



*vilenica*

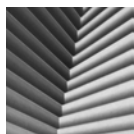
24.

**mednarodni  
literarni festival**  
*international  
literary festival*

2009

**Društvo  
slovenskih  
pisateljev**  
*Slovene  
Writers'  
Association*

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*vilenica*

**24.**

**mednarodni  
literarni festival**  
*international  
literary festival*

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Vilenica 2009

*Urednici*

Miljana Cunta, Tanja Petrič

*Založilo*

Društvo slovenskih pisateljev / zanj Slavko Pregl

*Lektura*

Jožica Narat, Alan McConnell-Duff

*Grafično oblikovanje naslovnice*

Goran Ivašič

*Stavek*

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*Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2009, ki jo podeljuje  
Društvo slovenskih pisateljev, dobi*

*Der Verein Slowenischer Schriftsteller verleiht den Internationalen  
Literaturpreis Vilenica für das Jahr 2009 an*

*The Slovene Writers' Association presents the Vilenica 2009  
International Literary Prize to*

Claudio Magris

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# Claudio Magris





Claudio Magris se je rodil leta 1939 v Trstu. Italijanski pisatelj, esejist, kolumnist, prevajalec in dramatik je diplomiral na univerzi v Torinu in bil kasneje imenovan za rednega profesorja univerz v Trstu in Torinu. Prejel je tudi številne častne doktorate številnih uglednih evropskih univerz. Ves čas svojega ustvarjanja je Magris v svoji domovini širil zavest o srednjeevropski kulturi in habsburškem mitu ter pri tem prevrednotil vpliv hebrejske dediščine na srednjeevropsko tradicijo. Prvi večji prodor je Magrisu uspel prav s tematiziranjem multikulturalnosti v evropski zgodovini v delu *Danubio (Donava)*, prevedenim v štiriindvajset jezikov, ki predstavlja njegov *opus magnum*. Magris ni le esejist, pisatelj in dramatik svetovnega formata, temveč je tudi priznan prevajalec Ibsna, Kleista, Schnitzlerja, Büchnerja in Grillparzerja. V letih 1994–1996 je bil izvoljen za strankarsko neodvisnega senatorja v Rimu. Po prodoru na italijansko politično arena je bil v letih 2001–2002 predstojnik katedre za evropske študije na Collège de France. Leta 2007 je bil imenovan za častnega profesorja na univerzi v Kopenhagnu. Je tudi član raznih italijanskih in tujih akademij: Deutsche Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung v Darmstadtu, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, Ateneo Veneto, Akademie der Wissenschaften v Göttingenu, Akademie der schönen Künste München, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Accademia dei Lincei. Prejel je številne častne naslove: Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Art et Lettres de la République Française, Björnsonorden Den Norske Orden for Litterære Fortjenester, Officer de l'Ordre des Art et Lettres da la République Française, Cavaliere di Gran Croce della Repubblica Italiana 2001, Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la République Française 2004. Njegovi eseji in kolumne so bili večkrat objavljeni v časniku *Corriere della Sera* ter v drugih evropskih zbornikih in časopisih.

Claudio Magris was born in the Italian city of Trieste in 1939. The Italian writer, essayist, columnist, translator and playwright completed his graduate studies at the University of Turin before being appointed full professor at the Universities of Trieste and Turin. He has also received honorary doctorates from many distinguished European universities. Throughout his career Magris has spread awareness of Central European culture and the Habsburg myth in his home country, reevaluating the influence of the Hebrew heritage on the Central European tradition. In fact, thematising the multiculturalism of European history in *Danubio (Danube)*, his *magnum opus*, won him his first major breakthrough and was translated into twenty-four languages. Apart from winning worldwide acclaim for his awarded essays, novels and plays, Magris has also distinguished himself as a translator of Ibsen, Kleist, Schnitzler, Büchner, and Grillparzer. Furthermore, in the years 1994 – 1996 he served as a senator in Rome. Subsequent to his entry into the Italian political arena, he held the European Chair at the Collège de France between the years 2001 – 2002, and in 2007 he was appointed honorary professor at the University of Copenhagen. Claudio Magris is also a member of various Italian and foreign academies: Deutsche Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung in Darmstadt, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, Ateneo Veneto, Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Akademie der schönen Künste München, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Accademia dei Lincei. He holds a number of honorary titles: Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres de la République Française, Björnsonorden Den Norske Orden for Litteraere Fortjenester, Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres de la République Française, Cavaliere di Gran Croce della Repubblica Italiana 2001, Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la République Française 2004. His essays and columns have been published in *Corriere della Sera* as well as in other European journals and newspapers.

## Izbor nagrad

Claudio Magris je za svoje literarne dosežke na področju proze, esejistike in dramatike prejel že več kot osemdeset nagrad. Med njegova najpomembnejša priznanja sodijo:

nagrada strega (1997)

Würthova nagrada za evropsko kulturo (1999)

leipziška knjižna nagrada za evropsko sporazumevanje (2001)

nagrada erasmus (2001)

nagrada princa Asturije (2004)

avstrijska državna nagrada za evropsko literaturo (2005)

nagrada Kythera (2007)

nagrada Walterja Hallsteina (2008)

## Izbrana bibliografija

### Proza

*Illazioni su una sciabola* (Sklepanje o sablji), roman, Cariplo-Laterza, Milano-Bari 1984; Studio Tesi, Pordenone 1986; Garzanti, Milano 1992.

*Danubio (Donava)*, Garzanti, Milano 1986.

*Un altro mare* (Drugo morje), roman, Garzanti, Milano 1991.

*Il Conde (El Conde)*, kratka zgodba, Melangolo, Genova 1993.

*Microcosmi (Mikrokozmosi)*, Garzanti, Milano 1997.

*Fra il Danubio e il mare. I luoghi, le cose e le persone da cui nascono i libri* (Med Donavo in morjem. Kraji, reči in ljudje, ki porodijo knjige), Garzanti, Milano 2001 (skupaj z videoposnetkom istoimenskega filma F. Conversana in N. Grignaffinija, ustanoviteljema Movie Movie Bologna).

*Alla cieca (Na slepo)*, roman, Garzanti, Milano 2005.

*L'infinito viaggiare* (Brezkončno potovati), potopis, Mondadori, Milano 2005.

### Eseji in znanstvena dela

*Il mito absburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna (Habsburški mit v moderni avstrijski književnosti)*, Einaudi, Torino 1963.

*Wilhelm Heinse*, Università di Trieste, Trieste-Udine 1968.

*Tre studi su Hoffmann* (Tri študije o Hoffmannu), Cisalpino, Milano-Varese 1969.

*Lontano da dove. Joseph Roth e la tradizione ebraico-orientale* (Daleč od nekod. Joseph Roth in orientalsko hebrejska tradicija), Einaudi, Torino 1971.

## Selected Prizes

Claudio Magris has received more than eighty prizes which celebrate his literary accomplishments in the field of prose, essay writing and drama.

Some of the most significant ones are:

the Strega Award (1997)

the Würth Prize for European Culture (1999)

the Leipzig Book Prize for European Understanding (2001)

the Erasmus Prize (2001)

the Prince of Asturias Prize (2004)

the Austrian State Prize for European Literature (2005)

the Kythera Prize (2007)

the Walter Hallstein Prize (2008)

## Selected Bibliography

### Prose

*Illazioni su una sciabola (Inferences from a Sabre)*, novel, Cariplo-Laterza, Milano-Bari 1984; Studio Tesi, Pordenone 1986; Garzanti, Milano 1992.

*Danubio (Danube)*, Garzanti, Milano 1986.

*Un altro mare (A Different Sea)*, novel, Garzanti, Milano 1991.

*Il Conde*, short story, Melangolo, Genova 1993.

*Microcosmi (Microcosms)*, Garzanti, Milano 1997.

*Fra il Danubio e il mare. I luoghi, le cose e le persone da cui nascono i libri (Between the Danube and the Sea. The Places, the Things and the Persons which Give Birth to Books)*, 2001, Garzanti, Milano 2001 (together with the videotape of the film of the same title by F. Conversano and N. Grignaffini, the founders of Movie Movie Bologna).

*Alla cieca (Blindly)*, novel, Garzanti, Milano 2005.

*L'infinito viaggiare (The Infinite Travelling)*, travelogue, Mondadori, Milano 2005.

### Essays and Academic Writings

*Il mito absburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna (The Habsburg Myth in Modern Austrian Literature)*, Einaudi, Torino 1963.

*Wilhelm Heinse*, Università di Trieste, Trieste-Udine 1968.

*Tre studi su Hoffmann (Three Studies on Hoffmann)*, Cisalpino, Milano-Varese 1969.

*Lontano da dove. Joseph Roth e la tradizione ebraico-orientale (Far from Somewhere. Joseph Roth and the Oriental Hebrew Tradition)*, Einaudi, Torino 1971.

- Dietro le parole* (Za besedami), Garzanti, Milano 1978.  
*L'altra ragione, Tre saggi su Hoffmann* (Drugi razlog, Trije eseji o Hoffmannu), Stampatori, Torino 1978.  
*Itaca e oltre* (Itaka in dlje), Garzanti, Milano 1982.  
*Trieste. Un'identità di frontiera* (Trst, obmejna identiteta), z A. Aro, Einaudi, Torino 1982, 1987.  
*L'anello di Clarisse* (Clarissin prstan), Einaudi, Torino 1984.  
*Utopia e Disincanto* (Utopija in streznitev), Garzanti, Milano 1999.  
*È pensabile il romanzo senza il mondo moderno?* (Si je mogoče zamisliti roman brez modernega sveta?), v: *Il romanzo. La cultura del romanzo*, ur. F. Moretti, Einaudi, Torino 2001, str. 869–880.  
*La storia non è finita. Etica, politica e laicità* (Zgodba ni končana. Etika, politika in laicizem), Garzanti, Milano 2006.  
*Alfabeti* (Abecede), Garzanti, Milano 2008.

Del Magrisovega opusa predstavljajo tudi eseji o Hofmannsthalu, Ibsnu, Bleiu, Jacobsenu, Canettiju, Rilkeju, Defoeju, Hamsunu, Musilu, Svevu, Walserju, Krausu, Kafki, Dodererju, Marinu, Bernhardu, Hesseju, Singerju, Borgesu in mnogih drugih.

## Drame

- Stadelmann*, Garzanti, Milano 1988.  
*Le Voci* (Glasovi), Edizioni dell'Elefante, Roma 1994; Melangolo, Genova 1996.  
*La mostra* (Razstava), Garzanti, Milano 2001.  
*Essere già stati* (Že bili), v: *1991-2001. Dieci anni in Europa. 20 Microdrammi*. Mitterfest, Angeli, Milano 2001, str. 236–241.  
*Lei dunque capirà* (Saj razumete), Garzanti, Milano 2006.

## Izvirna dela v tujem jeziku

- Trois Orients. Récits de voyages*, prev. J. in M. Pastureau, Payot&Rivages, Paris 2006.  
*Wer ist auf der anderen Seite? Grenzbetrachtungen*, Residenz, Salzburg 1993.  
*Donau und Post-Donau*, prev. R. M. Seidl-Gschwend, Aer, Bolzano 1995.  
*Utopie und Entzauberung*, otvoritveni govor na Salzburškem festivalu, prev. R. Lunzer, Residenz Verlag, Salzburg 1996.  
*The Fair of Tolerance*, prev. N. Carter, Amsterdam 2001.  
*Langs grenzen. Essays, fragmenten en verholen* (z W. Otterspeerjem), prev. A. Haakman, Bert Bakker, Amsterdam 2001 (Nizozemska izdaja antologije, objavljene ob prejemu nagrade erasmus).

- Dietro le parole* (Behind the Words), Garzanti, Milano 1978.  
*L'altra ragione, Tre saggi su Hoffmann* (The Other Reason, Three Essays on Hoffmann), Stampatori, Torino 1978.  
*Itaca e oltre* Garzanti (Ithaca and Further), Milano 1982.  
*Trieste. Un'identità di frontiera* (Trieste. A Border Identity), with A. Ara, Einaudi, Torino 1982, 1987.  
*L'anello di Clarisse* (Clarisse's Ring), Einaudi, Torino 1984.  
*Utopia e Disincanto* (Utopia and Disenchantment), Garzanti, Milano 1999.  
*È pensabile il romanzo senza il mondo moderno?* (Is It Possible To Imagine a Novel Without the Modern World?), in *Il romanzo. La cultura del romanzo*, ed. F. Moretti, Einaudi, Torino 2001, pp. 869-880.  
*La storia non è finita. Etica, politica e laicità* (The Story Is Not Finished. Ethics, Politics and Laicism), Garzanti, Milano 2006.  
*Alfabeti* (Alphabets), Garzanti, Milano 2008.

Magris' oeuvre also includes essays on Hofmannsthal, Ibsen, Blei, Jacobsen, Canetti, Rilke, Defoe, Hamsun, Musil, Svevo, Walser, Kraus, Kafka, Doderer, Marin, Bernhard, Hesse, Singer, Borges and many others.

## Drama

- Stadelmann*, Garzanti, Milano 1988.  
*Le Voci* (*Voices: Three Plays*), Edizioni dell'Elefante, Roma, 1994; Melangolo, Genova 1996.  
*La mostra* (The Exhibition), Garzanti, Milano 2001.  
*Essere già stati* (*To Have Been*), in *1991-2001. Dieci anni in Europa. 20 Microdrammi*. Mitterfest, Angeli, Milano 2001, pp. 236-241.  
*Lei dunque capirà* (You Understand Then), Garzanti, Milano 2006.

## Original Publications in a Foreign Language

- Trois Orients. Récits de voyages*, trans. by J. and M. Pastureau, Payot&Rivages, Paris 2006.  
*Wer ist auf der anderen Seite? Grenzbetrachtungen*, Residenz, Salzburg 1993.  
*Donau und Post-Donau*, trans. by R. M. Seidl-Gschwend, AER, Bolzano 1995.  
*Utopie und Entzauberung*, the opening speech of the Salzburg Festival, trans. by R. Lunzer, Residenz Verlag, Salzburg 1996.  
*The Fair of Tolerance*, trans. by N. Carter, Amsterdam 2001.  
*Langs grenzen. Essays, fragmenten en verholen* (with W. Otterspeer), trans. by A. Haakman, Bert Bakker, Amsterdam 2001 (the Dutch edition of the anthology published on the occasion of the Erasmus Prize).

## Prevodi

Magrisova dela so bila prevedena v večino evropskih in v nekatere druge jezike, med njimi so angleški, francoski, nemški, španski, nizozemski, danski, kitajski, japonski, vietnamski, korejski in tudi slovenski jezik.

## Seznam slovenskih književnih prevodov

*Habsburški mit v moderni avstrijski književnosti*, prev. Ivana Placet, Založništvo tržaškega tiska / Editoriale Stampa Triestina, Trieste 2001.  
*Trst, obmejna identiteta*, z A. Aro, prev. Marija Cenda Klinc, Študentska založba, Ljubljana 2001.

*El Conde*, prev. Veronika Brecelj, Založništvo tržaškega tiska / Editoriale Stampa Triestina, Trieste 2003.

*Mikrokozmosi*, prev. Vasja Bratina in Rada Lečič, Slovenska matica, Ljubljana 2003.

*Donava*, prev. Vasja Bratina, Cankarjeva založba, Ljubljana 2006.

*Saj razumete*, prev. Veronika Brecelj, Slovenska matica, Ljubljana 2008.

*Na slepo*, prev. Veronika Brecelj, Slovenska matica, Ljubljana 2009.

## Translations

The works by Claudio Magris have been translated into most European and some other languages, among them English, French, German, Spanish, Dutch, Danish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean and also Slovene.

### List of Slovene Book Translations

*Habsburški mit v moderni avstrijski književnosti* (The Habsburg Myth In Modern Austrian Literature), trans. by Ivana Placet, Založništvo tržaškega tiska / Editoriale Stampa Triestina, Trieste 2001.

*Trst, obmejna identiteta* (Trieste. A Border Identity), with A. Ara, trans. by Marija Cenda Klinc, Študentska založba, Ljubljana 2001.

*El Conde*, trans. by Veronika Brecej, Založništvo tržaškega tiska / Editoriale Stampa Triestina, Trieste 2003.

*Mikrokozmosi* (*Microcosms*), trans. by Vasja Bratina in Rada Lečič, Slovenska matica, Ljubljana 2003.

*Donava* (*Danube*), trans. by Vasja Bratina, Cankarjeva založba, Ljubljana 2006.

*Saj razumete* (You Understand Then), trans. by Veronika Brecej, Slovenska matica, Ljubljana 2008.

*Na slepo* (*Blindly*), trans. by Veronika Brecej, Slovenska matica, Ljubljana 2009.



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# Claudio Magris

## Nagrajenec Vilenice 2009

Veronika Simoniti

Claudio Magris (1939) je eden najodličnejših in najlucidnejših esejistov, vrhunski poznavalec Srednje Evrope in njene literature, eden najpomembnejših evropskih pisateljev, dramatik, germanist, človek »prostrane« kulture, ki izhaja tako fizično kot duhovno iz Trsta. To multietnično, večkulturno mesto ob zalivu je svet njegovega otroštva in odraščanja in vanj se vrača tudi v svojih esejih. Trst, kjer se ni zacelila nobena rana iz preteklosti, kjer je zgodovina še živa in trpka, mesto, v katerem sobivajo avstroogorski duh, judovsko izročilo, fašizem in spomin na štiridesetdnevno partizansko zasedbo, slovensko in furlansko razumnštvo, mesto Scipia Slataperja in drugih, ki so v njem pustili svoj pečat, vse je pomešano v en sam velik lonec nostalgije. Trstu je Magris posvetil esejistično delo *Trst, obmejna identiteta* (1987), ki ga je napisal skupaj z Angelom Aro. *Nostos* je vračanje domov; tudi Magris sam je nostalgično odkrival svoj Trst šele v Torinu med študijem in pozneje službovanjem kot profesor nemške literature. Njegova diplomska naloga *Habsburški mit v moderni avstrijski književnosti*<sup>1</sup> je oživila refleksijo o srednjeevropskosti nasploh, predvsem v luči metafore o krizi moderne civilizacije. Sledila so ji mnoga literarnoesejistična dela (npr. o nemških oz. srednjeevropskih avtorjih W. Heinseju, E. T. A. Hoffmannu, J. Rothu, T. Dorstu, G. Wulzu).

Njegovo največje delo *Donava* (1986), prevedeno v štiriindvajset jezikov, je sentimentalno potovanje skozi čas; smisel potovanja je srečevanje ljudi in soočanje z zgodovino, reka pa je prisposoda spraševanja o identiteti. Potovanje, resnično ali metaforično, je rdeča nit skozi ves njegov opus. Skozi *Mikrokozmose* (1997), za katere je v letu izida prejel ugledno nagrado strega, niza pripovedi, duhovite anekdote, zgodovinske dogodke, lirične opise, usode pomembnih in »navadnih« ljudi, protagonistov majhnih in velikih osebnih in zgodovinskih zgodb, na razpotju med severom in jugom, vzhodom in zahodom; vse te zgodbe se torej zapletajo in prepletajo le lučaj od balkanske morije, v Srednji Evropi, ta pa za Magrisa ni samo meteorološki pojem, temveč s pomeni nabiti in s sledmi zaznamovani kraji, ki jih kot obraz brazdajo gube časa. Vsaka zgodba je prežeta z zgodovino, vsak kraj je klobčič časa, pisati pa pomeni odpletati njihovo štreto, »kakor Penelopa parati tkanje Zgodovine«. Kraji iz *Mikrokozmosov* in *Donave* ne pripadajo toliko ljudem, kolikor ljudje pripadajo krajem, ki so, kot reče no, ne neme, temveč zgovorne priče, ki prehajajo iz rok v roke, izpod ene oblasti pod drugo, če se spomnimo samo na snežniški gozd, kajti »pod snegom se tedni in leta nabirajo v eno samo zdajšnjost, ki jih vse čuva in iz

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<sup>1</sup> Leta 1963 izdana v knjižni obliki pri založbi Einaudi.

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# Claudio Magris

## The Vilenica 2009 Prize Winner

*Veronika Simoniti*

Claudio Magris (1939) is one of the most brilliant and lucid essayists, a supreme expert on Central Europe and its literature, one of the most important European writers, a playwright, a scholar of the Germanic languages, a man of “wide” culture, who hails both physically and spiritually from Trieste. To this multi-ethnic, multicultural city situated in a bay, to the world of his childhood and adolescence, he keeps returning in his essays. Trieste, where no wound from the past has ever been healed and where history is still alive and bitter; a city combining the Austro-Hungarian spirit, the Jewish tradition, Fascism and the memory of the forty-day Partisan occupation, the Slovene and Friulian intelligentsia; the city of Scipio Slataper and others who have left their mark on it: everything blends into a single huge potpourri of nostalgia. Trieste is the subject of Magris’ essay *Trieste. A Border Identity* (1987), co-authored by Angelo Ara. *Nostos* means “homecoming”; indeed, it was only at Turin, as a student and later as a professor of German literature, that Magris nostalgically began to discover his Trieste. His dissertation, *The Habsburg Myth in Modern Austrian Literature*<sup>1</sup>, revived the reflection on Central European identity in general, especially through the metaphor of the crisis affecting modern civilisation. It was followed by a number of literary essays (e.g. on German and other Central European authors such as W. Heine, Hoffmann, J. Roth, T. Dorst, G. Wulz).

His magnum opus, *Danube* (1986), translated into twenty-four languages, is a sentimental journey through time; the meaning of the journey lies in meeting people and confronting history, while the river itself symbolises the quest for identity. Travel, literal or metaphorical, is the thread running through his entire oeuvre. His *Microcosms* (1997), which received the prestigious Strega Award in the year of its publication, is a string of narratives, witty anecdotes, historical events, lyrical descriptions, fates of important and “ordinary” people, protagonists of personal and historical stories both great and small, all at the crossroads between north and south, east and west. All these stories are thus spun and interwoven only a stone’s throw from the Balkan slaughter, in Central Europe, which Magris sees not as a mere meteorological concept but as places charged with meanings and marked by traces, ravaged by the lines of Time like a human face. Each story is steeped in history, each place is a tangle of time, and to write means to disentangle their skein, “to unravel, like Penelope, the web of History”. The places from *Microcosms* and *Danube* belong to

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<sup>1</sup> Published as a monograph in 1963 by the publishing house Einaudi.

katere se pojavljajo kakor pod snegom pokopani predmeti po odjugi. Čas zledeni v večni snežni zamet, plasti snega, zapadlega v različnih letih, se dotikajo in nalagajo druga na drugo.« Vsak kraj ima svoj čar in zbuja v avtorju literarne asociacije in fascinantna razmišljanja o kulturi, umetnosti in človeku kot takem. Tudi o njegovi identiteti, ki je še posebno krhka, če je obmejna, vendar ni nikoli samo nacionalna in politična, ampak predvsem kulturna, »doživljati jo je treba spontano in potem pozabiti nanjo«, saj je človeška univerzalnost nad njo. Tako je tudi Snežnik nekako meja med naravo in zgodovino, v tem primeru zgodovino mejá, vendar Magris tu preseže pojem političnih meja in jih razpne v poetično mejo venenja in cvetenja, umiranja in prerajanja gozda.

Magris je večni popotnik, vendar njegovi itinerariji niso samo geografski. Potuje, da bi videl, prepoznal poznano, spregledal ob že videnem. Potovanje je pouk iz preprostosti in skromnosti, da bi spoznali meje svojega razumevanja in dožemanja. Tudi obmejni človek je popotnik, ki gre naprej in se vrača, tako kot je zgodovina potovanje, vendar ne vedno naprej, potujemo lahko tudi nazaj in se vračamo v kraje, od koder smo krenili na pot. In Magris je obmejni človek, ki pa tržaškost (tržaškost v najboljšem pomenu) presega, saj potuje tudi v metaforičnem smislu. Magrisovo Srednjo Evropo parajo meje, prave in namišljene, ki so jih ljudje skozi zgodovino začrtovali, premikali in brisali. Nacionalne, politične in socialne meje, ki so tudi psihološke in kulturne, so meje med mentalitetami, ideologijami, jeziki in narečji in so spremenljive kot naše življenje. Meje so nestalne, nujne in tudi nečimrne, pa naj gre za meje med vodami, barvami lagune, državami ali narečji.

Meja je tudi stično območje, včasih celo smrtonosna pokrajina, ki zahteva žrtve in kri. To je njeno prekletstvo. Toda brez meje ni ne identitete ne oblike ne življenja. Čeznje teče Donava in Magrisovo istoimensko delo predstavlja željo po začrtanju mej okrog individualnosti in identitete na eni strani, na drugi pa hrepenenje po njihovem prekoračenju. Če so meje ločnice med znanim in neznanim, pomeni presežati jih potemtakem prilasčati si in spoznavati neznano, podobno kot sicer resnična oseba Carlo Michelstaedter v romanu *Drugo morje* (1991) uči, da filozofija pomeni videti oddaljene stvari, kot bi bile blizu. Pravilen način dožemanja meja je, da se čutimo tudi na drugi strani.

Z mejami porisano zemljo obliva morje, ki obljublja srečo, vanj se kot življenje v smrt izliva počasna Donava, v morju se raztapljajo strahovi, obsesije in sram. Že v antiki so verjeli, da je odpluti na morje brezbožno dejanje, skrunitev svetih meja in vesoljskega reda. Je tudi smrt, morje smo izrabili, da smo pripluli do dežel, ki smo jih potem izropali in zasužnjili. Morje je samemu sebi dovolj in se ne obrablja, je tudi brezcilna sreča, »večnost in samozadostnost trenutka«, vanj bi se rad razblinil Enrico Mreule iz *Drugega morja*.

Magris je ves čas razpet med esejistiko in beletristiko in med njima bi večkrat težko potegnili ločnico; še ena meja, torej, ki jo v literarni esejistiki presega z asociativnim, a zato ne arbitrarnim povezovanjem mitov in dejstev. Iz literarne esejistike »z dnevno perspektivo« se sprehaja v

their people less than the people belong to these places, which are, as we have said, eloquent witnesses rather than dumb ones, passing from hand to hand, from one government to another. A case in point is the forest of Monte Nevoso (Snežnik), for “beneath the snow, weeks and years accrue into one single present which guards them all, emerging from it like objects buried under snow once the thaw has set in. Time freezes into an eternal snowdrift, the layers of snow fallen throughout the years touching and pressing upon each other.” Each place has a unique charm, triggering the author’s literary associations and fascinating reflections on culture, art, and man as such, including the human identity. While the last is particularly fragile in borderlands, it is never only national and political, but primarily cultural: “it must be experienced spontaneously and then forgotten”, since human universality is above it. Monte Nevoso thus forms a boundary between nature and history – in this case, the history of boundaries – but Magris transcends the concept of political borders, expanding them into the poetic boundaries of fading and blooming, of the death and rebirth of the forest.

Magris is the eternal traveller, but his itineraries are not merely geographic. He travels in order to see, to recognise the known, to regain his sight at the already seen. A journey is a lesson in simplicity and modesty, helping us recognise the limits of our understanding and perception. The borderland man, too, is a traveller pressing forward and coming back – just as history is a journey, but not always a journey forward: one may travel backward as well, returning to the places from which one has set out. Such a borderland man is Magris, who, however, transcends his Trieste character (“Trieste” in the best sense of the word) since he travels in the metaphorical sense as well. Magris’ Central Europe is riven by boundaries, real and imaginary, which have been drawn, moved, and erased throughout history. The national, political and social boundaries, which are also psychological and cultural ones, are those between mentalities, ideologies, languages, and dialects, changeable like life itself. The boundaries are unstable, necessary, full of vanity even, whether they run between different waters, colours of a lagoon, states, or dialects.

Moreover, a boundary is an area of contact, sometimes even a deadly landscape demanding sacrifice and blood. That is its curse. Without a boundary, however, there can be neither identity nor form nor life. Through all of these runs the Danube, and Magris’ work of the same title presents the urge to draw a boundary around individuality and identity, as well as the yearning to transcend them. If boundaries are demarcation lines between the known and the unknown, transcending them means appropriating and exploring the unknown, just as Carlo Michelstaedter, a (real-life) character in the novel *A Different Sea* (1991), teaches that philosophy means seeing faraway things as if they were near. The right way to perceive boundaries is to feel ourselves on the other side, too.

The land criss-crossed by boundaries is surrounded by the sea, with its promise of happiness: it is there that the slow Danube flows, like life to

beletristiko, kjer prevladujejo temačni toni (spomnimo se na primer samo borgesovsko obarvane zgodbe *El Conde* iz leta 1993), avtorja pogosto vodijo demoni, njegovi dvojniki, ki so v nasprotju s piščevimi vrednotami. Podobno kot nas literatura uči, kako prestopati meje, in jih tudi zarisuje, da jih lahko prestopa, se tudi Magrisova literarna esejistika naslanja predvsem na spomin, ki je vir domišljije in refleksije. V *Sklepanju o sablji* (1992) se obe, domišljija in refleksija, razvnameta ob pogledu na držaj sablje in spleteta literarno rekonstrukcijo o kozaškem poveljniku Krasnovu. Tako Magris izgrebe iz pozabe na videz obroben zgodovinski dogodek, ki ima tudi svojo fantastično različico. To stori na primer tudi v *Drugem morju*, ko razkrinka prevaro zgodovine, ki nas hoče prepričati v samo eno resnico, in nam razkrije dva možna datuma smrti za vsakega izmed protagonistov, Krasnova v *Sklepanju o sablji* in goriškega intelektualca Enrica Mreuleta iz *Drugega morja*, ki se umakne v Patagonijo. Naklonjenost malemu človeku, ki ga zgodovinske usode narodov kot lupino premetavajo po viharnem morju, se v *Na slepo* (2005) kaže v zgodbah človeka, razcepljene osebnosti, ki po tržaški tradiciji leže na psihiatrov kavč, vendar pove dosti srhljivejšo zgodbo kot Svevov Zeno.

Pisanje je puščanje sledi, ker brez besed ni mogoče živeti, z njimi preganjamo praznino. Zaradi puščanja sledi je pripovedovanje kot življenje in potovanje, potovanje pa je tudi izgubljena bitka s pozabo; na poti se je treba »ustaviti in opazovati podobo debela, ki še ni povsem strohnelo, obris sipine, ki jo veter raznaša, sledove bivanja v stari hiši«. V tem opisu iz *Mikrokozmosov*, ki zajema pojem pisanja kot strast prepisovanja, prepisovanja preteklosti, lepoto minljivosti in poskus, ki je brezupen in poln upanja obenem, da te lepote ne bi pustili umreti (kajti nihče ne sme izginiti, kot da ga nikoli ni bilo), je morda bistvo Magrisove poetike, ki je pripovedovanje o ostružkih zgodovine skozi literarno prizmo, skozi lečo literature, za katero pa vemo, da je nepravilna, nepopolna in dvoumna. In ker je tudi življenje dvoumno, si morda prav literatura lahko lasti pravico govoriti o njem; ne more ga rešiti, lahko pa ga evocira.

Pogled na življenje in zgodovino je lahko nostalgičen, kar lahko korigiramo s treznostjo, *od-čaranostjo* (če italijanske besede »disincanto«<sup>2</sup> ne prevajamo kot »treznost«, »streznitev«, ampak dobesedno, ker samo takrat vsebuje pojem »čar«), kot Sancho Pansa si popravljamo donkihotski pogled na svet, na drugi strani pa je sprijaznjenost z usodo tako ali tako samo oksimoron, ironična oblika upanja. Upanje je skupni imenovalac utopije in treznosti, pogled naprej, saj vemo, da ni nič večno. Vsakemu narodu je usojen njegov čas razcveta in zgodovina je zaporedje nacionalnih letnih časov. Diktature, ki so se zdele večni red stvari, so se naenkrat razblinile, kot bi presahnila Donava, če bi zaprli vodovodno pipo v neki razpadli nemški hiši, iz katere po legendi ta reka izvira.

Zato po padcu ideologij, ki so stari celini povzročile toliko gorja, ostaja Claudio Magris trezen premišljevalec in morda poslednji evropski utopist,

<sup>2</sup> Gl. *Utopia e disincanto*, 2001.

death; it is the sea that dissolves all fears, obsessions, shame. According to the ancients' belief, to set sail for the open sea was an impious act, a violation of the sacred boundaries and of the universal order. And it is death as well: the sea was used to sail to countries which were then pillaged and enslaved. The sea is self-sufficient and never worn out; moreover, it is an aimless happiness, "the eternity and self-sufficiency of the moment", - what Enrico Mreule of *A Different Sea* should like to dissolve into.

Magris is constantly torn between essay-writing and fiction, thus often blurring the demarcation line between the two; another boundary, then, transcended in his literary essays by linking myth and fact on the basis of associations, though not arbitrarily. From literary essays with their "perspective of the day", he strolls over into fiction, dominated by dark tones (as one example of many, let us recall the Borghes-coloured short story *El Conde* from 1993); the author is often guided by demons, his doubles, who are at odds with his values. If literature teaches us how to cross boundaries, even drawing the latter in order to cross them, Magris' literary essays draw chiefly on memory as the source of imagination and reflection. In his *Inferences from a Sabre* (1992), both the imagination and reflection are spurred on by the sight of a sabre hilt to spin a literary reconstruction featuring a Cossack general, Krasnov. Thus Magris ferrets out from oblivion a seemingly marginal historical event, which has its fantastic variant as well. The same end is achieved in, for example, *A Different Sea*, which unmasks the fraudulence of a history seeking to persuade us of one single truth: there are two possible death dates revealed for each protagonist, for Krasnov in *Inferences from a Sabre* and for Enrico Mreule, a Gorizian intellectual who withdraws to Patagonia, in *A Different Sea*. The writer's sympathy for the common man, tossed by the historical fates of nations like an empty shell on a stormy sea, emerges in *Blindly* (2005) through the stories of a man with a split personality, who, in the true Trieste tradition, lies down on the psychiatrist's couch, but has a far more frightening tale to tell than Svevo's Zeno.

To write is to leave marks because it is impossible to live without words, which help us drive away the emptiness. Because of this mark-leaving, storytelling is like living and travelling, while travel is at the same time a lost battle against oblivion; on one's way, one has "to stop and observe the image of a tree trunk not quite rotten yet, the outline of a dune being scattered by the wind, the traces of habitation in an old house". This description from *Microcosms* involves the concept of writing as a passion for copying, copying the past, the beauty of transience and the attempt, both hopeless and hopeful, not to allow that beauty to die (for nobody should disappear as if they had never existed). As such, it may well form the essence of Magris' poetics - narrating the scrapings of history as seen through the lens of literature, which we know to be incorrect, imperfect, and ambiguous. And since life is ambiguous itself, literature may be justified in claiming the right to talk about it; while unable to save life, literature may still evoke it.

kajti »utopija daje življenju smisel«. Tej drzni etiketi pa je treba takoj dodati oznake demokrat, romantik in zmernež; kot pravi sam, pa tudi »nehote moralist«. Tudi to v najžlahtnejšem pomenu, pripominjamo mi. Luciden kulturni optimist, skratka, ki ga ne smemo nehati prebirati.

We may adjust a nostalgic view of life and history with practicality, *disenchantment* (translating the Italian word “disincanto”<sup>2</sup> not as “disillusionment” but literally, so as to preserve the notion of “enchancing”), correcting our quixotic view of the world like Sancho Panza. On the other hand, resignation is in itself nothing but an oxymoron, an ironic form of hope. Hope is the common denominator of utopia and practicality, the look ahead, for we know that nothing lasts forever. Each nation is destined for a period of flourishing, and history is the sequence of national seasons. Dictatorships, which had seemed the eternal order of things, have suddenly dissolved, as the Danube would dry up by our turning off the tap in the dilapidated German house where this river, according to legend, has its source.

That is why, after the fall of the ideologies which had brought so much grief to the Continent, Claudio Magris remains a practical thinker and perhaps the last European utopist, for “utopia gives meaning to life”. This daring label, however, needs to be supplemented at once with such labels as “democrat”, “romantic”, “moderate” and, as he himself says, an “unintentional moralist”. Again in the noblest sense of the word, we may add. A lucid cultural optimist, in short, whom we must not stop reading.

*Translated by Nada Grošelj*

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<sup>2</sup> See *Utopia e disincanto (Utopia and Disenchantment)*, 2001.



# Na slepo

(Odlomek)

(...) – toda od kod prihaja to vpitje, vse to hrumenje, ničesar več ne razumem, čigavo je to uho, gluho, glušelo, neuporabno, verjetno zaradi udarca s palico, in če je kdo koga s palico udaril, je bil nekdo tepen, jaz ali kdo drug.

Je že minilo, hrumenje ponehava. Glejte, tudi prejšnje je retorično vprašanje, ker je to moje uho in se vi, doktor Ulcigrai, sklanjate k drugemu, levemu, da bi me vprašali: »Praviš, da je tvoje pravo ime Jorgen in da si to sam napisal,« in mi pri tem kažete tisto staro beležnico, ki sem jo našel v knjigarni na Salamanca Place. Vi vsaj ne preteplate, nasprotno, še vljudni ste in se niti ne užalite, če vas kličem Kogoi, in ne vztrajate s svojimi vprašanji. Če molčim, ne silite vame; pa ste me vseeno spraševali, sicer po nepotrebem, ker resnico že poznate, ali si vsaj domišljate, da jo poznate, kar je isto; kakorkoli že, ko vam odgovarjam, moj odgovor že poznate – ali mi ga prišepnete, položite na usta.

V bistvenih točkah je odgovor odločen in jasen; kar zadeva podrobnosti, pa priznam, nekoliko zmeden. Kaj pa morem, v vsej tej zmešnjavi, z vsemi stvarmi, ki so se nagrmadile, križale, leta in države in morja in ječe in obrazi in dogodki in misli in še zapori, razparani večerni oboki, iz katerih teče kri, in rane in pobegi in padci ... In enega življenja, več življenj, ni moč držati skupaj. Povrhu vsega človek, izmučen zaradi nenehnih zaslisevanj, še težje spravi stvari v red, često ne prepozna niti svojega glasu in svojega srca. Čemu me včasih, kadar vrtite naprej in nazaj tisti trak, silite, da ponavljam vaša vprašanja? Morda zato, da si jih bolje zapomnim, razumem, saj res, včasih se zgubljam, toda še bolj sem zmeden, ko vas slišim, kako govorite z mojim glasom. Vsekakor: kolikor bolj nas sprašujejo, toliko manj znamo odgovarjati – zapletamo se v protislovja, pravijo, in tedaj še bolj pritisnejo na nas, zlepa ali zgrda, pač odvisno od njihovega poklica.

Ne vem točno, kaj so protislovja, vendar se zagotovo zapletamo vanje, to je kot pribito. In tedaj izginemo, ostružki, ki jih vodni vrtnec povleče za sabo v odtok – tu na južni polobli se voda v kopalni kadi okrog odtočne luknje vrta v nasprotni smeri urnega kazalca, pri nas pa, narobe, v smeri urnega kazalca. Gre za fizikalni zakon, sem prebral, pravijo mu Coriolisove sile – čudovite simetrije Narave, kadirilja, pri kateri se izvajajo figure: en par napreduje, medtem ko drugi nazaduje, in ko je na vrsti, se prikloni, da se ples ne ustavi. Eden se rodi, drugi umre, pehotno vrsto na griču pokosijo topovske krogle, kaj kmalu so vrh griča nove uniforme in novi prapori, pa jih nove topovske krogle spet pokosijo. »Računi se torej izidejo ...« Seveda, debet in kredit, zmaga in poraz, kazensko taborišče na Golem otoku in potem letovišča na istih čudovitih plažah jadranskega otoka, komunizem, ki nas je rešil lagerja in nas zaprl v gulag, kjer smo vzdržali v imenu tovariša Stalina, ki je medtem zapiral druge naše tovariše v svoje gulage.

## Alla cieca

(Un brano)

[...] - ma da dove vengono queste urla, che fragore, non sento più, di chi è quest'orecchio assordato rintonato messo fuori uso, dev'essere stata una bastonata e se qualcuno l'ha data qualcuno l'ha certo presa, io o un altro.

Ecco, è passato, il frastuono si smorza. Anche quella era una domanda retorica; è il mio orecchio, questo, visto che Lei, dottor Ulcigrai, si china verso l'altro, quello sinistro, quando mi chiede «Dunque il tuo vero nome sarebbe Jorgen e questo lo avresti scritto tu», mostrandomi quel vecchio scartafaccio che avevo trovato in quella libreria di Salamanca Place. Lei almeno non alza le mani, anzi, è gentile, non si offende nemmeno quando La chiamo Cogoi, non insiste neanche con le domande. Se sto zitto, lascia perdere, ma intanto me l'ha chiesto ed è inutile, perché Lei conosce già la verità, o crede di conoscerla, il che fa lo stesso, e comunque conosce già la mia risposta, quando Le rispondo - altrimenti me la suggerisce, me la mette in bocca.

Una risposta ferma e sicura, nell'essenziale; talvolta, lo ammetto, un po' confusa nei dettagli. Ma come si fa con tutto questo andirivieni, con tante cose che si accavallano, anni e paesi e mari e prigionie e volti e fatti e pensieri e ancora prigionie e squarciati cieli della sera da cui il sangue esce a fiotti e ferite e fughe e cadute... E la vita, tante vite, non si può tenerle insieme. Oltretutto uno, sfinito dagli interrogatori senza tregua, ha ancora più difficoltà a mettere le cose in ordine, tante volte non riconosce la sua voce e il suo cuore. Perché ogni tanto, andando avanti e indietro con quel nastro, mi fa ripetere le Sue domande? Forse per imprimermele meglio, capisco, è vero che qualche volta mi perdo, ma così mi perdo ancora di più, a sentire Lei che parla con la mia voce. Comunque, più si viene interrogati meno si sa rispondere - si cade in contraddizione, dicono, e ti mettono ancor più alle strette, con le buone o con le cattive, a seconda dei loro mestiere.

Non so bene cosa voglia dire contraddizione, ma certo si cade, questo è indubbio. E si sparisce, trucioli risucchiati da vortici d'acqua nello scolatoio - qui nell'emisfero australe l'acqua della vasca da bagno gira intorno al buco in senso antiorario, da noi lassù invece all'inverso, in senso orario. È una legge fisica, ho letto, le chiamano le forze di Coriolis - mirabili simmetrie della Natura, quadriglia in cui una coppia avanza mentre l'altra indietreggia, entrambe s'inclinano quando è il loro turno e il ballo non perde il ritmo. Uno nasce un altro muore, una linea di fanteria sulla collina viene falciata a cannonate, altre divise e bandiere sono poco dopo sulla cresta della collina, una scarica le falcia a loro volta. «Dunque i conti tornano...» Sì, dare e avere, vittoria e sconfitta, il bagno penale a Goli Otok e poi i bagni di mare su quelle stesse meravigliose spiagge dell'isola adriatica, il comunismo che ci ha liberato dal Lager e messo in un Gulag dove abbiamo resistito in nome del compagno Stalin che intanto metteva altri nostri compagni nei Gulag.

»Računi se izidejo in krvavi madeži na glavni knjigovodski knjigi ne zbrisejo števil, niti ničle na koncu, izenačenja med aktivno in pasivo.« Ampak takole lahko govorim jaz, ki sem toliko let preživel v zaporu mesta, ki sem ga sam ustanovil, z vsemi hišami, cerkvijo in zaporom vred; ustanovil sem ga pred mnogimi leti v tem neizmernem ustju Derwenta – kjer ni mogoče razložiti, kje se konča reka in začne morje, v tej veliki praznini, kjer ni ničesar do niča Antarktike in Južnega pola – ko so tu plavali le črni labodi in kiti, ki še niso skusili, kako se jim harpuna zapiči v hrbet, da jim brizgne kri visoko pod nebo, kot voda, ki jo prhnejo iz nosnih votlin. Prvega kita sem harpuniral jaz, Jorgen Jorgensen, kralj Islandije in kaznjenec, graditelj mest in zaporov, graditelj svojega lastnega zapora, Romul, ki konča kot suženj v Rimu. Pa vendar vsi ti zračni vrtinci, ki trosijo prah mrtvih in živih, niso posebno pomembni. Odločilno je, doktor Ulcigrai, da lahko na vaša pleonastična vprašanja pri bistvenih zadevah odgovarjam natančno, kajti vem, kdo sem, kdo sem bil, kdo smo.

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Vsekakor so mi retorična vprašanja všeč – najbrž mi je častiti Blunt rekel, da jim rečemo tako – ker človeka izučijo, da na vprašanja ni nikoli odgovora; razen če nima kdo odgovora že v svoji glavi in si sam odgovarja, kakor počenjate pogosto vi, ki mi narekujete odgovore, no, potem pa nima smisla spraševati. Morda pa ni tako, morda pa nam dobro dene, če slišimo, kar že vemo; slišimo samo lasten glas, kakor v jambornem košu, kadar vpijemo proti vetru. Krik se porazgubi na morju, samo ti ga slišiš in nisi niti prepričan, da je tvoj glas; morda ti je sunek vetra prinesel glas koga drugega, ki je prav tako vpil z vrha druge ladje, izginjajoče na obzorju, kot vse ladje, ki sem jih videl izginiti na oceanih; ladja naglo drsi in pušča za sabo glasove s krova, iz podpalubja, ptice, ki letajo nad krmo, se ustavijo in izgubijo. Za kratek čas glasove še slišiš, potem pa zaznavaš samo nerazumljivo vreščanje, veter ti bije v obraz, ptičja krila ti prhutajo v ušesih, glasovi, vpitje, besede, divji, tepeni galjoti v tvoji glavi.

In vendar je glas, pa naj bo že glas kogar koli, vsekakor tolažba, potem ko si bil neskončne ure sam v temni, smrdljivi celici ali tam gor, v jambornem košu sredi ogromnih valov, ki se dvigajo kot gluhi, penasti topovski streli visoko v nebo proti koprenastim zidovom. Dolgo lahko kličeš, sam ali z drugimi – ne, nikoli nisi sam; vedno se dobi kdo, ki preži nad tabo – toda, ko kaj prosiš, ni nikdar odgovora. Tedaj molčijo vsi, kot molči sir George, kadar ga ponižno prosim, po vseh letih, ki sem jih preživel tu v kazenski koloniji, naj odpošlje v London mojo prošnjo za pomilostitev.

\* \* \*

Že od včeraj dežuje, neprenehoma dežuje na liste evkaliptov in praproti, ki se svetijo in bleščijo v zraku, temnem od vlage, nepredirnem vodnem zidu, za katerim ostaja vse, obrazi-glasovi-leta ... tudi Istra, tam gor, na drugi strani, v nekem drugem svetu, čudno, kako se mi zdi, da jo vidim čisto

«I conti tornano e se anche il sangue macchia i libri mastri, non cancella le cifre né lo zero finale, l'equivalenza dell'attivo e del passivo.» Se c'è uno che può dirlo sono io, che ho passato tanti anni in galera in questa stessa città che avevo fondato, con le sue case la sua chiesa e anche la sua galera, tanti anni prima, quando in questo immenso estuario del Derwent, che non si capisce dove finisce il fiume e inizia il mare, in questo grande vuoto in cui non c'è niente fino al niente dell'Antartide e del Polo Sud, c'erano solo cigni neri e balene che non avevano mai sentito una fiocina piantarsi nel loro dorso a far zampillare il sangue alto come l'acqua soffiata dalle narici. La prima balena l'ho arpionata io, Jorgen Jorgensen, re d'Islanda e forzato, costruttore di città e di galere, della mia galera, Romolo che finisce schiavo a Roma. Ma tutti questi mulinelli di vento che disperdono la polvere dei morti e dei vivi non hanno molta importanza. Decisivo è che alle Sue domande pleonastiche, dottor Ulcigrai, io possa rispondere nettamente per quel che riguarda l'essenziale, perché so chi sono, chi ero, chi siamo.

\* \* \*

Comunque quelle interrogative retoriche - dev'esser stato il reverendo Blunt a dirmi che si chiamano così - mi piacciono, perché insegnano che alle domande non c'è mai risposta, a meno che uno non ce l'abbia già in testa e se la dia da solo, come fa spesso Lei mettendomela in bocca, ma allora è inutile star lì a chiedere. Eppure forse no, fa bene sentirsi rispondere quello che si sa già; è solo la propria voce che si sente, come quando lassù sulla coffa si grida nel vento. Il grido si perde nel mare, quello che hai gridato lo hai sentito solo tu, ma non sei ben sicuro che sia la tua voce, forse il refo lo ha portato quella di un altro, urlata in cima a un'altra nave sparita oltre l'orizzonte, come ne ho visto sparire tante negli anni che ho passato sugli oceani; la nave fila veloce e si lascia indietro le voci salite dal ponte e dalla stiva, uccelli che volteggiano a poppa e poi restano indietro perduti. Per un po' le distingui ancora, le voci, poi è uno stridio indistinto, il vento ti sbatte in faccia e le ali degli uccelli ti stridono dentro le orecchie, voci urla parole, tutta una ciurma selvaggia e flagellata nella tua testa.

Sia di chi sia, una voce è comunque una consolazione dopo ore e ore che sei solo nella buia fetida cella o lassù sulla coffa, fra i marosi che si lanciano in alto, sordi e schiumosi colpi di cannone contro le muraglie di nuvole. Si ha un bel gridare, da soli o in tanti - no, non si è mai soli, c'è sempre qualcuno che mi sta addosso - ma non c'è mai nessuno che ti risponda quando chiedi qualcosa di cui hai bisogno. Tutti zitti, come sir George che tace quando riceve le mie suppliche di inoltrare a Londra la mia petizione di ta grazia, dopo tanti anni di colonia penale quaggiù.

\* \* \*

E da ieri che piove, una pioggia incessante che percuote le foglie degli eucalpti e le felci, lucide e brillanti nell'aria scura di umidità,

blizu, kot z barkovljanskega nabrežja, potem pa izgine, se utrne ... Tistega dne, pred enim stoletjem, morda dvema, ko smo pluli z *Lady Nelson* od ustja Derwenta River navzgor, je bilo na nebu veliko črnih labodov, cele jate labodov, in vsake toliko sem kakšnega počil. Njihovo meso je imelo trpek okus, po divjem; kakšen grizljaj sem vrgel tudi vklenjenim kaznjencem, ki smo jih šli iskat in so medtem žvečili svoj prepečenec. Bregove Derwenta River so prekrivali šopi premočene in svetleče se trave; slapovi in brzice bele vode so kot sneg poskakovaje padali v reko in dvigali prah, ki se je v soncu svetil; strohnela debla so se zapletala v tok in ustvarjala zavoje rjave vode, kak kenguru je izginil v grmovju. Tam, kjer je sedaj Hobart Town, je bil nekoč bujno gomazeč pragozd, svetloba je prodirala in izginjala kot ptice med sprepletenimi vejami, gobe in lišaji so se oklepali orjaških tisočletnih dreves.

Izkricali smo se v zalivu, pri Risdon Cove, kjer smo izkricali še kaznjence; in tako se je rodil Hobart Town. Jasno se spominjam tistega dne, bilo je 9. septembra leta 1803. Pogledal sem tudi v svojo avtobiografijo in zadovoljen sem, da avtor datum točno navaja; to je dokaz njegove natančnosti in zanesljivosti. Hobart Town, prva civilna, vojaška in kazenska kolonija na Van Diemenovi zemlji. Predvsem kazenska kolonija. Vsa mesta se rodijo v krvi; nobeno naključje, da je že takoj po tem prišlo do pokola pri Risdon Creeku; morda se je med pobitimi domorodci znašel tudi kdo izmed tistih, ki so že prvi dan goli stopili na krov *Lady Nelson*, da bi v zameno za svojo sulico pri nas dobili pečenega laboda.

To rečem kar tako, nihče ni potem preverjal, kaj se je sploh tam zgodilo; tudi naš častiti Knopwood je zatisnil eno oko. Glede teh stvari, glede pokolov, ljudje radi zatisnejo eno oko. Tudi Nelson, potem ko je ure bombardiral moj Kopenhagen, in so potopili v ožini blokirano dansko brodovje. Razdejano in požgano mesto je tedaj dvignilo belo zastavo in sam angleški komandant, admiral Parker, je dal znak, naj prenehajo z ognjem. Nelson pa približa daljnogled prevezanemu očesu, gleda klanje z napačnim, pokritim očesom, vidi samo črnino, nobene bele zastave, *I'm damned if I see it*, krogle še naprej padajo na ljudi, ki se niti več ne branijo, potem pa se začnejo ceremonije predaje, prihodi admiralov in visokih častnikov v uniformah, predajanje in velikodušno vračanje orožja; očesna preveza je priročna, pomaga, da zatisnemo eno oko in ne vidimo pokola.

Klanje tu spodaj, klanje tam zgoraj, severni in južni sij, oba napovedujeta isto krvavo sonce; medtem pa ljudje opevajo nov dan, ki bo napočil, le škoda za tiste, ki ne bodo videli novega dne. Sonce prihodnosti ...

*Prevedla Veronika Brecej*

un'invalicabile muraglia d'acqua, e tutto è dall'altra parte, i volti le voci e gli anni... anche l'Istria, lassù, è dall'altra parte, in un altro mondo, è strano come da qui mi sembri di vederla così bene, vicina, come quando la si guarda dalla riviera di Barcola, ma poi sparisce, dissolta... C'erano tanti cigni neri, quel giorno che abbiamo risalito con la *Lady Nelson* l'estuario del Derwent River, un secolo fa, forse due, stormi di cigni neri nel cielo, e ogni tanto ne abbattevo uno. La carne aveva un sapore acre, selvatico, ne tiravo qualche boccone ai forzati in catene, che eravamo venuti a scaricare e masticavano le loro gallette. I banchi del Derwent River erano coperti di ciuffi d'erba fradicia e splendente, cascate e cateratte di acqua bianca come la neve precipitavano a balzi nel fiume in un pulviscolo che scintillava nel sole, tronchi marci s'impigliavano nella corrente che formava anse di acqua bruna, qualche canguro spariva nella boscaglia. Là dove c'è adesso Hobart Town c'era la foresta col suo brulicante disordine, la luce s'infilava e spariva come gli uccelli nell'intrico dei rami, funghi e licheni si abbarbicavano a giganteschi alberi millenari.

E là, in quella baia, a Risdon Cove, che siamo sbarcati, che abbiamo sbarcato i forzati; è così che è nata Hobart Town. Ricordo perfettamente il giorno, 9 settembre 1803. Sono andato a controllare la mia autobiografia e mi fa piacere che questa data sia riportata con esattezza, dimostra lo scrupolo e la precisione dell'autore. Hobart Town, prima colonia civile, militare e penale della Terra di Van Diemen. Soprattutto penale. Ogni città nasce dal sangue; non per niente poco dopo c'è stato il massacro di Risdon Creek, magari fra quegli indigeni massacrati ci sarà stato anche qualcuno che quel primo giorno era salito nudo sulla *Lady Nelson* a scambiare con noi la sua lancia per un cigno arrosto.

Dico così per dire, perché poi nessuno si è interessato a come erano andate veramente le cose; anche il nostro reverendo Knopwood ha chiuso un occhio. Su queste cose, dico sui massacri, tutti chiudono sempre un occhio. Lo ha chiuso anche Nelson, quando ha continuato a bombardare per ore e ore la mia Copenaghen dopo che la flotta danese, bloccata nello stretto, era stata affondata; la città sconquassata e in fiamme aveva alzato bandiera bianca e lo stesso ammiraglio Parker, il comandante inglese, aveva lanciato il segnale di cessare il fuoco. Ma Nelson accosta il cannocchiale all'occhio bendato, guarda la strage con l'occhio sbagliato, chiuso, vede solo nero, nessuna bandiera bianca, I'm damned if I see it, le palle continuano a cadere su gente che non si difende più, poi seguono tutte le cerimonie della resa, ammiragli e dignitari in alta uniforme, spade consegnate e magnanimamente restituite, la benda è comoda, aiuta a chiudere un occhio sul mattatoio.

Macelli quaggiù e lassù, l'aurora boreale e quella australe annunciano un identico sole di sangue e tutti a magnificare il giorno che sorge, tanto peggio per quelli per cui non sorgerà più. Il sole dell'avvenire...

# Blindly

(Excerpt)

[...] - but where are those shouts coming from, what an uproar, I can't hear a thing anymore, whose ear is this, deafened, stunned, out of order, it must have been a wallop and if someone packed it, someone certainly caught it, me or somebody else.

There, it's over, the roaring is subsiding. That too was a rhetorical question; it's *my* ear, this one here, seeing that you, Doctor Ulcigrai, are bending over the other one, the left one, when you ask me "So then your real name is supposedly Jorgen and you say you wrote this", showing me that old tattered book that I found in that bookshop on Salamanca Place in Hobart Town. At least you don't raise your hand to me, on the contrary, you're very kind, you don't take offence even when I call you Cogoi, and you don't keep on asking me the same questions over and over again. If I don't answer, you let it go, but the fact remains that you asked me and it's pointless because you already know the truth, or think you know it, which is the same thing, and in any case you already know my answer, when I answer you – otherwise you suggest it to me, you put the words in my mouth.

An unwavering, firm response, essentially; at times, I admit, a bit confused as to the details. But what can you expect with all this coming and going, with so many things that pile up, years and countries and oceans and prisons and faces and events and thoughts and more prisons, and slashed evening skies gushing blood, and injuries and escapes and defeats... Life, so many lives, can't be held together. On top of it all, when you're worn out from relentless interrogations, you have even more trouble putting things in order, many times you don't recognize your own voice and your own heart. Why, every so often, do you make me repeat your questions, playing that tape backwards and forwards? Maybe it's to impress them on me more, I understand, it's true that I sometimes get confused, but that way I get even more confused, hearing your words spoken by my voice. In any case, the more you're questioned the less able you're to respond – you start contradicting yourself, they say, then they drive you even further into a corner, by hook or by crook, depending on their skill.

I don't exactly know what contradicting yourself means, but you can certainly fall into it, that's for sure. And then you disappear, soap shavings sucked up by eddies of water in a drain – here in the southern hemisphere the water in the bathtub whirls around the hole counterclockwise, for us up there though it's the reverse, clockwise. It's a physical law, I read, they call it the Coriolis effect – the marvelous symmetries of Nature, a quadrille in which one couple advances and the other retreats, both bow when it is their turn and the dance never misses a beat. One person dies, another is born, a line of infantry on a hill is mowed down by

a barrage of artillery fire, other troops and flags gain the crest of the hill shortly afterwards, and a barrage mows them down in turn. "So then it all evens out..." Yes, give and take, victory and defeat, the penal swimming-hole of Goli Otok and ocean bathing later on those same magnificent beaches of the Adriatic island, Communism that freed us from the Lager and put us in a Gulag where we held out in the name of Comrade Stalin, who meanwhile put our other comrades in the Gulags.

"Accounts even out, and although blood stains the ledgers, it doesn't erase the figures or the final zero, what the assets and liabilities add up to." If anyone can say that, it's me, having spent so many years in jail in this same city that I had founded years earlier, with its houses, its church and even its jail, at a time when there were only black swans and whales in this immense estuary of Derwent, where you can't tell where the river ends and where the sea begins, in this great void in which there is nothing until the nothingness of Antarctica and the South Pole – whales that had never felt a harpoon plant itself in their backs, causing the blood to spurt high in the air like water spouting from their blowholes. The first whale was harpooned by me, Jorgen Jorgensen, King of Iceland and a convict, forced to build cities and jails, even my own jail, Romulus who ends up a slave in Rome. But all these whirlwinds that scatter the dust of the dead and of the living are of little importance. What is critical, Dr. Ulcigrai, is that I can answer your pleonastic questions accurately as far as the essentials go, because I know who I am, who I was, who we are.

\* \* \*

Still, I like those rhetorical questions – it must have been Reverend Blunt who told me that's what they're called - because they teach you that questions never have an answer, unless you already have one in mind and state it yourself, as you often do, putting words in my mouth, but then it's pointless to bother asking. Though perhaps not, it's good to hear someone answer what you already know; it's only your own voice you're hearing, like when you're shouting in the wind up there on the ship's mast. The shout is lost at sea, you're the only one who heard what you shouted, but you're not too sure it's your voice, maybe a gust of wind brought you someone else's, shouted from the top of another vessel that has vanished over the horizon, like the many I saw vanish in the years I spent at sea; the ship plows swiftly ahead, leaving behind voices rising from the deck and from the hold, birds that circle above the stern and are then left behind, lost. For a while you can still make them out, those voices, then it becomes an indistinct shrieking, the wind smacks you in the face and the wings of birds flap in your ears, voices, shouts, words, all one unruly, whipped up swarm in your head.

Whoever it belongs to, a voice is nonetheless a solace after hours and hours of being alone in a dark, fetid cell or up there on the mast, amid heavy seas that surge up, impervious, cannonades of spray against walls of cloud. There's quite a bit of shouting, alone or in a crowd – no, you're



never alone, someone's always on your back – but there's never anyone to answer when you ask for something you need. They all keep quiet then, like Sir George who remains silent when he receives my entreaties to forward my Petition for Pardon to London, after so many years in the penal colony down here.

\* \* \*

It's been raining since yesterday, an incessant rain that hammers the eucalyptus leaves and the ferns, shiny and bright in the murky, humid air, an insurmountable wall of water, and everything is on the other side, the faces, the voices, the years... Istria too, up there, is on the other side, in another world, it's strange how from here I seem to see it so clearly, so near, like when you look at it from the coast of Barcola, but then it vanishes, dissolves... There were scores of black swans, that day we sailed up the estuary of the Derwent River on the *Lady Nelson*, a century ago, maybe two, flocks of black swans in the sky, and occasionally I would shoot one down. The meat had a pungent, gamy taste, I threw a few scraps to the convicts in chains, whom we had come to drop off and who were chewing their hardtack. The banks of the Derwent River were covered with clumps of drenched, shiny grass, waterfalls and cataracts white as snow plunged into the river from great heights, their fine particles glinting in the sunlight, rotted logs got trapped in coves of brownish water formed by the meandering current, a kangaroo ran off into the bush. A forest brimming with confusion stood where Hobart Town now stands, the light filtered in and disappeared like birds in the tangle of branches, fungi and lichens clung to giant trees a thousand years old.

It was there in that bay, at Risdon Cove, that we landed, that we put ashore the convicts sentenced to forced-labor; that's how Hobart Town was born. I remember the day perfectly, September 9, 1803. I went to check my autobiography and I'm glad to see that this date is reported accurately, it shows the author's diligence and meticulousness. Hobart Town, the first civilian, military and penal colony of Van Diemen's Land. Above all penal. Every city is founded on blood; it's not surprising that the Risdon Creek massacre occurred a short time later, perhaps the aboriginal who climbed naked on the *Lady Nelson* that first day to trade us his spear for a roasted swan may have been among those massacred.

I'm just saying that, since afterwards no one bothered to find out how things really went; even our Reverend Knopwood turned a blind eye. Everyone always turns a blind eye to these things, massacres I mean. Nelson did too, when he continued to bombard my Copenhagen for hours and hours after the Danish fleet, trapped in the strait, had been sunk; the city, battered and in flames, had raised the white flag and Admiral Parker himself, the British commander, had sent a cease-fire signal. But Nelson brings the spyglass to his blindfolded eye, observes the carnage with the wrong eye, the blind one, and sees only the black patch, no white flag, *I'm damned if I see it*, the shells continue to fall on people who no longer defend them-

selves, then come the surrender ceremonies, admirals and dignitaries in full dress, swords handed over and magnanimously returned, a blindfold is convenient, it helps you close an eye to the slaughter.

Butchery down here and up there, the aurora borealis and the aurora australis herald the same bloody sun and everyone exalts the rising day, so much the worse for those for whom it no longer rises. The sun of the future...

*Translated by Anne Milano Appel*

# Donava

(Odlomek)

## Med drugimi Dunajčani

Dunaj je tudi kraj pokopališč, ki so tako veličastna in zaupna kakor portreti Franca Jožefa. Zentralfriedhof, Glavno pokopališče, je parada *grandes manoeuvres*, postavljenih na prizorišče, da bi se pretvarjale, kako lahko zaustavijo zmago slavje časa. Grobnice pomembnih Dunajčanov – predel, namenjen slovitim osebam, ki se začne levo od glavnega vhoda, vrata št. 2 – so prva vrsta straže, ki kljubuje minljivosti, vendar se v nasprotju z Napoleonovo pri Waterlooju, ki se je brez oklevanja postavila v karé, bojuje v skladu s prožno, prilagodljivo taktiko, videti je, kakor da se hoče potuhniti, nakazuje prevare, obide smrt, posmehuje se in zavlačuje, da bi zbegala metodičen zamah s koso. Ob petih zjutraj je ta četa nagrobnih plošč, doprskih kipov in spomenikov še vedno skoraj nevidna, skrita v megleni, deževni noči v temačni, brezbarvni stvarnosti, sem in tja razsvetljeni z nagrobnimi svetilkami. Gospod Baumgartner se ne loči od svoje puške – puške, ki jo ima že trideset let, mi je povedal trenutek pred tem – in nanjo položi svojo roko z ljubečo in spokojno domačnostjo dolgega sobivanja, tako kakor glasbenik izkusi užitek ob tem, ko začuti pod roko svojo violino, ki jo ima rad ne le zaradi njenih zmožnosti, temveč tudi zaradi oblike, zaobljenosti, površine in barve lesa.

Prvič sem na pokopališču zraven nekoga, ki ne polaga cvetja, vihti lopate ali deli molitvenikov, temveč ravna s puško in z naboji. Toda danes je za kakšno uro ali dve, preden se bo zdanilo, Glavno pokopališče na Dunaju goščava, džungla, gozd Poslednjega Mohikanca, stepa Turgenjeva, kraljestvo Diane ali svetega Huberta, kraj, na katerem se ne pokopava in se ne blagoslavlja, marveč se postavlja v zasedo, strelja se, ubija starodavne sorodnike, za katere noben obred ne predvideva *Requiema* ali *Kaddisha*. Danes zjutraj se na Glavnem pokopališču lovi, pa čeprav gospod Baumgartner noče niti slišati te besede in govori o nujno potrebnem in pooblaščenem zmanjšanju števila primerkov, škodljivih zaradi njihovega prevelikega števila in iz drugih razlogov. Je eden od treh lovcev, ki jih je dunajska občina pooblastila, da vzdržujejo pravo ravnovesje med živimi, ki nezakonito naseljujejo to prestolnico pokojnih («mesto drugih Dunajčanov», kakor mu pravijo Avstrijci). Da potemtakem preprečujejo preveč živih in jih nemudoma spremenijo v mrtve, če se izkaže, da se imajo predobro na tem svetu in se razmnožujejo. Smrt je neškodljiva, obzirna in zaupna, nikomur ni v nadlego in nikogar ne prizadene. Življenje je tisto, ki vznemirja, povzroča hrup, moti, je nasilno in mora biti zato pod nadzorom, da ne bi postalo preživo. Zajci, na primer, gojijo veliko strast – uničevalno in grešno, kakor so vse strasti – do mačeh, ki jih na grobove posadijo žalujoči sorodniki. Glodajo jih, ruvajo iz zemlje, trgajo jim liste, ne zadovoljijo se s tem, da si potešijo lakoto, temveč izvajajo nad njimi prave pokole in jih

# Danubio

(Un brano)

## Fra gli altri viennesi

Vienna é anche una città di cimiteri, maestosi e confidenziali come i ritratti di Francesco Giuseppe. Il *Zentralfriedhof*, il Camposanto Centrale, è una parata delle grandi manovre messe in scena per fingere di arginare il trionfo del tempo. Le tombe dei grandi viennesi - il settore dedicato alle personalità illustri, che inizia a sinistra dell'ingresso principale, la porta n. 2 - sono la prima linea di una Guardia che fa fronte alla fugacità, ma a differenza di quella napoleonica a Waterloo, che fa quadrato senza esitare, questa Guardia combatte secondo una tattica elastica, sembra voler defilarsi, accenna finte, aggira la morte, scherza e mena il can per l'aia, per confondere il metodico abbattersi della falce. Alle cinque del mattino questa schiera di lapidi, busti e monumenti e ancora quasi invisibile, nascosta nella notte nuvolosa e piovigginosa, in una realtà opaca e senza colore, punteggiata qua e là dalle lampade votive. Il signor Baumgartner si tiene vicino il fucile - un fucile che ha da trent'anni, mi ha detto pochi minuti prima - e gli posa la mano sopra, con l'affettuosa e tranquilla familiarità di una lunga convivenza, come un suonatore prova piacere a sentire sulla mano il contatto del suo violino, che ama non solo per le sue prestazioni ma anche per la sua forma, la sua curvatura, la superficie e il colore del suo legno.

È la prima volta che, in un cimitero, mi trovo accanto a qualcuno che non maneggi fiori, pale o libri di preghiera, bensì fucili e cartucce. Ma oggi, per qualche ora, prima che venga chiaro, il Cimitero Centrale di Vienna è una foresta, una giungla, il bosco di Calza di Cuoio, la steppa di Turgenjev, il dominio di Diana o di Sant'Uberto, il luogo in cui non si seppellisce e non si benedice, ma ci si apposta, si spara, si uccidono antichi parenti per i quali nessun rito prevede un *Requiem* o un *Kaddisch*. Stamattina, al Cimitero Centrale, si caccia, anche se il signor Baumgartner non vuol sentire questa parola e parla di necessario e autorizzato abbattimento di capi, nocivi per il loro soprannumero o per altre ragioni. Lui è uno dei tre cacciatori incaricati dal Comune di Vienna di mantenere il giusto equilibrio fra i vivi che abitano abusivamente questa metropoli di defunti (questa «città degli altri viennesi», come dicono gli austriaci) e dunque di impedire che ci siano troppi vivi, di trasformarli subito in morti se mostrano di stare troppo bene in questo mondo e di prosperare. La morte è innocua, riguardosa e discreta, non dà fastidio e non fa male a nessuno; è la vita che disturba, fa chiasso, guasta, aggredisce e va dunque tenuta a freno, perchè non sia troppo viva. Le lepri, per esempio, hanno una vera passione, rovinosa e colpevole come tutte le passioni, per le viole del pensiero deposte sulle tombe dai pietosi familiari; le rosicchiano, le svellono, le strappano, non si accontentano di sfamarsi ma ne fanno strage

razmetavajo naokrog, kakor kune v kokošnjaku so. In res so po častni grobnici, v kateri počivajo predsedniki Republike, raztreseni šopi izkoreninjenih in objedenih mačeh.

Ali si ta drobna nespoštljivost zasluži dovoljenje za ubijanje? Kakorkoli že, dovoljenje je zelo omejeno in nadzirano. Cevi šibrovke gospoda Baumgartnerja grozita zgolj fazanom (moškega spola), zajcem in kuncem, pa še tem le znotraj zelo natančno predpisanih omejitev. Avstrija je bila in je, kakor pravijo v mojih krajih, urejena dežela in lovska dovolilnica je podvržena strogim nadzorom, kršitelje doletijo hude kazni in ni tistih nedeljskih lovcev, ki – pijani od otročjega veselja spričo svoje moči ubijanja – streljajo na divjad in ljudi in bi si veliko bolj od zajcev, požrešnih na mačeh, zaslužili poseg gospoda Baumgartnerja.

On – zraven mene je, preži v travi in njegova očetovska, krepka postava se začenja kazati iz mraka – ni obseden z lovom, ne predaja se bedastemu užitku ubijanja in zaustavljanja vsakršnega življenja, ki se giblje, ne zateka se k skrpučanim filozofemom o totemski zvezi med ubitimi in ubijalci, ne kaže nikakršnega banalnega vznemirjenja, temveč dobrodušno spokojnost kakega vrtnarja. Ima mirno roko in počne to, kar mora početi, Avstrija je urejena dežela, toda nemara mu ni preveč žal, ko se ne po svoji krivdi vrne domov praznih rok.

Na začetku najbrž ni bil navdušen nad tem, da bi se mu motal med nogami, saj ponavadi nihče ne sme biti navzoč, in pri vhodu je moral nočnemu čuvaju pojasniti, da sem profesor, kar je tukaj zelo cenjen naziv, da lahko izjemoma vstopim, ker se je zame zavzel urad dunajskega župana. Ob tem vlažnem svitu, ki pobledi temne oblake, ne preživljam velike lovske pustolovščine, temveč morda vrhunec svoje slave in slovesa, saj bi moje knjige o habsburški Srednji Evropi, po zaslugi katerih mi je dunajska občinska uprava dovolila ob tej uri čepeti v travi na Glavnem pokopališču, le stežka lahko imele večji vpliv na stvarnost in na prestopanje njenih omejitev in prepovedi. Mogoče sem ob tej zori doživel svoj dan – kakor izjavi kralj Lear.

Med grobovi, ki počasi postajajo bolj razločni, se pomikava proti robu pokopališča. Na grobu Castellija, vedrega in zelo plodovitega avtorja ljudskih komedij, je napis društva za zaščito živali, iz rahlih meglic se prikaže preprost in visok križ, na katerem en sam stavek jedrnato povzame življenje Petra Altenberga, ki je bilo ena sama tokata in fuga: »Ljubil je in videl.« Gladka, preprosta kocka je nagrobni spomenik Adolfa Loosa, Schönbergov, genialnega stvaritelja bolj vznemirljive geometrije, je tudi kocka, a ukrivljena.

Gospod Baumgartner opreza naokrog, prisluškuje zvokom, s pogledom pregleduje krošnje, ki so v tem mraku še brezoblične. Lahko strelja, kamor hoče, tudi med križi in še vedno svežimi venci, toda pazi, da ne zgreši, saj je za ta predel pokopališča, velik približno tretjino vsega – druga dva sta v pristojnosti dveh sodelavcev – sam odgovoren in mora odgovarjati za svoje krogle in za kak morebitni zgrešeni strel, ki bi razbil nagrobno svetilko ali oprasnil angela, zamišljeno bedočega nad grobom. Sorodniki, ki bi čez nekaj ur, ob odprtju pokopališča, našli fotografijo svojega dragega

e spreco, come le faine in un pollaio. Sul sepolcro d'onore, in cui riposano i presidenti della Repubblica; sono infatti sparpagliati ciuffi di viole del pensiero, sradicati e mangiucchiati.

La modesta irriverenza vale la licenza di uccidere? Questa licenza, del resto, è molto ristretta e sorvegliata. Le due canne del fucile del signor Baumgartner minacciano solo fagiani maschi, lepri e conigli selvatici e anche questi entro regole ben precise. L'Austria, come si dice dalle mie parti, era ed è un paese ordinato, la licenza di caccia è soggetta a controlli severi, le infrazioni sono punite duramente e non esistono quei cacciatori della domenica che impallinano, ebbri di un'infantile potenza di uccidere, la selvaggina e la gente e meriterebbero, ben più delle lepri divoratrici di viole, l'intervento del signor Baumgartner.

Quest'ultimo, che accanto a me, appostato fra l'erba, comincia a emergere dal buio con la sua corporatura paterna e massiccia, non è un maniaco della caccia, non rivela lo stupido piacere di uccidere e di fermare la vita che si muove, non si abbandona ai raffazzonati filosofemi sulla comunione totemica fra uccisi e uccisori, non mostra alcuna banale eccitazione ma una bonaria tranquillità da giardiniere. Ha una buona mira e fa ciò che deve fare, l'Austria è un paese ordinato, ma forse non gli spiace troppo quando, non per colpa sua, torna a casa a mani vuote.

All'inizio non deve esser stato entusiasta all'idea di avermi fra i piedi, visto che nessuno di solito può essere presente, e all'ingresso del cimitero ha spiegato al custode notturno che ero un professore, titolo qui onorato, che potevo entrare, in via eccezionale, per interessamento dell'ufficio del borgomastro di Vienna. In quest'alba umida, che comincia a sbiadire le cupe nuvole, sto vivendo non una grande avventura di caccia ma forse l'apice della mia gloria e della mia fama, perché i miei libri sulla Mitteleuropa absburgica, in virtù dei quali il municipio di Vienna mi ha concesso la speciale autorizzazione di stare accovacciato a quest'ora fra l'erba nel Cimitero Centrale, difficilmente potranno esercitare un peso maggiore sulla realtà e forzare i suoi limiti e divieti. Può darsi che, in quest'alba, io abbia avuto il mio giorno, come dice re Lear.

Ci spostiamo verso il margine del cimitero, passando fra le tombe, che si fanno lentamente più distinte. Sul sepolcro di Castelli, il gaio e fecondissimo autore di commedie popolari, c'è una scritta a cura della lega per la protezione degli animali, dalla nebbia leggera spunta una semplice e alta croce sulla quale una frase dice laconicamente la vita di Peter Altenberg, tutta una toccata e fuga: «Amò e vide». Un cubo, nudo ed essenziale, è il monumento funebre di Loos, mentre quello di Schönberg, genio di una geometria più inquietante, è anch'esso un cubo, ma storto.

Il signor Baumgartner si guarda intorno, tende l'orecchio ai rumori, fruga con lo sguardo il fogliame incerto nel crepuscolo. Può sparare dove vuole, anche fra le croci e le ghirlande ancora fresche, ma sta attento a non sbagliare, perché quel settore del camposanto, circa un terzo - gli altri sono di competenza dei suoi due colleghi - è affidato alla sua responsabilità ed è lui che deve rispondere delle sue pallottole e di qualche eventuale tiro sbagliato che spappolasse un lumino perpetuo o sfregiasse

pokojnika, razcefrano kakor sombrero v kakem vesternu, ali nagrobno ploščo, okrvavljeno od krvi divjega kunca, ki bi bil ustreljen v napačnem trenutku, bi vedeli, na koga nasloviti svoje ogorčene ugovore. »To se ne sme zgoditi, lahko pa se,« večkrat vedro ponovi.

Sva na robu zadnje vrste grobov in preživa na vzpetini, od koder je dober razgled. Narejena je iz odkopane zemlje, korenik, trave in gnilega listja, nagrabljenega s stezic in tja odvrženega. Zemljišče tistega predela je posebno primerno za hiter razkroj trupel, in to so v devetnajstem stoletju dobro vedeli tako oblasti kakor tudi lastniki parcel, ki so se med načrtovanjem izgradnje pokopališča prepirali in dvigovali ceno glede na večjo ali manjšo razkrojevalno sposobnost zemlje. To so prignali tako daleč, da so si celo izmenjevali žaljive pamflete, kakršnega je leta 1869 občinski svetnik doktor Mtlacher naslovil na barona Laskyja. Predel, kjer sva, je pust, je obsežna travnata ravan, ki se razprostira med robovi gozda in zidom, ki obdaja glavni urad dunajskega tramvajskega podjetja. Na bližnjem nagrobniku je pod imenom družine Pabst napis *auf Wiedersehen*, na svidenje. Ta travnik, čeprav prostran, je otoček narave, obdan z družbo, s simetrijo stezic in pokopališko industrijo na eni strani, na drugi pa z občinskim prevoznim podjetjem, toda ta prostorček je kakor tajga ali savana, ki ju tudi obdaja civilizacija, v njiju pa vlada pradavni zakon živalskega sveta, vohljanje, plazenje, iskanje hrane, parjenje, postavljanje zased in izogibanje zasedam, zakon, ki velja tudi na gredici na vrtu ob hiši ali v cvetličnem lončku z eno samo rastlino.

Brezbarvna trava nenadoma zazeleni, v krošnjah dreves se prebujata prvo frfotanje in ščebet, velike črne vrane selivke, ki so priletele iz Rusije, poletavajo, na vzhodu se dviguje bled limonin olupek in nezamenljiv vonj jutra botruje tudi v tej predmestni goščavi telesnemu občutku sreče, užitku telesa, ki se dobro počuti, slasti poslušanja, tipanja, opazovanja. Nedorakljivim fazankam, ki že nekaj časa skakljajo po travniku, se od daleč previdno približuje fazan, moj sosed v travi pa nameri. Ker sem navajen na svojem Snežniku razdirati pasti lovcev, se počutim malce izdajalca, kot nekdo, ki je prestopil na drugo stran. Mar se gre tudi vsakdo izmed nas srečati s svojo usodo tako jalovo, čeprav prekaljeno previden? Negiben se sprašujem, kateri skupek možnih groženj, jedrskih ali mikrobioloških, zvezdnih vojn, recidivnih virusov, prehitevanj v ovinek meri na moje življenje, kakor meri puška mojega soseda na fazana, ki ga je izbrala neskončna veriga kombinacij.

Med tem absurdnim in krivdo vzbujajočim čakanjem obžalujem, da so leta 1874 zaradi visoke cene (en milijon forintov) opustili načrte za izvedbo pokopov s pomočjo pnevmatske pošte, ki sta jih naredila Felbinger in Hudetz. V skladu z njimi bi pokojne iz mesta po kilometrskih cevah s pomočjo stisnjenega zraka izstrelili naravnost v njim namenjen grob. Lahko si predstavljam, da bi v ozračju odzvanjalo od rezkih udarcev nenehno prihajajočih trupel, in fazan bi vzletel.

Toda splet naključij in medsebojnih zvez, ki stiska veselje v pesti, je sklenil, da bo preložil usmrtevek fazana s tem, da je dobil drugačno preobleko, vendar tudi to prav po avstrijsko birokratsko: trenutek pred tem, ko

un angelo pensosamente vegliante su un sepolcro; fra un paio d' ore, all' apertura del cimitero, i parenti che trovassero la fotografia del caro estinto sforacchiata come il sombrero in un film *western*, o la lapide insanguinata da un coniglio selvatico raggiunto nel momento sbagliato, saprebbero a chi rivolgere le loro indignate proteste. «Non deve, ma può succedere», ripete egli più volte serenamente.

Siamo sull' orlo dell' ultima fila di tombe, appostati su un rialzo da cui si gode una buona vista, formato da terra rivoltata, detriti, erba e foglie fradicio raccolto nei viali e accumulato in quel punto. Il terreno, in quella zona, è particolarmente adatto alla rapida putrefazione dei cadaveri, come ben sapevano nel secolo scorso le autorità e i proprietari degli appezzamenti che, durante i progetti per la costruzione del cimitero, litigavano e tiravano sul prezzo in relazione alla maggiore o minore funzionalità dell'impudire, sino a scambiarsi ingiuriosi pamphlets come quello fra il consigliere comunale dottor Mitlacher e il barone Lasky, nel 1869. La zona in cui ci troviamo è squallida, una vasta prateria fra i bordi del bosco e un muro che cinge l'officina centrale dell'azienda tranviaria di Vienna. A pochi passi, una pietra tombale dice, sotto il nome della famiglia Pabst, *aufWiedersehen*, arrivederci. Quella prateria, pur estesa, è una piccola natura circondata dalla società, dalla simmetria dei viali e dall'industria funeraria da una parte e dall'azienda dei trasporti comunali dall'altra, ma questo minimo spazio è come la *taigà* o la savana, anch'esse accerchiate dalla civiltà ma scandite dalla legge antica del mondo animale, fiutare, strisciare, cercare il cibo, accoppiarsi, tendere e fuggire l'agguato, quella legge che vige anche nell'aiola del giardino di casa o nel vaso che contiene una pianta.

L'erba incolore diviene ad un tratto verde, fra gli alberi si desta il primo frullo e il primo richiamo, le grosse cornacchie migratorie giunte dalla Russia cominciano a volare, a oriente sale una scialba buccia di limone e l'inconfondibile odore del matti no mette addosso, anche in quella boscaglia da suburbio, una felicità fisica, il piacere di un corpo a proprio agio, il gusto di sentire, tastare, guardare. Alle intoccabili femmine che da qualche minuto saltellano sul prato si aggiunge, ancora lontano, un fagiano maschio che s'avvicina cauto, mentre il mio vicino prende la mira. Abituato, sul mio Monte Nevoso, a scompigliare le trappole dei cacciatori, mi sento vagamente traditore, uno che è passato dall'altra parte. È così che anche ognuno di noi va incontro al fato, con inutile anche se agguerrita cautela? Mi chiedo, immobile, quale costellazione di minacce possibili, atomiche o microbiologiche, guerre stellari, virus recidivi, sorpassi in curva tenga sotto tiro la mia vita, come il fucile del mio vicino tiene il fagiano, scelto da un'infinita catena di combinazioni.

In quell'attesa assurda e colpevole, rimpingo che, nel 1874, l'alto costo (un milione di fiorini) abbia fatto fallire il progetto di funerali per posta pneumatica elaborato da Felbinger e Hudetz, il quale prevedeva che i defunti della città venissero scagliati direttamente, attraverso una chilometrica condotta azionata ad aria compressa, nella tomba loro



bi se tarča toliko približala, da bi bil strel zanesljiv, se je na robu gozda v bližini *auf Wiedersehen* družine Pabst pojavil sopihajoč tovornjaček, naložen s trohnečim listjem in z drugimi odpadki, ki so jih pokopališki vrtnarji, skoraj tako zgodnji kot lovci, pograbili s stezic in pripeljali iztovoriti poleg naju. Fazan ves prestrašen izgine, gospod Baumgartner si privoščiči glasen »Prekletost!«, vendar prisrčno pozdravi te nebodijihotreba.

Odpraviva se proti izhodu, saj bodo kmalu začeli prihajati običajni obiskovalci. Ne nazadnje je bila to zora, ubrana z dunajskim duhom, ki se roga smrti, se ji prilizuje pa tudi norčuje iz nje, ji dvori, in ker se je ne more dokončno znebiti, kakor se lahko znebiš že nadležne ljubice ali ljubimca, ji skuša vsaj malce kljubovati. Pri vhodu se srečava s sodelavcem gospoda Baumgartnerja. Zajec, ki ga je ustrelil, je podoba hibe veselja in izvirnega greha življenja, ki se hrani s smrtjo. Čez nekaj ur bo zajec ljubka trofeja, še pozneje okusna jed, zdaj pa je še groza in bežanje, trpljenje bitja, ki ni prosilo, da bi se rodilo v ta svet, in si ni zaslužilo smrti, skrivnost življenja, tisto nenavadno, kar je bilo še pred kratkim v zajcu, zdaj pa ni več, in za kar niti znanstveniki dobro ne vedo, kaj naj bi bilo, saj se morajo, da bi to opredelili, zatekati k takšnim tautologijam, kakršna je »skupek pojavov, ki kljubuje smrti«. Ne vem natanko, zakaj, saj nimam – tako kakor vsi stranski igralci v predstavi sveta – osrednje vloge in zato nobene natančno določene in neposredne odgovornosti, toda ob zajcu nesporno izkusim občutek sramu.

*Prevedel Vasja Bratina*

destinata. Laria, immagino, rintonerebbe dei secchi colpi di queste salme continuamente in arrivo e il fagiano prenderebbe il volo.

Ma il gioco delle coincidenze e delle concatenazioni che stringe l'universo ha deciso di differire l'esecuzione del fagiano assumendo un'altra veste, anch'essa però austriacamente burocratica; poco prima che il bersaglio diventi definitivamente sicuro, sull'orlo del bosco, presso l'«arrivederci» della famiglia Pabst, compare un ansimante camioncino carico di foglie marce e di altri rifiuti, che i giardinieri del camposanto - mattinieri quasi quanto i cacciatori - hanno raccolto nei viali e vengono a scaricare accanto a noi. Il fagiano, spaventato, si dilegua; il signor Baumgartner si concede un sonoro «merda!», ma saluta cordialmente i guastafeste.

Ci avviamo verso l'uscita, fra poco arriveranno i visitatori consueti. In fondo, è stata un'alba coerente con lo spirito viennese che beffeggia la morte, la adula ma anche la irride, la corteggia e, non potendo piantarla definitivamente in asso come si fa con un partner sentimentale venuto a noia, cerca almeno di farle qualche torto. Sulla porta incontriamo il collega del signor Baumgartner. La lepre che egli ha preso è l'immagine del deficit dell'universo e del peccato originale della vita che si nutre di morte. Fra qualche ora quella lepre sarà un grazioso trofeo e più tardi ancora un piatto succulento, ma adesso è ancora fuga e terrore, la sofferenza della creatura che non ha chiesto di vivere né meritato di morire, il mistero della vita, questa cosa strana che c'era nella lepre sino a poco fa e che ora non c'è più e che neanche gli scienziati sanno bene cosa sia, se per definirla ricorrono a tautologie come «l'insieme dei fenomeni che si oppongono alla morte». Non so bene di che cosa, perché - come tutte le piccole comparse nello spettacolo del mondo non ho ruoli centrali né quindi responsabilità dirette e precise, ma certo, dinanzi a quella lepre, provo un sentimento di vergogna.

# Danube

(Excerpt)

## Among the Other Viennese

Vienna is also a city of cemeteries, as majestic and friendly as the portraits of Francis Joseph. The *Zentralfriedhof*, the Central Cemetery, is a major march-past in the *grandes manoeuvres* which attempt to postpone the triumph of time. The graves of the great Viennese - the sector devoted to illustrious personages, which starts to the left of the main entrance, Gate No. 2 - comprise the front rank of a Guard which makes a stand against transience but, unlike Napoleon's Guards at Waterloo, forming square without the least hesitation, this regiment fights according to elastic tactics, seems to wish to defilade, itself; it suggests feints, it outflanks death, it jests, it beats about the bush, with a view to frustrating the methodical swish of the scythe. At five in the morning this host of stones, busts and monuments is still almost invisible, opaque and colourless, as it lies hidden in the cloudy nighttime drizzle, though here and there a votive lamp punctuates the murk. Herr Baumgartner keeps his shotgun close beside him - a gun he has owned for thirty years, he told me a moment ago - and rests a hand on it with the quiet, affectionate familiarity of long cohabitation, as a musician finds pleasure in touching his violin, which he loves not only for its performance but for its shape, its curves, the texture and colour of its wood.

It is the first time I have ever been in a cemetery next to someone who is handling not flowers, shovels or prayer-books, but guns and cartridges. But today, for an hour or two, before daylight comes, the Central Cemetery in Vienna is a forest, a jungle, Leatherstocking's woods, Turgenev's steppes, the dominion of Diana or St Hubert, a place where one does not bless or bury, but lies in wait, fires, kills ancient relatives for whom no rite prescribes a *Requiem* or a *Kaddish*. This morning, in the Central Cemetery, the order of the day is shooting, even if Herr Baumgartner doesn't want to hear this word, and talks about a necessary, authorized reduction of the number of heads: they are harmful, it seems, because of their excessive profusion and for other reasons. He is one of three marksmen employed by the Viennese municipal authorities to maintain a correct balance among the living who unlawfully inhabit this metropolis of the dead (this "city of the *other* Viennese", as the Austrians put it), and prevent them from being too lively by transforming them on the instant, into corpses if they reveal themselves too healthy and prosperous in this world. Death is harmless, respectful and discreet; it causes no trouble and doesn't hurt anyone. It is life that is so troublesome, so noisy, so aggressively destructive, and must therefore be kept in check, lest it should get above itself. Hares, for example, have a downright passion - destructive and guilty

as are all passions - for the pansies laid on the tombs by pious relatives. They gnaw them, they uproot them, they rip them to shreds, they are not content with satisfying their hunger but they make a massacre of them, like martens in a hen-run. And indeed, the sepulchre in which the presidents of the Republic are laid to rest is littered with torn-up, tattered pansies.

Does this mild irreverence merit the licence to kill? Well anyway, this licence is very restricted and rigidly controlled. Herr Baumgartner's double-barrelled gun only threatens male pheasants, hares and wild rabbits, and even these according to well-established rules. Austria, as they say in my part of the world, both was and is an orderly country, and a gun-licence is subject to strict control. Infractions are severely punished, and there are none of those Sunday hunters who infest Italy, drunken with childish delight in their power to kill, blasting away indiscriminately at wildlife and humans: hunters: more deserving by half of the attentions of Herr Baumgartner than are the hares with a taste for pansies.

The man himself, squatting down beside me in the grass, is beginning to emerge from the darkness in all his massive, paternal bulk; he is not a trigger-happy maniac, he shows no sign of that stupid pleasure in killing and putting a stop to whatever life is seen to move; he does not indulge in threadbare sophisms about the totemistic communion between killer and victim; and indeed he reveals no kind of banal excitation, but rather the good-natured calm of a gardener. He is a good shot and does what he has to do, for Austria is an orderly country, but maybe he is not all that displeased when, through no fault of his own, he goes home empty-handed.

I imagine that, to start with, he was none too keen on the idea of having me under his feet, for no one as a rule is allowed to be present. At the entrance to the cemetery he explained to the night-watchman that I was a professor, a title much honoured here, and that I was allowed in as an exceptional case through the good offices of the department of the burgo-master of Vienna. In this damp dawn, which is already beginning to pale the gloomy clouds, I am experiencing what is not a great hunting adventure, but what may be the zenith of my fame and glory, because it is unlikely that my books on the Mitteleuropa of the Habsburgs, in virtue of which the municipality of Vienna have given me special permission to be squatting down at this hour of the morning on the grass in the Central Cemetery, will have any greater impact on reality than this, or any further farce its limits and prohibitions. It might well be that, in this dawn, I have had my day, as King Lear puts it.

We move towards the edge of the cemetery, passing between the tombs, which are slowly becoming more distinct. The tomb of Castelli, the light-hearted, prolific author of popular comedies, bears an inscription by courtesy of the league for the protection of animals, while from the faint mist rises a tall, simple cross with a phrase that sums up the life of Peter Altenberg, all a toccata and fugue: "He loved and saw." A bare, basic cube is the funeral monument of Adolf Loos, while that of Schönberg, creator of a more disquieting geometry, is also a cube, but a distorted one.

Herr Baumgartner peers around him, lends an ear to every rustle, scrutinizes the foliage, amorphous in the half light. He may fire where he likes, even among the crosses and the still-fresh wreaths, but he is careful to make no mistakes, because that sector of the cemetery - roughly a third, the other parts falling to the competence of his two colleagues - is entirely his responsibility, and he has to answer for where his lead ends up, for any chance bosh-shot that shatters a votive lamp or grazes an angel thoughtfully watching over a tomb. In a couple of hours' time the relatives who find the photograph of their dear departed as riddled as a sombrero in a western movie, or the stone stained with the blood of a rabbit hit at the wrong moment, would know to whom to address their outraged protests. "It shouldn't happen, but it might," he repeats several times, but placidly.

We are on the edge of the last row of graves, set on a slight rise which commands a good view. The bank itself is made of loose earth, debris, and rotten grass and leaves swept up along the avenues and amassed at this point. The soil in this area is particularly well suited to the rapid putrefaction of corpses, as was well known in the last century to the authorities and to the proprietors of plots. During the projection stage for the building of the cemetery the latter used to haggle and stick out for higher prices in relation to the greater or lesser putrefactive vigour of the soil, to the point of exchanging abusive pamphlets such as the one addressed in 1869 by the municipal councillor Dr Mitlacher to Baron Lasky. The area where we are now is unkempt, a large grassy expanse stretching between the wood, and a wall surrounding the central workshops of the Vienna tramway company. A few steps away is a tomb bearing the name of the Pabst family, and beneath it the inscription *auf Wiedersehen*. This meadow, extensive as it is, is a small slice of nature hemmed in by society, by the symmetry of the avenues and the funeral industry on one hand and the municipal transport company on the other; but even this minimal space is like the taiga or the savannah, which are also surrounded by civilization but measured by the ancient laws of the animal world, sniffing at scents, crawling, searching for food, coupling, setting and avoiding ambushes; the law, in fact, which rules even in a flower-bed in the garden or in a pot containing a single plant.

The colourless grass now swiftly turns to green, the first birdcall and the first flutterings are heard among the trees, the big crows migrating from Russia rise on the wing, while in the east there rises a pallid lemon-rind sun. Even in that suburban undergrowth the unmistakable smell of morning endows us with a physical sense of happiness, the pleasure of a body at ease in itself, a relish for hearing, touching, seeing things. The untouchable hen-birds which for some minutes have been sporting on the grass are now about to be joined by a cock-pheasant. Still some way off, he approaches cautiously while my neighbour takes aim. Accustomed as I am, on my own Mount Snežnik, to dismantling the traps laid by hunters, I have a vague sense of being a traitor, a man who has gone over to the other side. Is this the way in which each of us goes to meet his fate, with

useless even if practised caution? Standing motionless, I ask myself what constellations of possible threats, atomic or microbiological, star-wars, recurrent viruses or overtakings on bends have my life in their sights, as my neighbour's gun now has this pheasant, selected by an infinite concatenation of coincidences.

During this absurd, guilt-stricken wait, I regret the fact that in 1874 the high cost (a million florins) of the operation led to the failure of Felbinger and Hudetz's scheme for funerals by pneumatic post. According to this the dead would be shot off directly to their allotted tombs through miles of tubing activated by compressed air. And I imagine that the air of the cemetery would have rung with the sharp reports made by corpses in continuous arrival, and that this pheasant would have taken wing.

But the interplay of coincidences which holds the universe in its grip, taking on a different guise, though remaining perfectly Austrian and bureaucratic, has decided to grant the pheasant a stay of execution. Just before the target gets within absolutely safe range, at the edge of the wood, near the Pabsts' *auf Wiedersehen*, a lorry comes huffing and puffing along, laden with dead leaves and other debris which the cemetery gardeners - birds almost as early as the gamekeepers - have swept up along the pathways and are about to dump near us. The pheasant takes fright and vanishes, while Herr Baumgartner allows himself a sonorous "Damn!", but greets the spoilsports cordially.

We make for the exit, for the usual visitors will soon be starting to arrive. All in all it has been a dawn in keeping with the Viennese spirit which mocks at death, flatters it but also ridicules it, courts it but at the same time, not being able to leave it in the lurch once and for all, as in the case of a lover who has grown to weary us, at least tries to spite it a little. At the gate we meet one of Herr Baumgartner's colleagues. The hare he has shot is an image of the deficit of the universe and of the original sin of life which feeds on death. In a few hours that hare will be a pleasing trophy, and later still a succulent dish, but right now it is still terror and flight, the suffering of a creature that neither asked to live nor deserved to die, the mystery of life, this strange thing that was in the hare until a short while ago and now is not, the real essence of which is unknown even to the scientists, if in order to define it they must needs have recourse to such tautologies as "the complex of phenomena which oppose death". I don't know exactly why, since - like all those with walk-on parts in the spectacle of the world - I have no central role and therefore no direct, precise responsibilities, but that hare certainly leaves one with a sense of shame.

*Translated by Patric Creagh*

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Jana Beňová (1974) živi v Bratislavi na Slovaškem. Na umetniški akademiji je študirala gledališko dramaturgijo. Objavila je tri pesniške zbirke: *Svetloplachý* (1993), *Lonochod* (1997) in *Nehota* (1997); ljubezenski roman *Parker* (2001) v zbirki *Odpad* (Smeti) in zbirko kratkih zgodb *Dvanásť poviedok a Ján Med* (Dvanajst kratkih zgodb in Ján Med, 2003). Njeno najnovejše delo je roman *Plán odprevádzania (Café Hyena)* (Spremljevalni načrt (Café Hyena), 2008). Leta 1997 je prejela štipendijo fundacije Fundacao Calouste Gulbenkian in preživela tri mesece v Lizboni, prejela pa je tudi pisateljsko štipendijo Literaturhaus Niederösterreich v Kremsu (2006). Od leta 2002 dela kot poročevalka za dnevnik *SME* pod psevdonimom Jana Parkrová.

Jana Beňová (1974) lives in Bratislava in Slovakia. She studied Theatre Dramaturgy at the Academy Of Theatre and Music in Bratislava and has published three books of poetry: *Svetloplachý* (1993), *Lonochod* (1997) and *Nehota* (1997); a romance novel *Parker* (2001) in the *Odpad* (Garbage) collection and the short story collection *Dvanásť poviedok a Ján Med* (Twelve Short Stories and Ján Med, 2003). Her most recently published work is the novel *Plán odprevádzania (Café Hyena)* (Seeng People Off (Café Hyena), 2008). In 1997 she spent three months in Lisbon after receiving the Fundacao Calouste Gulbenkian grant, she also received the writers' grant from Literaturhaus Niederösterreich in Krems (2006). Since 2002 she has been working as a reporter for the daily *SME* under the pseudonym Jana Parkrová.

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# Jana Beňová





# Spremljevalni načrt (Café Hyena)

(Odlomek)

Kalisto Tanzi

**Elza:** Skupaj sva jedla grozdje in ga zalivala z roséjem. Naslednji dan sem v žepu zatipala vlažen grozdni pecelj. Izgledal je kot obrano drevesce.

Kalisto Tanzi je izginil iz mesta, v katerem je zavladata vročina. Toplota je žarela iz hiš in ulic naravnost v obraz, razgreto mesto se je ljudem odtisnilo na čelo kot pečat.

Ustavila sem se pred gledališčem, da sem lahko na plakatih prebrala Kalistovo ime in si tako potrdila, da obstaja tudi v resničnosti. Uživam ob izgovarjanju imena, ki ga je mučilo celo otroštvo in puberteto in ga je zares nehala motiti šele z mojim prihodom. Počasi hodim na drug konec mesta, mišice na nogah se lahkotno gibljejo v vročem zraku. Poldne je. Edino, kar se na tem planetu res premika, so potne kapljice. Stekajo po čelu in znova privrejo izpod las.

Kupit grem strup.

Ian je včeraj na stranišču videl podgano.

Deratizator ima pod trgovino klet z vinom. V podzemlju uhajava neznosni pripeki in popivava. Pripoveduje mi, kako so podgane inteligentne.

»Imajo pokuševalca, to je tisti, ki prvi poskusi hrano. Če pogine, se ostali vabe niti ne dotaknejo. Zato zdaj ponujamo pasti druge generacije. Podgana začne umirati šele štiri dni po zaužitju strupa. Umira zaradi posledic notranje krvavitve. Takšno smrt je že Seneka označil za nebolečo. Ostalim podganam se zdi, da je njihov kolega umrl naravne smrti. Če pa jih na tak način v kratkem času umre več, ocenijo to območje zaradi visoke umrljivosti za neugodno in se preselijo. Takšna sposobnost ocenjevanja bi prišla prav marsikateremu človeku ali celo narodu.«

Popolni gnusni svet. Posmiham se s kozarcem rdečega traminca. Deratizator govori zelo hitro. Njegov obraz je ves čas v gibanju. Kot da bi imel preveč mišic na obrazu. Kot da bi pod njegovo kožo ves čas mrgolelo krdelo glodavcev. Od enega ušesa k drugemu. Od brade do čela in nazaj. Čutim, kako se njegove nemirne noge zibljejo pod mizo, celotni trup pa pada pod težo v ritmu.

Ob tem pogledu postanem omotična. Vrtil se mi v glavi kot pri filmu s prehitrimi kadri. Deratizator se skloni k meni in se zaplete v moje lase.

»Tako lepi ste, miška,« se smeje. Tudi jaz se smejim. Čutim, da oddajam vonj po osamljenosti.

Pospremi me in mi da za na pot plastično vrečko, polno deratizacijskih sredstev. Namesto rož. Ponosno jo stiskam v rokah. Mogoče bo od zdaj zmeraj tako, pomislim. Če mi bodo hoteli moški dvoriti, mi bodo namesto rož dali vrečko z deratizacijskimi sredstvi druge generacije.

Potem ko sem odšla iz hladne kleti, mi je v obraz puhnil vroč zrak in svet brez Kalista Tanzija.

# Plán odprevádzania (Café Hyena)

(Úryvok)

Kalisto Tanzi

**Elza:** Jedli sme spolu hrozno a zapíjali ho ružovým vínom. Na druhý deň som nahmatala vo vrecku vlhkú hroznovú stopku. Vyzerala ako obratý stromček.

Kalisto Tanzi zmizol z mesta, ktoré zachvátila horúčava. Teplo sálalo z domov a ulíc rovno do tváre a rozpálené mesto sa ľuďom vtlačalo na čelo ako pečať.

Zastavila som sa pred divadelnou vitrínou, aby som si na plagátoch mohla prečítať Kalistovo meno a potvrdiť si, že existuje aj v skutočnosti. Mám pôžitok z vyslovovania mena, ktoré ho trápilo celé detstvo a pubertu a naozaj mu prestalo prekážať až s mojím príchodom. Pomaly kráčam na druhý koniec mesta, svaly na nohách sa mi zľahka chvejú v horúcom vzduchu. Je poludnie. Jediné, čo sa na tejto planéte skutočne pohybuje, sú kvapky potu. Stekajú ku koreňu nosa a opäť tryskajú pod vlasmi.

Idem kúpiť jed.

Ian včera videl v záchode potkana.

Deratizér má pod obchodom pivnicu s vínom. V podzemí unikáme neznesiteľnej páľave a popijame. Rozpráva mi, aké sú potkany inteligentné.

„Majú ochutnávača, ten prvý skúša potravu. Keď zdochne, ostatní sa nástrah ani nedotknú. Preto už ponúkame nástrahy druhej generácie. Potkan začne zomierať až po štyroch dňoch po skončení jedu. Zomiera na následky vnútorného krvácania. O takejto smrti už Seneca tvrdil, že je bezbolestná. Ostatné potkany majú dojem, že ich druh zomrel prirodzenou smrťou. Ale aj tak – ak ich takto zomrie viac v krátkom čase, vyhodnotia lokalitu z hľadiska vysokej mortality ako nepriaznivé a sťahujú sa. Táto schopnosť hodnotenia úplne chýba niektorým ľuďom aj celým národom.“

Dokonalý hnusný svet. Usmievam sa nad tramínom červeným. Deratizér rozpráva veľmi rýchlo. Tvár má neustále v pohybe. Akoby v nej mal priveľa svalov. Akoby mu pod kožou neustále pobehoval krdeľ hlodavcov. Od jedného ucha k druhému. Od brady k čelu a späť. Cítim, ako mu pod stolom kmitajú nepokojné nohy a celý trup sa mu kláti v tanci.

Pri tom pohľade ma chytá závrat. Hlava sa mi točí ako pri prirýchlo postrihanom filme. Deratizér sa ku mne nakloní a zamotá sa mi do vlasov.

„Ste taká pekná myška,“ usmieva sa. Usmievam sa tiež. Cítim, že páchnem osamelosťou.

Výprevádza ma a na cestu mi dáva igelitovú tašku plnú deratizačných prostriedkov. Miesto kvetov. Zvieram ju pyšne v ruke. Možno to už bude takto vždy, pomyslím si. Ak mi muži budú chcieť kurizovať, darujú mi miesto kvetov tašku s deratizačnými návnadami druhej generácie.

Kalista sem prvič videla na otvoritvi neke razstave. Veliko se je pilo in v tistem večeru je nastalo kar nekaj novih parov. Kot pravi Ian – tam, kjer so moški, ženske in alkohol ... – in daje tako osnovne koordinate za lokalizacijo seksa.

Pogledala sem ga v modre oči in prvič zahrepenela po človeku z barvnimi očmi. Ian ima skoraj črne. Barve so bile zame vedno odločilne. Njihova kombinacija na Kalistovem obrazu me je privlačila. Skupaj sva sedela do jutra in se pogovarjala. Kot vedno na začetku: človek lahko znova pripoveduje o svojem življenju in vse je vredno pozornosti. Pripoveduje in se počasi vrti okrog sebe – pleše in skupaj z njim ves prostor – nežen bleščeč prah se useda na njegove lase.

Pred Kalistom Tanzijem je moja pripoved oživila. Moje lastno življenje je plavalo pred najinimi očmi kot steklena gora. Z vsako besedo sem ga spet ustvarila. Rekreatirala. Rekreatirala sem se ob Kalistu Tanziju. O tem bi se gotovo dala napisati knjiga. To bi bil muzikal: *Oh, dobra vila, ko bi le vedela, kaj sem preživljala ...*

Ampak zdaj je že poldne. In jaz sedim v kavarni. Oblečena v rjavo obleko: stara ženska. Sedim nasproti Iana. Star par. Tišino med nama prekinjajo samo časopisni naslovi. Od časa do časa Ian kakšnega navrže čez mizo. In bere naprej. Časopis je padajoči most. Včasih ga odloži in me pogleda. Najine oči se ne srečajo. Vino ima okus po suhih slivah in čokoladi. Napis coca-cola na prtu začne nepričakovano siliti v moj obraz. Prekrijem ga s krožničkom. Všeč mi je, da vse ostaja na svojem mestu.

Doma sedim za mizo in pišem pismo. Ian stoji za mojim hrbtom. – Oh, kakšno dolgo pismo moraš pisati, revica. Ne bi bilo lažje poslati sms? Na primer: Kje si?

Kalisto Tanzi nima mobitela niti mejla. Ta način komunikacije se mu zdi izsiljevanje. (Stari angleški izraz *black mail* je označeval terjanje neupravičenih davkov. Neobstojećih dolgov, nedanih obljub.)

Skorajda nemogoče je priti v njegovo življenje, zlesti skozi okna na zaslonu ali se utelesiti naravnost pred njegovimi očmi. Elza se ni mogla zanesti na elektronsko zapeljevanje. Čeprav je bila nadarjena zanj: za blebetanje in čenčanje. Spretna čvekulja.

Nove možnosti pa so prinesle tudi močnejšo konkurenco. Tako lahko se je bilo s kom zaplesti, navezati stik. Vse je bilo v prid zapeljevanju. Predvsem čas, ki ga prihraniš s hitro komunikacijo.

Nikomur ni bilo treba stati na straži ponoči na temni ulici, se voziti s kočijo, z avtom, v nevihti. Popravljati kolesa, menjavati vrelo vodo v avtomobilskem hladilniku, hoditi gor in dol okrog hiš in kavarn, nemočno krožiti po ulicah do lokacij, kjer je bilo upanje, da se srečaš z ljubljeno osebo. Ugotavljati možnost njene navzočnosti. Spremljati, prežati, se skrivati, ostajati leta negiben na enem mestu ali tavati brez prestanka.

Mejli in sms sporočila so bili okna in ogledala, ki jih je svet hitro sprejel. Z njihovo pomočjo se je dalo zlesti skozi okna, na streho, stranišče, potopiti glavo, vzleteti. Kamorkoli obesiti svojo privlačno podobo – instalacijo.

**Elza:** V zrak, na cesto. Da te predočim moji podobi.

Po tom, ako som vyšla z chladnej pivnice, do tváre ma udrel horúci vzduch a svet bez Kalista Tanziho.

Prvýkrát som Kalista videla na jednej vernisáži. Veľa sa tam pilo a v priebehu večera vzniklo zopár nových dvojíc. Ako hovorí Ian – tam, kde sú muži, ženy a alkohol... – a udáva tým základné súradnice na lokalizáciu sexu.

Pozerala som mu do modrých očí a po prvýkrát zatúžila po bytosti s farebnými očami. Ian ich má takmer čierne. Farby boli pre mňa vždy rozhodujúce. Ich kombinácia v Kalistovej tvári ma priťahovala. Sedeli sme spolu do rána a rozprávali sa. Ako vždy na začiatku: človek môže rozprávať svoj život znovu a všetko stojí za pozornosť. Rozpráva a pomaly sa točí sám okolo seba – tancuje a s ním celá miestnosť – jemný trblietavý prášok mu sadá do vlasov.

Pred Kalistom Tanzim moje rozprávanie ožilo. Môj vlastný život plával pred našimi očami ako sklený vrch. Každým slovom som ho opäť tvorila. Rekreatovala. Rekreatovala som sa pri Kalistovi Tanzim. Určite by sa o tom dala napísať kniha. To by bol muzikál: *Ach, víločka, keby si ty vedela, čo som ja všetko prežila...*

Ale to už je obed. A ja sedím v kaviarni. Oblečená v hnedých šatách: stará žena. Sedím oproti Ianovi. Stará dvojica. Ticho medzi nami prerušujú len novinové titulky. Ian mi ich občas prízvukuje ponad stôl. A číta ďalej. Noviny sú padací most. Občas ich sklopí a pozrie sa mi do tváre. Oči sa nám nestretnú. Víno chutí ako sušené slivky a čokoláda. Nápis coca cola na obruse začína nebadane stúpať v ústrety mojej tvári. Zatažím ho tanierikom. Mám rada, keď všetko zostáva na svojom mieste.

Doma sedím za stolom a píšem list Kalistovi. Ian mi stojí za chrbtom – Ach, taký dlhý list musíš písať, chůďatko? Nestačila by esemeska? Napríklad: Kde si?

Kalisto Tanzi nemá mobil ani mailovú adresu. Považuje tento spôsob komunikácie za výpalníctvo. (Starý anglický výraz black mail označoval vymáhanie neopodstatnených daní. Neexistujúcich dlhov, nedaných sľubov.)

Neexistuje jednoduchý spôsob, ako mu zasiahnuť do života, vliezť cez okná na obrazovke alebo displeji, zhmotniť sa mu rovno pred očami. Elza sa nemohla spoľahnúť na elektronické zvädzanie. Hoci mala naň talent – na reči a rečičky. Bola zručný Ketzalquatzel.

Ale nové možnosti jej priniesli aj silnejšiu konkurenciu. Bolo také ľahké s niekým sa zapliesť, skontaktovať. Zvädzaniu všetko nahrávalo. Najmä čas ušetrený rýchlou komunikáciou.

Nik už nemusel hliadkovať v noci na tmavej ulici, cestovať v koči, v aute, v búrke. Opravovať kolesá, vymieňať vriacu vodu v chladiči, pochodovať okolo domov a kaviarní, krúžiť bezmocne v uliciach miest, kde je nádej na stretnutie s milovanou osobou. Mapovať možnosť jej výskytu. Sledovať, strichnúť, schovávať sa, zotrvať nehybne cele roky na jednom mieste či putovať bez prestávky.

Elzino jutro se je začelo s pisanjem. Vklpila je glasbo in pol ure strastno nadaljevala s knjigo. Med delom je pogosto vstajala od mize, potna, ker spiije pri pisanju na litre čaja, posluša glasno glasbo in piše. Piše, kot bi tekla po hribu navzdol. Poti se in mrazi jo. Celo življenje se njena telesna temperatura giblje med 37,1 in 37,6 stopinje, to pa povzroča lažje tresenje in slabe živce. Poleg tega vročina prispeva k ustvarjanju erotične strasti in omogoča človeku, da je doma in ga nihče ne moti. Zdravniki se večinoma bojijo poslati pacienta z vročino v vrtinec delovnih dni.

Ko konča s pisanjem, je lačna, žejna in popolnoma izčrpana. Elza nima sposobnosti trajne ustvarjalnosti – sitzleder. Njen delovni dan traja tri ure. Takrat ko Elza vstane od delovne mize, moški vstane iz postelje. Skupaj sedita na divanu v kuhinji in razmišljata, kaj bosta jedla in kaj bo šla Elza kupit. Ponavadi kosita obložene kruhke in pijeta gin s sokom grenivke. Elza je brala, da je to, kako se počutiš, v osemdesetih procentih odvisno od tvojega želodca. Od tistega, kar je v njem. Obloženi kruhki in gin so hrana, ki je povezana z zabavami. Zato so jo cela leta življenja spominjala na eno veliko zabavo. Dan za dnem. Tako kot med vsakim spontano doživetim dobrim žurom – ob mraku ali ob zori – ko je svetloba dolgo neizrazita in pokrajina spominja na plastično osvetljeno sceno – neke zadaj na jeziku na mehkem nebu se je pojavil decenten trpek okus – okus konca zabave. Imela je sadni buket, sobno temperaturo, polno telo in dolg rep. Ponoči jo je vedno pogosteje budil: okus žalostnega konca. Kot takrat za novo leto, par sekund po polnoči stopi Ian za trenutek ven z drugo žensko in na Elzine prsi, glavo in ramena poklekne poraščen trol: nočna mora, vročino lula naravnost na njene ploske prsi.

Na poti domov se Elza proti jutru razjoče kar sredi ulice:

»Jaz nočem hodit. Nočem še naprej hodit gor in dol. Celo življenje samo gor in dol!«

»Pa saj ni treba it peš. Bom poklical taksi,« jo utiša Ian.

»Ti tega ne razumeš. Vseeno je. Peš ali pa v taksiju. Ves čas samo hodimo, gor in dol.«

*Prevedla Špela Sevšek Šramel*

Maily a rýchle sms správy boli oknami a zrkadlami, ktoré na svete rýchlo pribúdali. Dalo sa cez ne vliezť do izby, na strechu, toaletu, ponoriť pod vodu, vzlietnuť. Hocikam zavesiť vlastný lákavý obraz – inštaláciu.

**Elza:** Do vzduchu, do cesty. Vystavovať Ťa môjmu obrazu.

Elzino ráno sa začínalo písaním. Pustila si hudbu a polhodinu náruživô pokračovala v knihe. Často počas práce vstávala zo stoličky, spotená, lebo pri písaní pije litre čaju a púšťa si hudbu príliš hlasno do uší a píše, píše. Píše, akoby utekala z kopca. Potí sa a mrazí ju. Celý život sa jej telesná teplota pohybuje medzi 37.1 a 37.6 stupňov a to nahráva ľahkej triaške a slabým nervom. Okrem toho horúčka prospieva tvorbe a erotickej vášni a umožňuje človeku nerušený pobyt doma. Lekári sa zväčša boja poslať pacienta s teplotou do víru pracovných dní.

Keď dopíše, je hladná, smädná a pozornosť má celkom vyčerpanú. Elze chýba schopnosť vytrvalej tvorby – sitzfleisch. Jej pracovný deň trvá tri hodiny. Vtedy, keď Elza vstáva od pracovného stola, muž vstáva z postele. Sedia spolu na kanapke v kuchyni a rozmýšľajú, čo budú jesť a čo pôjde Elza nakúpiť. Zväčša obedujú obložené chlebičky a pijú gin s grepovou šťavou. Elza čítala, že na tom, ako sa človek cíti, sa z osemdesiatich percent podieľa jeho žalúdok. To v ňom. Obložené chlebičky a gin sú stravou súvisiacou s oslavami. Preto jej celé roky v živote pripadali ako jedna nepretržitá a poctivá oslava. Deň po dni. A ako počas každej nefalšovane prežívanej – neodfláknutej oslavy – podvečer alebo nadržanom – keď je svetlo dlho neurčité a krajina pripomína plasticky nasvietenú scénu – niekde na koreni jazyka a na podnebí sa objavovala decentná trpkastá chuť – chuť konca oslavy. Mala ovocný buket, izbovú teplotu, plné telo a dlhý chvost. V noci ju prebúdza čoraz častejšie: chuť smutného konca. Ako keď na Silvestra pár sekúnd po polnoci odíde na chvíľu Ian von s inou ženou a Elze si na hrud', hlavu a ramená čupne zarastený trollo: nočná mora a ciká jej horúčavu rovno na ploché prsia.

Po ceste domov sa Elza nadržanom rozplače rovno uprostred ulice:

„Ja nechcem pochodovať. Nechcem už ďalej pochodovať. Celý život len pochodujem!“

„Tak nemusíme ísť pešo. Zavolám taxík,“ tíši ju Ian.

„Nerozumieš tomu. To je jedno. Peši alebo v taxíku. Človek aj tak furt len pochoduje.“

## Seeing People Off (Café Hyena)

*(Excerpt)*

Kalisto Tanzi

**Elza:** Together we ate grapes and washed them down with pink wine. The next day I discovered a damp grape stalk in my pocket. It looked like an upside-down tree.

Kalisto Tanzi disappeared from the town, which was gripped by a heat wave. The heat radiating from the houses and streets burned people's faces and the scorching town seared its mark on their foreheads.

I stopped in front of the theatre's display case so I could read Kalisto's name on the posters and reassure myself that he actually did exist. I derive pleasure from uttering the name that had tormented him throughout childhood and puberty and only really stopped annoying him after my arrival. I slowly walk to the other end of the town, the muscles in my legs tingling slightly in the hot air. It is noon. Drops of perspiration are the only thing really moving on this planet. They run down to the bridge of my nose and spurt out again from under my hair.

I'm going to buy poison.

Yesterday Ian saw a rat in the lavatory.

The rat-catcher has a wine cellar under his shop. We go underground to escape the unbearable heat and sip wine. He tells me how intelligent rats are.

"They have a taster, who is first to try the food. If he dies, the others won't even touch the bait. That's why we use second generation baits. The rat begins to die only four days after consuming the poison. It dies as a result of internal bleeding. Even Seneca claimed that such a death is painless. The rest of the rats get the impression that their comrade has died a natural death. But even so - if several of them die in a short time, they decide the locality is unfavourable on account of the high mortality rate and they move elsewhere. Some people and even whole nations completely lack this ability to assess a situation."

A perfect, repulsive world. I smile over red Tramin. The rat-catcher speaks very fast. His face is in constant motion. As if he had too many muscles in it. As if a pack of rodents were running around under his skin. From one ear to the other. From his chin to his forehead and back. I can feel his restless legs jiggling under the table and his whole trunk sways in a dance.

The sight of this makes me feel dizzy. My head spins like when watching a film that flashes too quickly from one scene to the next. The rat-catcher bends forward and gets tangled in my hair.

"You're such a pretty little mouse," he smiles. I smile back. I sense I stink of loneliness.

He sees me out and on the way he gives me a plastic bag full of rat poison. Instead of flowers. I clutch it proudly. Perhaps it will always be like this, I think to myself. If men want to court me, instead of flowers, they will give me a bag of second generation rat bait.

After emerging from the cool cellar, hot air and a world without Kalisto Tanzi hits me in the face.

I first saw Kalisto at a private preview. A lot was drunk there and a few new couples were formed in the course of the evening. As Ian says - where there are men, women and alcohol... - and he thus gives the basic coordinates for the localisation of sex.

I looked into his blue eyes and for the first time I longed for a being with coloured eyes. Ian's are almost black. Colours have always been a decisive factor for me. Their combination in Kalisto's face attracted me. We sat together and talked until morning. As always in the beginning: you can once more give an account of your life and everything is interesting. You talk, slowly revolving around yourself - the whole room dances with you - fine sparkling powder settles in your hair.

In Kalisto Tanzi's presence my account seemed more exciting. My own life swam before our eyes like a glass mountain. With every word I created it anew. Recreated. I recreated in Kalisto Tanzi's presence. No doubt I could write a book about it. It would be a musical: Ah, little fairy, if you only knew all the things I've been through...

But it's lunchtime now. I am sitting in a coffee bar. Dressed in brown: an old woman. I am sitting opposite Ian. An old couple. The silence between us is broken only by the newspaper headlines. From time to time Ian reads one out to me over the table. Then he reads on. The newspaper is a drawbridge. He occasionally lets it down and looks at my face. Our eyes do not meet. The wine tastes like prunes and chocolate. The coca cola inscription on the tablecloth begins to rise imperceptibly to meet my face. I hold it down with a plate. I like things to stay in their place.

Back home I sit at the table and write a letter to Kalisto. Ian stands behind me - Ah, do you have to write such a long letter, you poor thing? Wouldn't an SMS do? For example: Where are you?

Kalisto Tanzi doesn't have a mobile or an e-mail address. He considers this form of communication threatening. (The old English term black-mail referred to extorting unjustified taxes. Non-existent debts, promises not given.)

There did not exist a simple way of interfering in his life, climbing through the window of a monitor or display, appearing in person before his very eyes. Elza could not rely on electronic seduction. Although she had a talent for it - for chatting and sweet nothings. She had the gift of the gab.

But the new possibilities also brought her stronger competition. It was so easy to get involved with someone, to contact them. Everything played in favour of seduction. In particular the time saved by rapid communication.



Nowadays no one had to patrol a dark street at night, travel in a coach, a car, a storm. Repair a wheel, change the water boiling in a radiator, walk around homes and coffee bars or helplessly roam streets where there was a hope of meeting the loved one. Map the possibility of their being there. Follow, track, hide, stay in the same place for year after year or travel endlessly.

Emails and quick SMS messages were windows and mirrors rapidly multiplying in the world. Through them it was possible to climb into a room, onto a roof, into a lavatory, plunge under water and fly into the air. Hang up your own alluring picture - install yourself - anywhere.

**Elza:** In the air, in someone's path. Expose you to my picture.

Elza's morning begins with writing. She puts on some music and for half an hour eagerly gets on with her book. While working she often gets up from her chair damp with perspiration, because when writing she drinks litres of tea and has the music on too loud and she writes and writes. She writes as if she were running downhill. She sweats and that chills her. All her life her body temperature has ranged between 37.1 and 37.6 degrees, which tends to produce slight shivering fits and weak nerves. Apart from the fact that a fever is good for creative work and erotic passion, it enables one to stay at home undisturbed. Doctors are usually afraid to send a patient with a temperature into the whirlwind of working days.

When she has finished writing, she is hungry, thirsty and her concentration is completely exhausted. Elza lacks the ability to keep at creative work for a long time - *sitzfleisch*. Her working day lasts three hours. When Elza gets up from her desk, her husband gets out of bed. They sit side by side on the couch in the kitchen and think about what they will eat and what Elza will go to buy. They usually have open sandwiches for lunch and they drink gin with grapefruit juice. Elza has read that your stomach - what is in it - contributes eighty per cent to how you feel. Open sandwiches and gin are food associated with celebrations. That is why whole years in her life have seemed to her like a really good, endless celebration. Day after day. And, as during every celebration genuinely enjoyed and properly done - in the early evening or early morning, when the light has long been vague and the scenery looks like a lit-up stage setting, somewhere at the back of the tongue and on the roof of the mouth a discreet bitter taste would appear - the taste of the end of a celebration. It had a fruity bouquet, room temperature, full body and long tail. It woke her up in the night more and more often: that taste of a sad end. Like when at New Year, just a few seconds after midnight, Ian goes outside for a while with another woman and a hairy troll crouches on Elza's chest, head and shoulders: a nightmare, and it tinkles a wave of heat right onto her flat breasts.

On the way home in the early hours of the morning, Elza bursts into tears in the middle of the street:

“I don’t want to march. I don’t want to keep marching on any more. All my life I have done nothing but march on!”

“Then we needn’t walk. I’ll call a taxi,” Ian tries to calm her.

“You don’t understand. It’s all the same. On foot or by taxi. One way or another, all we do is just keep marching on.”

*Translated by Heather Trebatická*

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Ines Cergol, rojena leta 1959 v Kopru, članica DSP, je pesnica in prevajalka, objavlja pa tudi literarne kritike, eseje in strokovne razprave. Od leta 2007 je predsednica Združenja književnikov Primorske in pobudnica ter prva urednica biltena Združenja z naslovom *Beseda*. Dlje časa je delala kot lektorica in novinarka pri časopisu *Primorske novice* ter kot zunanja urednica in lektorica pri koprski založbi Lipa, že več kot dvajset let pa tako na Koprskem kot tudi širom po Sloveniji, v zamejstvu in na Hrvaškem organizira ter povezuje kulturna srečanja. Zaposlena je na Gimnaziji Koper kot učiteljica slovenščine. Izdala je tri pesniške zbirke: *Globoko zgoraj* (1991), *Vmes* (1998), *Svetlobnica* (2005) in dva knjižna pesniška prevoda iz hrvaščine (Antun Branko Šimić, Mile Pešorda). Je tudi soavtorica treh dvojezičnih (italijansko-slovenskih) zbornikov: *Tja in nazaj / Andata e ritorno* (2000), *Due mondi ... un sentiero / Dva svetova ... ena pot* (2002), *Cinque / Pet* (2003). Njene uglasbene pesmi so posnete na zgoščenci Mojce Maljevac z naslovom *Intima*.

Ines Cergol, born in 1959 in Koper, is a poet and a translator as well as a member of the Slovene Writers' Association. She has also published literary reviews, essays and treatises. The President of the Primorska Writers' Association since 2007, Ines Cergol was also the initiator and the first editor of the bulletin issued by the association. As a freelance editor and proofreader, she has worked for the Lipa publishing house in Koper, and has also been a proofreader as well as a journalist at the *Primorske novice* newspaper for quite some time. For more than twenty years she has organised and hosted cultural events in the Koper region, all over Slovenia, in Slovene communities abroad and in Croatia. Cergol works as a teacher of Slovene at the Koper Grammar School. She has published three poetry collections *Globoko zgoraj* (Deep Above, 1991), *Vmes* (Between, 1998), *Svetlobnica* (Lantern, 2005) and two poetry book translations from Croatian (Antun Branko Šimić, Mile Pešorda). Cergol also co-authored three bilingual (Italian-Slovene) almanacs: *Tja in nazaj / Andata e ritorno* (The Way There and Back / Andata e ritorno, 2000), *Due mondi ... un sentiero / Dva svetova ... ena pot* (Due mondi ... un sentiero / Two Worlds ... One Path, 2002), *Cinque / Pet* (Cinque / Five, 2003). Her poems have been set to music and appeared recorded on the CD by Mojca Maljevac entitled *Intima* (Intimacy).

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Ines Cergol



# Fulgura

ne kleši črk  
na robu neizgovorljivega  
na robu nespregledljivega

naj zarobijo temo v rodovnik skal  
naj triduum pascal  
bo uvertura nepredvidljivega

med trnjem nad prepadom morja na grobnicah teles

naj bo ples osuplost razčlenjene črke

## Fulgura

don't chisel the letters  
on the edge of the unspeakable  
on the edge of the unseeable

let them hem the darkness in the genealogy of rocks  
let triduum pascal  
be the overture of the unpredictable

among thorns above the precipice of the sea on the sepulchers of bodies

let dance be the perplexity of the dissected letter

## Fascinatio

ljubim  
to razkosanost  
te reminiscence  
ki se nikakor ne morejo zliti v celoto  
to razklanost v zevajoča brezna  
svetlobo-temo ki se amalgamno pretaka  
skozi zgolj slutljivo tusedanjost

skoznjo pronicam  
postajam meglenica lisica sledbeni pes

na trenutke otipam  
navidezno veslo  
da se prerodi občutek trdnosti  
da se voda v led ne spremeni

ljubim  
to razklanost vode skozi veslo ki od mokrote nabreka  
oživlja svoj les  
ta manko vode  
ki v odtekanju pronica  
v zamahe vesla  
v zamahe rok  
ki ritem budi v valovanje  
dopusti pot skožse  
v sanje  
v govorico  
pridobljeno z zamudo  
v kroge vase  
ki ne vedo zase ne za stanovitnost nenehnega skupzlitja

## Fascinatio

I love  
this disparting  
these faint memories  
that will never fuse into a whole  
this crack into gaping abyss  
light-darkness that amalgamates  
through hazy here-and-nowness

through which I trickle  
and transfer into galaxy fox sleuthhound

now and then I touch  
the imaginary oar  
to feel the firmness regenerating  
to hinder the water turning into ice

I love  
this crack in the water round the oar swollen from moist  
rejuvenating its wood  
this deficit of water  
that through the outflow seeps  
into oar swings  
into hand swings  
that rouses rhythm into surge  
brooks trails through itself  
into dreams  
into speech  
captured with delay  
into circular forms  
ignorant of themselves or the permanence of a continuous togetherflow



## Nascor

kateri jezik  
razvnema roži krilo  
drami usnulo umevanje ustnic  
razvezuje pogled  
v samodejnost trav v brstenje ognja

kateri nov jezik  
prerokuje drugost  
odkriva izgubljeni dom  
veriži telo v predčasnost  
v soglasnost menjav

## Abnegatio

Stiskava se med veje vrbe žalujke.  
V kamnite vlažne kleti polagava ciknjeno vino.  
Je že čas iti ali se z nakopičenim preriniti skozi šivankino uho?

So tudi ribe kdaj glasne, se v njih zrklih zrcali nebo?  
Je zmaga več v prežganih krilih?  
Se lakota skriva v sredici kruha?  
Je ljubezen odlitek napuha?  
Je pepel molk lačne notrine, ki nikdar ne mine?

Tiho se vračam v varno naročje predsvita,  
v iluzijo svetlobe,  
ko je dan še utopija brez končne podobe.

## Nascor

what language  
rouses the rose's dress  
awakens the sleeping discernment of lips  
unbinds the view  
into spontaneity of grasses into sprouting fire

what new language  
prophesies the otherness  
reveals the missing home  
chains the body into prematurity  
into unanimity of alternation

## Abnegatio

We are crowded under the branches of a willow tree.  
Into wet stone cellars we store the refermented wine.  
Is it already time to leave or squeeze through the eye of a needle with  
everything we piled up?

Are even fish sometimes noisy, is it the sky reflecting in their eyes?  
Is the triumph of moths in their singed wings?  
Is famine concealed within the bread?  
Is love a cast of vanity?  
Are ashes the silence of inner hunger that never ceases to exist?

Quietly, I return into a haven of moments before dawn,  
into the illusion of daylight,  
when the day is nothing but utopia without a final form.

## Metamorphoses

Pokriješ mi usta z rdečo cunjo toreadorja.  
Ogrneš me v belo tančico neveste.  
Prekriješ me s črno ruto naricalke.  
Prevedeš me v košuto, v blazno zenico,  
v negibno skrivno sonce na uzdi stvarnika,  
v slepo samico.

Zbesniš, ko mi misli letijo v lunine mene.  
Onemiš, ko grem ostra, sama, zapahnjena.

Drseča svila ovija brezoblični taleči se bron.  
Oči obvisijo na krajcih meseca.

Postajam devica, snežna kraljica, ženska s pretvezo.  
Neranljiva.

## Metamorphoses

You cover my mouth with the red cape of toreadors.  
You wrap me in the white gauze of brides.  
You cover me with the black kerchief of funeral dirges.  
You transpose me into a hind, into a frenzied pupil,  
into a motionless secret sun on the reins of the creator,  
into a blind female.

You are enraged when my thoughts drift toward the moon phases.  
You grow dumb when I pass – stinging, alone, bolted.

Slithering silk drapes the formlessly melting bronze.  
Eyes hanging from the pointed edges of the moon.

I turn into a virgin, snow queen, woman with pretence.  
Invulnerable.

## Pomladna saga

»Prevaranci so ponosni na svojo zvestobo, prevarantje in goljufi  
navdušeni nad umetnostjo svojih zvijač: tako mora biti,  
ko se presuka leto in vzpne nov začetek, sleherna pomlad  
je velikanska pozaba smrti in krvav porod.«  
(Milan Dekleva)

In ko zazveni fuga votlega okostnjaka fragmentarnih vzorcev,  
ko se na belino kosti lepijo palimpsetni obliži,  
se razpne brezno vere.

Trilčki citatnih besed niso navdihi.

Stihi ostajajo nedokončane partiture.

Invalidno hotenje se opoteka po škrlah opustele ulice.

Najdlje se ohranijo kosti,

a se na koncu sesedejo v prah pepelnične srede.

Ponavljajoče se faraonske sanje utrujajo.

Valovi med režami škur plimujejo.

Jožef ponavlja obrazec sedem plus sedem krav,

vpisan v beli prah kostne moke.

Tudi sedem krat sedemdeset ni neskončje svetov

nit (po)polnost enega samega romanja.

Petelini vsako jutro trikrat zapojejo,

okostnjak se ob vsaki zori milo razjoče,

a v nobenem jutru ne postane skala.

Sizif vedno znova obrača peščene ure v peščenih hišah,  
da bi podaljšal rok trajanja.

A čas je posmehljivo poželenje, ki se kopiči na peščenih vekah.

In peščene ure niso budilke, niso znanilke novega časa.

Skrivno življenje rojeva krik pretrgane popkovine.

Krvavo zares se rojeva pomlad.

Nikoli prezgodaj.

Nikoli prepozno.

Vedno pravi čas.

In sploh ni več pomembno, kdo je ljubeči, kdo ljubljeni

- iz semena klije klas.

## Springtime Saga

“The cheated are proud of their loyalty, the cheaters and tricksters are thrilled with the artistry of their tricks – this is how it must be at the turn of the year and at the rise of a new beginning; each spring carries within an immense oblivion of death and is born in blood”.

(Milan Dekleva)

And when the fugue of the hollow skeleton resonates in fragmentary patterns,  
when the palimpsest plasters stick on the whiteness of the bones,  
the crevasse of faith cracks open.  
Trills of cited words are no true inspiration.  
Verses remain unfinished compositions.  
The handicapped will stagger across the slates of a solitary street.  
Bones endure the longest,  
at the end collapsing into the dust of Ash Wednesday.  
Repetitious pharaoh dreams are wearying.  
The waves of rising tide flood between the shutter rifts.  
Joseph repeats the form of seven plus seven cows,  
written into the white bone-meal dust.  
Even seven times seventy is not yet the vastitude of worlds  
or perfection of one sole pilgrimage.

Roosters sing three times each morning,  
the skeleton weeps sadly at each dawn,  
but not one morning turns it into stone.

Sisyphus incessantly turns hourglasses into sand houses  
to prolong the expiry date.  
But time is just a sneering lust that heaps upon the lids of sand,  
and hourglasses no alarm clocks, no harbingers of a new time.

Mysterious life gives birth to the screech of a torn umbilical cord.  
Bloody indeed the birth of spring.  
Never too early.  
Never too late.  
Always on time.  
And it doesn't matter any more who loves, who is loved  
– the seed is beginning to ear.

*Translated by Ana Jasmina Oseban*

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Kalin Donkov, rojen leta 1941 v vasi Beglež v Bolgariji, je pesnik in prozaist. Zanima ga usoda današnjega človeka, njegovi upi, dvomi in osebne žrtve. Njegova lirika izpoveduje moralni perfekcionizem in zvestobo vrednotam človeškega srca. Bralci ga poznajo po naslednjih pesniških zbirkah: *Риза за ближния* (Srajca za bližnjega, 1977), *Неизбежен човек* (Neizogiben človek, 1982), *Очевидец на съдбата* (Priča usode, 1986), *Незабравя* (Nepozaba, 1986), *Животът е последен* (Življenje je zadnje, 1986), *Събуди ме вчера* (Zbudi me včeraj, 1999) in druge. V prozi raziskuje odnose in konflikte sodobne bolgarske družbe ter spremlja katarzo posameznika na prelomu dveh stoletij. K njegovim priljubljenim proznim delom spadajo *Частен случай* (Posebni primer, 1979), *Ранни мемоари* (Zgodnji spomini, 1980) in *Нерви и утехи* (Živci in utehe, 1999). Delal je na bolgarskem radiu in televiziji, pa tudi za mnoge časopise in revije. Prejel je več literarnih nagrad. Njegova dela, ki so bila prevedena v mnoge tuje jezike, so služila kot podlaga za filme, pesmi in gledališke igre. Živi in dela v Sofiji.

Kalin Donkov, born in 1941, in Beglezh, Bulgaria, is a poet and a prose writer. He is intrigued by the fate of modern man, his hopes, doubts and sacrifices. His lyric poetry professes ethical perfectionism and loyalty to the values of the human heart. He has won acclaim through the poetry collections *Риза за ближния* (The Shirt for the Fellow Man, 1977), *Неизбежен човек* (The Inevitable Man, 1982), *Очевидец на съдбата* (Witness of the Fate, 1986), *Незабравя* (Unforgettable, 1986), *Животът е последен* (Life Is Last, 1986), *Събуди ме вчера* (Wake Me Yesterday, 1999) and others. In his prose he scrutinizes relationships and conflicts in contemporary Bulgarian society, apart from analyzing the catharsis of an individual at the break of the century. Some of his most popular prose works are *Частен случай* (The Particular Case, 1979), *Ранни мемоари* (Early Memories, 1980), *Нерви и утехи* (Nerves and Consolations, 1999), and others. He has worked for the Bulgarian Radio and Television, as well as written for newspapers and magazines. He has received numerous literary awards and his works, which have inspired movies, songs and plays, have been translated into several languages. Donkov lives and works in Sofia.

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# Kalin Donkov

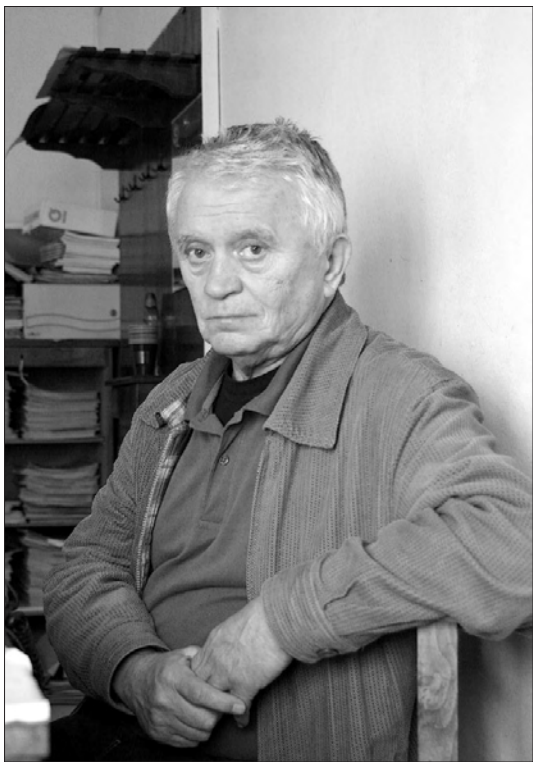


Foto © Krasimir Todorov



## V sredino

Budilka. Reaktiven dim.  
In taksiji.  
Zaman tratimo čas minljiv.  
Beži.

Zaman nas utesnjuje greh  
nenarejeni.  
Roke drže darove, ki so  
skromni.

Z rokami, spraskanimi  
od kovine,  
razdaj, kar nakopičil si.  
Preden mine.

Razdaj dosežke. In razdaj  
vso bedo.  
To je tvoj znak. Brez datuma.  
Brez kraja.

Ne čakaj razjasnenih dni.  
Zaman je.  
Nad nežnostjo prikloni se  
brez sape.

Imej rad zvezde, ulice,  
ideje.  
Ženo rad imej. In bodi  
poleg nje.

Ne, ti v poslednji ne goriš  
svetlobi.  
Od nežnosti se staramo.  
A kaj bi ...

## В средата

Будилник. Реактивен дим.  
Таксита.  
Напусто времето скъпим.  
Отлита.

Напусто ни гнети грехът  
несбъднат.  
Ръцете дарове държат  
оскъдни.

С ръце, издрани от метал  
и кремък,  
раздай каквото си събрал.  
Навреме.

Раздай сполуката. Раздай  
бедата.  
Това е твоят знак. Без край.  
Без дата.

Не чакай обяснени дни.  
Излишно е.  
Над нежността се наклони.  
Не дишай.

Обичай улици, звезди,  
идеи.  
Жена обичай. И бъди  
до нея.

Не, не в последни светлини  
гориш ти.  
От нежността стареем ний.  
Но нищо...

## Duša

To mesto neobrito  
brez žalosti nas je razsulo.  
Vse nežno, vse grešno  
je med nami krivo oglušelo.  
Samo ti si ostala,  
kot zvon, ki udarja  
v meni, odzvanja,  
o, duša.

V tem mestu brezdanjem  
tvoj klic je potihnil.  
Kako modro, kako podlo  
pamet vsakogar ohromi!  
Le zakaj pa še vedno  
(eh!)  
duša-zvon glasno  
do smrti pod vsakim udarom  
odzvanja ...

## Danes

Življenje narobe. Nežnosti bežne.  
Ljubezenske zdrahe. Izžvižgane ideje.  
In danes peljejo jesen v dom za ostarele.  
Dež odleplja tapete rumene in rdeče.

Letargija drgne hrbet ob vhodnih vratih.  
Sumljivi razum pristopa po delih.  
Poganski prezir je očaral kri:  
čemu se odljublamo, če si ne drznemo sovražiti!

Kaj če je premagana še zadnja nečimrnost ljubezni?  
Kaj če je dolg ljubezenski do novčiča izplačan?  
Pisem ne pošiljam. Ne čakam sanj ponoči.  
Izpustil sem celo priložnost, da zajočem.

Jutri pa – sneg, olajšanje sveta. Ali pa bitje  
vključilo bo svoje močne avtomate.  
Ostajaš živ, zares. A bolj kot smrt boli.  
In telo se noče več vrniti k duši.

## Душа

Този град небръснат  
без печал ни пръсна.  
Всичко нежно, всичко грешно  
между нас виновно оглуша.  
Само ти остана,  
в мен като камбана  
да звъниш под удара,  
душа.

В този град бездънен  
твоят вик потъна.  
Колко мъдро, колко подло  
паметта си всякой вкамени!  
Но защо остана  
(ех!)  
душа-камбана  
до смъртта под всеки удар  
да звъни...

## Днес

Живот наопъки. Милувки тичешком.  
Любовни пакости. Освиркани прозрения.  
А днес отвеждат есента във старчески дом.  
Отлепва дъжд тапетите й жълти и червени.

Летаргията трие гръб във входната врата.  
Пристъпва на разделите съмнителният разум.  
Езическо презрение е очаровало кръвта:  
защо разлюбуваме, щом не посмяваме да мразим!

Какво, че е надвита и последната любовна суета?  
Какво, че е дългът любовен върнат до петаче?  
Писма не пращам. Не причаквам сънища в нощта.  
Изпуснах даже случая удобен да заплача.

А утре - сняг, световно облекчение. Или  
ще включи битието мощните си автомати.  
Оставаш жив, наистина. А повече от смърт боли.  
И тялото не иска да се върне при душата.

## Ostrina

Nekje v svetu, iz katerega smo,  
nekje v tej črni prsti,  
eno steblo nevidno pogumno  
zelenkasto sabljo drži.

Klije pomladno, lahkotno.  
V obratno smer ne sme.  
V zibelki pa ga težijo  
kosti kot zaklinjanje.

Čeprav ga po poti uzremo,  
le redko spoznamo, kdo je ta,  
ki njegovo nežno ostrino  
v pravični naravi suklja.

Ah, optimizem ničvreden,  
od njega nas nič ne oddalji.  
Zdaj veste, zakaj večkrat vas gledam  
s prebodenimi očmi?

## Beg

Zbogom, zbogom ... Hitel sem!  
Avtoceste, puščave, močvirja.  
Živel sem uspešno. Po drugih: povsem nekoristno.  
A prišel sem do kraja. Nemudoma moram od tukaj.  
V nek svet. V nek vek. V brezno peklensko.

Hitrost vseh stvari narašča od prvih korakov.  
Starost nas raztrešči: premišljeno, rezko, brez hibe.  
Samo še zvestoba greni pod skorjo smešnih pobegov.  
In solza beton naših mask izdolbe.

Jesen potrebuje potnika. Prav tako zima.  
In v snu nas zbada ostri laketi sekunde.  
Zbogom, zbogom! Poezija je ozdravljiva,  
kot ozdravljivo je rakavo obolenje.

Kometi nad vsakim slovesom mahajo z biči.  
Z vseh cest, obilno posutih, dviga se para.  
In če se že srečamo, bo to le zato, ker smo tekli,  
brez znanja, da zemlja je tolikšna krogla.

## Острие

Някъде в света, от който идем,  
някъде във черната земя  
едно стръкче храбро и невидимо  
стиска зеленикава кама.

То пробива пролетно и просто.  
Няма право на обратен път.  
В люлката му въглени и кости  
като заклинание тежат.

Даже да го зърнем мимоходом,  
рядко осъзнаваме кое  
движи в справедливата природа  
неговото нежно острие.

Ех, от оптимизма ни безвреден  
няма кой да ни отдалечи.  
Но разбрахте ли защо ви гледам  
често със избодени очи?

## Бяг

Сбогом, сбогом...Аз бързах!  
Автостради, мочури, пустини.  
Сполучливо живях. Според други: живях неизгодно.  
Но дотичах. И трябва незабавно от вас да замина.  
В някой свят. В някой век. В преизподнята.

Скоростта на нещата от стъпките тежко нараства.  
Възрастта ни разпръсква: безпогрешно, обмислено, рязко.  
Само вярност горчи под кората на смешните бягства.  
И сълзата дълбае бетона на нашите маски.

Есента има нужда от пътник. А също и зимата.  
И насън ни боде на секундата острият лакът.  
Сбогом, сбогом! Поезията е излечима  
само толкова, колкото е излечим ракът.

А над всяка раздяла размахват кометите бичове.  
Парят всички шосета, посипани щедро със въглен.  
И дори да се срещнем, то ще бъде, защото сме тичали,  
без да знаем, че земята е толкова кръгла.

## Če

Če bi ta usoda trajala še nekaj časa,  
da bi za hip odtrgali se od grmenja,  
morda odkril bi čudežno formulo,  
po kateri bi živeli brez trpljenja.

Če bi tale borba trajala še nekaj časa,  
da bi navadilo se mesto in umolknilo sosedi,  
morda bi videla, kako me kaže zmaga:  
prgišče bratov za menoj, pred mano – polki.

Če bi ta ljubezen trajala še nekaj časa,  
da bi prišla do konca vsakega jemanja,  
morda bi si vrnila nežnega demona,  
ki pred življenjskim vbrizgom kri varuje.

Zemlja pa se ni obrnila le enkrat.  
Večer se strmo vzpenja po telesih.  
Prekolni me sedaj in odpusti mi do svita!

Če bi to življenje trajalo še nekaj časa ...

*Prevedla Namita Subiotto in Ljudmil Dimitrov*

## Още

Ако тази съдба продължи още толкова,  
че да можем за миг да се дръпнем от громала,  
може би ще открия чудатата формула,  
по която човек съществува без болка.

Ако тази борба продължи още толкова,  
че да свикне градът и да млъкнат съседите,  
може би ще съгледаш как ме сочи победата:  
с шепя братя зад мен, а насреща ми - полкове.

Ако тази любов продължи още толкова,  
че да стигнем до края на всяко отнемане,  
може би ще си върнем най-нежните демони,  
дето пазят кръвта от житейски упойки.

А земята превърта не една обиколка.  
Вечерта се катери по телата ни стръмно.  
Прокълни ме сега и прости ми до съмване!

Ако този живот продължи още толкова...



## In The Middle

An alarm clock. The trace of a jet.  
Taxi cabs.  
It's vain on time such value to set.  
It flies away.

In vain because of an unfulfilled sin  
We chafe.  
We hold in our hands gifts perishable  
And unsafe.

With hands hurt by jagged steel  
And flint  
Give away everything you've got.  
Don't stint.

Rid yourself of misfortune and give away  
Your luck.  
Let that be your hallmark, your way,  
Show pluck.

Do not wait for days clearly defined,  
And do not fret.  
Concentrate on what is noble and refined  
With bated breath.

Love the streets, the sea,  
Ideas.  
Love a woman and always be  
True to her.

It's not because you've reached the final stage,  
That you're aflame.  
It's tenderness which makes us age.  
But so what of it..

## Soul

This unshaven town  
Has scattered us in all directions.  
Everything tender and everything sinful  
Has hidden in a hole like a mole  
The only thing still staying with me,  
ringing like a bell  
under the blows of life  
is you, my soul.

In this bottomless town  
Our cries have sunk somewhere low.  
How wisely and how cowardly  
We've stored our memories away.  
But you, my bell-like soul,  
You are staying with me  
To ring under every blow  
Until my final day.

## Today

A willful life. People aimlessly roam.  
Hurried unkindness. Rudely booed insights.  
Today they'll take Autumn to an old people's home.  
The rain tears colourful posters off the walls.

Apathy drags slowly along a narrow lane.  
Dubious reasons begin an unfriendly debate.  
Our blood is kept captive by a heathen disdain.  
Why don't we fall out of love if we can't even hate.

What if my last vain love has been overcome?  
I send no more letters. I don't expect dreams at night.  
I've paid back my love debt to the last crumb.  
But I missed my last chance to cry for it.

It'll snow tomorrow - a world relieved. Or  
life will switch on its powerful machine.  
You'll be still alive surrounded by its roar  
And the body will refuse to return to its soul.

## The Sharp Blade

Somewhere in this earth of ours,  
Somewhere in our mysterious life  
There is a bold and mysterious blade  
Which is like a sharp green knife.

It grows in a simple spring-like way.  
And is not allowed to go back.  
Like fate, embers and bones have  
Predetermined its upward track.

Even if we watched it night and day  
We'd never find out how it is made,  
How even-handed nature relentlessly  
Draws out its delicately shaped blade.

Our harmless optimism is great,  
It reaches far beyond the end of the skies.  
But have you tried to find out why  
I look at you with gouged-out eyes?

## Flight

Farewell, farewell... I was in a great hurry!  
Motorways, marshes, deserts.  
My life was a success. According to others - a failure.  
But I've managed to run up to here. And now I must leave.  
For another world. Another century. Or hell.

The steps one takes greatly increase the speed of things.  
Age scatters us in all directions - Harshly and with deliberate precision.  
Only loyalty tastes bitter under the cover of our masks.  
And the tears dig through the hard concrete of our flights.

Autumn needs a companion and so does winter.  
Even sleeping I see the seconds advance like enemies.  
Farewell. Farewell ! Poetry is as curable,  
As cancer is.

The comets lash their whips over every parting.  
Our feet are sore, for we run on a hot, rough ground.  
And even if we meet again it will be because  
We run not knowing that the earth is round.

If

If things go on as long as they have gone so far,  
So that we could withdraw from that terrible mess,  
Then, perhaps, we might be able to discover the formula  
That shows what the cures for a painless life are.

If the struggle goes on as long as it has gone so far,  
So that the town and all the neighbours get used to it,  
Then you might see how victory points at me and  
How many my friends and how many my enemies are.

If this love lasts as long as it has lasted so far,  
And we go beyond the point of give and take,  
Then, perhaps, we'll get rid of everything poisonous  
And we'll find out which the angels of tenderness are.

The earth turns round only once in a day and a night.  
The evening is eagerly creeping up our bodies,  
So forgive me and love me in the name of the brightest star

If this life goes on as long as it has gone so far.

*Translated by Vladimir Filipov*

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Umberto Galimberti, filozof, psihoanalitik, esejist in univerzitetni profesor, se je rodil leta 1942 v Monzi. Po študiju na Katoliški univerzi v Milanu je v Baslu obiskoval predavanja Karla Jaspersa in postal eden glavnih prevajalcev njegovih del v italijanščino. Med letoma 1987 in 1995 je pisal za časopis *Il sole 24 ore*, nato pa za italijanski časnik *La Repubblica* (do leta 2008), kjer še vedno ureja tedensko prilogo *D, la Repubblica delle donne*. Med njegova najznamenitejša dela sodijo: *Psichiatria e Fenomenologia* (Psihriatija in fenomenologija, 1979), *Il corpo* (Telo, 1983, mednarodna nagrada s. Valentino d'oro), *La terra senza il male* (Zemlja brez zla, 1984, nagrada fregene), *Gli equivoci dell'anima* (Nesporazumi duše, 1987), *Psiche e techne* (*Psiche* in *techne*, 1999), *Orme del sacro* (Stopinje svetega, 2000, državna nagrada Corrada Alvara 2001), *La casa di psiche* (Dom psihe, 2005, nagrada Cesara De Lollisa), *L'ospite inquietante* (*Srhljivi gost*, 2007), *Il segreto della domanda* (Skrivnost vprašanja, 2008), *La morte dell'agire e il primato del fare nell'età della tecnica* (Smrt ravnanja in primat dejanja v dobi tehnike, 2009). V zbirki *Universale Economica Saggi* bo kmalu izšel celoten ponatis njegovega opusa. Izdal je tudi *Dizionario di psicologia* (Slovar psihologije, 1992) z več kot štiri tisoč gesli, ki ga je v izdaji za založbo Garzanti še razširil. Delo *Srhljivi gost* je v slovenskem prevodu Veronike Simoniti leta 2009 izšlo pri založbi Modrijan.

Umberto Galimberti, philosopher, psychoanalyst, essayist and university professor was born in 1942 in Monza. After graduating at the Catholic University in Milan, he attended lectures by Karl Jaspers in Basel and became one of the leading translators of his works into Italian. Between the years 1987 and 1995 he wrote for the newspaper *Il sole 24 ore* and afterwards for the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* (up to the year 2008), whose weekly supplement *D, La Repubblica delle donne* he still edits. Among his most important works are: *Psichiatria e Fenomenologia* (Psychiatry and Phenomenology, 1979), *Il corpo* (The Body, 1983, the international S. Valentino d'oro Prize), *La terra senza il male* (The Earth Without Evil, 1984, the Fregene Prize), *Gli equivoci dell'anima* (Misunderstandings of the Soul, 1987), *Psiche e techne* (*Psyche* and *techne*, 1999), *Orme del sacro* (The Footprints of the Sacred, 2000, the State Corrado Alvaro Prize 2001), *La casa di psiche* (The Home of the Psyche, 2005, the Cesare De Lollis Prize), *L'ospite inquietante* (The Uncanny Guest, 2007), *Il segreto della domanda* (The Secret of the Question, 2008), *La morte dell'agire e il primato del fare nell'età della tecnica* (The Death of Action and the Primacy of Doing in the Technical Age, 2009). His entire oeuvre will shortly be reprinted and published in the *Universale Economica Saggi* series. He has also published *Dizionario di psicologia* (Dictionary of Psychology, 1992) with more than four thousand entries, which has been additionally extended for the Garzanti publishing house issue. The Slovene translation of *L'ospite inquietante* translated by Veronika Simoniti was published in 2009 by the Modrijan publishing house.

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# Umberto Galimberti



# Srhljivi gost

(Odlomek)

1.

Nihilizem in razvrednotenje vseh vrednot

Kaj pomeni nihilizem? – *Da se najvišje vrednote razvrednotijo.* Manjka odgovor na »Čemu?«

F. Nietzsche, fr. 9 (35), *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 1887–1888.

## 1. Decentraliziranje vesolja

Ljudje niso nikoli živeli v svetu, temveč vedno in samo v opisu sveta, ki so ga vsak ob svojem času dali mit, religija, filozofija ali znanost. Ta opis je bil zajet v ustaljenih besedah, umeščenih na robove vesolja, da so ga zamejile, in v njegovi notranjosti, da so ga artikulirale. Med »stvarmi od tam zgoraj« in »stvarmi od tu spodaj«, kot pravi Platonova geografija, ki je najbolj zgovorna in najbolj opisna, je bilo mogoče prepoznati hierarhijo stabilnosti, ki je pomagala pri odločanju med tem, kar je prav, in tem, kar je narobe, med pravilnim in nepravilnim, med vrednim in nevrednim. Red idej je zarisoval vzpenjajočo se pot, ki je z zemlje tekla proti nebu in je imela smer, smisel in cilj. V doseganju cilja je bila obljuba odrešitve in resnice.

Nekega dne je grška filozofija naletela na judovsko-krščansko oznanilo, ki je govorilo o obljubljeni deželi in poslednji domovini. Duša, ki si jo je zamislil Platon, je bila zdaj namenjena k cilju in je zaživela v vznemirljivem pričakovanju in času, ki sta jo ločevala od cilja. Ta čas ni bil več opisan kot ciklično ponavljanje kozmičnega dogajanja, temveč kot izžarevanje smisla, ki je spremenilo potek dogodkov v *zgodovino*, kjer se bo nazadnje izpolnilo to, kar je bilo oznanjeno na začetku.

Toda tudi ta kozmologija in časnost sta se kaj kmalu zamajali, z njima pa še vse ideje, ki so ju zaznamovale in poudarjale. Ko je znanost oznanila, da zemlja kroži okrog sonca, sonce pa da je vrženo v brezciljni tek, je ponudila nov opis sveta, v katerem je bilo mogoče prepoznati relativni značaj vsakega gibanja in vsakega položaja v prostoru, tega pa so čedalje pogosteje zamenjevali s časom, tako da je jezik filozofije in religije nazadnje izgubil vse normativne ideje, ki so govorile o orientaciji in trdnosti.

Posledica je bila decentralizacija vesolja. Novi opis je vseboval še stare besede, toda te pri označevanju stvari niso več opredeljevale njihovega bistva, temveč samo njihov odnos. Brez »visok« in »nizek«, »notri« in »zunaj«, »daleč« in »blizu« je vesolje izgubilo svoj red, smoter in hierarhijo in se ponudilo človeku kot gola naprava, ki jo je mogoče raziskati z orodji

# L'ospite inquietante

(Un brano)

1.

Il nichilismo e la svalutazione di tutti i valori

Nichilismo: manca il fine; manca la risposta al "perché?". Che cosa significa nichilismo? - *che i valori supremi perdono ogni valore.*

F. NIETZSCHE, fr. 9 (35), in Frammenti postumi 1887-1888.

## *I. Il decentramento dell'universo*

Gli uomini non hanno mai abitato il mondo, ma sempre e solo la descrizione che di volta in volta il mito, la religione, la filosofia, la scienza hanno dato del mondo. Una descrizione attraverso parole stabili, collocate ai confini dell'universo per la sua delimitazione e all'interno dell'universo per la sua articolazione. Tra "le cose di lassù" e "le cose di quaggiù", come voleva la geografia di Platone, la più dicente, la più descrittiva, era possibile riconoscere quella gerarchia di stabilità che consentiva di orientarsi tra il vero e il falso, il giusto e l'ingiusto, il pregevole e lo spregevole. L'ordine delle idee tracciava un itinerario ascensionale che dalla terra portava al cielo, e il cammino aveva una direzione, un senso, un fine. Nella realizzazione del fine c'era promessa di salvezza e verità.

Un giorno la filosofia greca incontrò l'annuncio giudaico-cristiano che parlava di una terra promessa e di una patria ultima. L'anima che Platone aveva ideato si trovò orientata a una meta e prese a vivere l'inquietudine dell'attesa e del tempo che la separava dalla meta. Un tempo non più descritto come ciclica ripetizione dell'evento cosmico, ma come irradiazione di un senso che trasfigurò l'accadere degli eventi in *storia*, dove alla fine si sarebbe compiuto ciò che all'inizio era stato annunciato.

Ma anche questa cosmologia e questa temporalità non tardarono a vacillare e con esse tutte quelle idee che ne segnavano la scansioni. Annunciando che era la terra a ruotare intorno al sole, a sua volta lanciato in una corsa senza meta, la scienza consegnò una nuova descrizione del mondo, in cui si riconosceva il carattere relativo di ogni movimento e di ogni posizione nello spazio, che a sua volta andava sempre più a confondersi con il tempo, fino a togliere al linguaggio della filosofia e della religione tutte le idee normative che dicevano orientamento e stabilità.

La conseguenza fu il decentramento dell'universo. La nuova descrizione implicava ancora le antiche parole, ma queste, nell'indicare le cose, non designavano più la loro essenza, ma solo la loro relazione. Senza più né "alto" né "basso", né "dentro" né "fuori", né "lontano" né "vicino", l'universo



računskega razuma. Razum je razprl umetni in mogočni svet tehnike; v njej je človek odkril njeno bistvo, ki je bilo dolgo časa skrito in nespoznavno zaradi mitičnega opisa sveta.

Zemlja, ki je bila prej mati-zemlja, je postala indiferentna materija, nebo je mesto zvezdne mitologije prepustilo kozmičnemu prahu in človekova duša, ki se je poslovila od obzorja smisla, je zatavala v družbi tistega gosta, ki ga Nietzsche imenuje »najsrhljivejši med vsemi gosti: nihilizem«<sup>1</sup> in v katerem prepoznavamo kadenco svojega sedanjega mišljenja in zbezanega občutenja.

## 2. Odčarani svet

Nihilizem je stari znanec, saj se je okrog biti in ničesar odprlo širono prizorišče filozofije, ki za razliko od religije in znanosti ni našla mesta na pričakovani ali uresničeni pozitivnosti, ampak v vmesnem prostoru med pozitivnim in negativnim, med bitjo in ničem, kjer je odločitev bolj dramatična in izbira bolj vrtoglava. Ta izbira namreč ni med tem ali onim bivajočim, med Bogom ali svetom, temveč med smislom celote biti in njenim sesutjem.

Od Gorgija – ki pravi, da »nič ni; četudi kaj je, je človeku nespoznavno; četudi je spoznavno, je pa neizrazljivo in drugemu nerazložljivo«<sup>2</sup> – do Heideggerja – ta se sprašuje: »Kako je z bitjo? Z bitjo ni nič. Kaj pa, če bi se v tem naznanjalo doslej zakrito bistvo nihilizma?«<sup>3</sup> – je v vsej zgodovini filozofije strašljivi gost dajal čutiti svojo navzočnost, toda šele danes, šele v naših časih je ta navzočnost postala vsesplošno občutje, izgubljenost vseh področij, ki so jih ljudje v svoji zgodovini s trdom zgradili, da bi lahko živeli na zemlji. Toda zakaj ravno danes? Na to odgovarja Franco Volpi:

Danes je tradicionalne reference – mite, bogove, transcendence, vrednote – razjedla odčaranost sveta. Znanstveno-tehnična racionalizacija je privedla do tega, da na ravni razuma ni več mogoče sprejeti najvišjih odločitev. Rezultat je politeizem vrednot in enakovrednost odločitev, enako neumni predpisi in enako nekoristne prepovedi. V svetu, ki mu vladata znanost in tehnika, so moralni imperativi očitno enako učinkoviti kot zavore bicikla na jumbo jetu. Pod jeklenim pokrovom nihilizma ni ne vrline ne možne morale.<sup>4</sup>

Tehnično-znanstvena paradigma si namreč ne zastavlja nobenega cilja, ki bi ga bilo treba uresničiti, ampak samo rezultate, ki jih je treba doseči v

<sup>1</sup> F. NIETZSCHE: *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 1885–1887: »Nihilizem je pred vrati: od kod nam prihaja ta najsrhljivejši gost?«

<sup>2</sup> Gorgij, *O naravi ali nebivajočem*, v: DIELS-KRANZ, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (1966); *Predsokratiki*, prev. A. Sovre, Ljubljana 1988, str. 150.

<sup>3</sup> M. HEIDEGGER: *Nietzsches Wort »Gott ist tot«*, v: *Holzwege* (1953).

<sup>4</sup> F. VOLPI, *Il nichilismo*, Laterza, Bari 2004, str. 175–176.

perse il suo ordine, la sua finalità e la sua gerarchia per offrirsi all'uomo come pura macchina indagabile con gli strumenti della ragione fatta calcolo. Questa dischiuse lo scenario artificiale e potente della tecnica, in cui l'uomo scoprì la sua essenza rimasta a lungo nascosta e resa inconoscibile dalla descrizione mitica del mondo.

Da terra-madre la terra divenne materia indifferente, il cielo cedette la mitologia delle stelle alla polvere cosmica, e l'anima dell'uomo, congedatasi da ogni orizzonte di senso, prese a vagare in compagnia di quello che Nietzsche chiama "il più inquietante fra tutti gli ospiti: il *nichilismo*"<sup>1</sup>, in cui riconosciamo la cadenza del nostro attuale pensare e disorientato sentire.

## 2. *Il disincanto del mondo*

Il nichilismo è un'antica figura, perché intorno all'essere e al nulla si è aperto il grande scenario della filosofia che, a differenza della religione e della scienza, non si è assestata sul positivo atteso o realizzato, ma in quel frammezzo tra positivo e negativo, tra essere e nulla, in cui la decisione si fa più drammatica e più vertiginosa la scelta di campo. Una scelta, infatti, che non è tra questo o quell'ente, tra Dio o il mondo, ma tra il senso della totalità dell'essere e la sua implosione.

Da Gorgia – per il quale “nulla è; se anche fosse, non sarebbe conoscibile; se anche fosse conoscibile, non sarebbe comunicabile”<sup>2</sup> – a Heidegger – per il quale “che ne è dell'essere? Dell'essere ne è nulla! E se proprio qui si rivelasse l'essenza del nichilismo finora rimasta nascosta?”<sup>3</sup> –, per l'intero arco della storia della filosofia, l'ospite inquietante ha fatto sentire la sua presenza, ma solo oggi, solo nel nostro tempo, questa presenza è divenuta clima della terra, spaesamento di tutti i paesaggi che gli uomini nella loro storia hanno di volta in volta faticosamente costruito per abitare la terra. Ma perché proprio oggi? Perché, scrive Franco Volpi:

Oggi i riferimenti tradizionali – i miti, gli dèi, le trascendenze, i valori – sono stati erosi dal disincanto del mondo. La razionalizzazione scientifico-tecnica ha prodotto l'indecidibilità delle scelte ultime sul piano della sola ragione. Il risultato è il politeismo dei valori e l'isostenia delle decisioni, la stessa stupidità delle prescrizioni e la stessa inutilità delle proibizioni. Nel mondo governato dalla scienza e dalla tecnica l'efficacia degli imperativi morali sembra pari a quella dei freni di bicicletta montati su un jumbo. Sotto la calotta d'acciaio del nichilismo non v'è più virtù o morale possibile.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> F. NIETZSCHE, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1885-1887*; tr. it. Frammenti postumi 1885-1887, in *Opere*, Adelphi, Milano 1975, vol. VIII, 1, fr. 2 (127), p. 112: “Il nichilismo è alle porte: da dove ci viene costui, il più inquietante fra tutti gli ospiti?”.

<sup>2</sup> GORGIA, *Del non essere o della natura*, in DIELS-KRANZ, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (1966); *Predsokratiki*; tr. it. *I presocratici. Testimonianze e frammenti*, Laterza Bari 1983, fr. B3, p. 917.

<sup>3</sup> M. HEIDEGGER, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (1935-1953); tr. it. *Introduzione alla metafisica*, Mursia, Milano 1968, p. 207

<sup>4</sup> F. VOLPI, *Il nichilismo*, Laterza, Bari 2004, pp. 175-176.

njenih postopkih. Ta odprava ciljev že v svojih temeljih odmišlja, da bi tiste vrste zahodni človek, ki je odrasel v »kulturi smisla« – po kateri je življenje sprejemljivo samo, če se lahko zariše na obzorje smisla – sploh še kakorkoli iskal smisel.

Na takšno vprašanje tehnika ne odgovarja, ker kategorija smisla ni v njeni pristojnosti. Ker pa je danes tehnika postala oblika sveta, poslednje obzorje onkraj vseh obzorij, tavajo vprašanja o smislu mukoma in brez odgovora po zemlji, ki jo je nebo že zapustilo in ki gosti človeško dejanje in nehanje kot katero koli drugo dogajanje.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Zaton zahodne kulture

Brezbriznost sveta, ta krik antične gnoze,<sup>6</sup> se danes vrača v obliki nihilizma, ki poudarja odtujenost človeškega dejanja, ki ga svet nevede gosti in ki mu pošilja samo sporočilo o nepomembnosti. Nietzsche, dobra priča takega ozračja, piše:

... in videl sem veliko žalost priti nad ljudi. Najboljši so se naveličali svojih del. Razširil se je nauk, vera je tekla ob njem: 'Vse je prazno, vse je enako, vse je bilo!' In enako od vseh gričev je odmevalo: 'Vse je prazno, vse je enako, vse je bilo!' Seveda smo želi: ampak zakaj nam je vse sadje segnilo in porjavelo? Kaj je v zadnji noči padlo s hudobne lune? Zaman je bilo vse delo, naše vino se je spremenilo v strup, hud pogled nam je rumeno prismodil polja in srca. Vsi smo se izsušili; in če pade ogenj na nas, se bomo zaprašili kakor pepel: – ja, sam ogenj se nas je naveličal. [...] Vsi studenci so nam usahnili, tudi morje se je umaknilo. Vsa tla se nočejo utrgati, ampak globočina noče požirati! 'O, kje je še morje, kjer bi se dalo utoniti,' tako zveni naša tožba – čez ravna močvirja.<sup>7</sup>

Žalost, ki je prišla nad ljudi, je žalost zatona, ko sonce odstopi prostor luni, ki je hudobna, saj končuje dan, v katerem je bilo delo jalovo, ker se je zemlja posušila, sadeži niso obrodili, studenci so usahnili in nobeno brezno se ni razprlo, da bi pogoltnilo človeka, ki je torej še zmeraj priča suši zemlje, še zmeraj je priča niču, ki se je rodil iz nje.

Nihilizem sklepa »večerno deželo« in varuje občutje zatona.<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche namreč pojmuje modernega človeka in njegov čas kot konec, konec več

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<sup>5</sup> Več o tem v: U. GALIMBERTI, *Psiche e techne. L'uomo nell'età tecnica*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1999, 54. poglavje: »Il totalitarismo della tecnica e l'implosione del senso«.

<sup>6</sup> Več o tem v: U. GALIMBERTI, *La terra senza il male. Jung dall'inconscio al simbolo* (1984), Feltrinelli, Milano 2001, 11. poglavje: »La metafora gnostica«.

<sup>7</sup> F. NIETZSCHE, *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (1883–1885); *Tako je govoril Zarathustra*, prev. Janko Moder, Ljubljana 1984, 2. izdaja. str. 156.

<sup>8</sup> Več o tem v: U. GALIMBERTI, *Il tramonto dell'Occidente nella lettura di Heidegger e Jaspers* (1975–1984), Feltrinelli, Milano 2005, še posebno XIII. del: »L'essenza del nichilismo e il senso del tramonto«.

Il paradigma tecnico-scientifico, infatti, non si propone alcun fine da realizzare, ma solo dei risultati da raggiungere come esiti delle sue procedure. Questa abolizione dei fini destituisce, fin dalle sue fondamenta, ogni possibile ricerca di senso per quel tipo d'uomo, l'occidentale, cresciuto nella "cultura del senso" secondo la quale la vita è vivibile solo se inscritta in un orizzonte di senso.

A questo tipo di domanda la tecnica non risponde, perché la categoria del senso non appartiene alle sue competenze. Ma siccome oggi la tecnica è diventata la forma del mondo, l'ultimo orizzonte al di là di tutti gli orizzonti, le domande intorno al senso vagano affannose e senza risposta in una terra ormai abbandonata dal suo cielo che ospita l'evento umano come qualsiasi altro evento.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Il tramonto della cultura occidentale

L'indifferenza della terra, questo grido dell'antica gnosi,<sup>6</sup> torna oggi nella forma del nichilismo a ribadire l'estraneità dell'evento umano che la terra ospita a sua insaputa e a cui invia solo un messaggio di insignificanza. Nietzsche, buon testimone di questa atmosfera, scrive:

Vidi una grande tristezza invadere gli uomini. I migliori si stancarono del loro lavoro. Una dottrina apparve, una fede le si affiancò: tutto è vuoto, tutto è uguale, tutto fu! Abbiamo fatto il raccolto: ma perché tutti i nostri frutti si corrompono? Che cosa è accaduto quaggiù la notte scorsa dalla luna malvagia? Tutto il nostro lavoro è stato vano, il nostro vino è divenuto veleno, il malocchio ha disseccato i nostri campi e i nostri cuori. Aridi siamo divenuti noi tutti. [...] Tutte le fonti sono esauste, anche il mare si è ritirato. Tutto il suolo si fenderà, ma l'abisso non inghiottirà! Ah, dov'è mai ancora un mare dove si possa annegare: così risuona il nostro lamento sulle piatte paludi.<sup>7</sup>

La tristezza che invade è la tristezza del tramonto, quando il sole cede il posto a una luna che è malvagia perché giunge a concludere un giorno in cui il lavoro è stato vano, perché la terra si è disseccata, i frutti non hanno risposto alle attese, le fonti si sono prosciugate e nessun abisso si è dischiuso a inghiottire l'uomo, che dunque resta testimone dell'aridità della terra, del niente che ne è nato.

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<sup>5</sup> Per un approfondimento di questa tematica si veda U. GALIMBERTI, *Psiche e techne. L'uomo nell'età della tecnica*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1999, capitolo 54: "Il totalitarismo della tecnica e l'implosione del senso".

<sup>6</sup> Si veda a questo proposito U. GALIMBERTI, *La terra senza il male. Jung dall'inconscio al simbolo* (1984), Feltrinelli, Milano 2001, capitolo 11: "La metafora gnostica".

<sup>7</sup> F. NIETZSCHE, *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (1883-1885); tr. it. *Così parlò Zarathustra. Un libro per tutti e per nessuno*, in *Opere*, cit., 1968, vol. VI, 1, p. 175.

kot dvatisočletnega moralnega in duhovnega gibanja, konec metafizike in krščanstva, konec vsakršne vrednostne sodbe. Zato na vprašanje: »Kaj pomeni nihilizem?« odgovarja: »Da se najvišje vrednote razvrednotijo.«<sup>9</sup>

*Prevedla Veronika Simoniti*

Umberto Galimberti: *Srhljivi gost*, založba Modrijan, Ljubljana 2009. Z dovoljenjem založbe Modrijan.

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<sup>9</sup> F. NIETZSCHE: *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 1887-1888.

Il nichilismo conclude la “terra della sera” e custodisce il senso del tramonto.<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche, infatti, concepisce l’uomo moderno e il suo tempo come una fine, la fine del movimento morale e spirituale di più di duemila anni, la fine della metafisica e del cristianesimo, la fine di ogni giudizio di valore. E perciò alla domanda: “Che cosa significa nichilismo?” risponde: “Che i valori supremi perdono ogni valore”.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Si veda a questo proposito di U. GALIMBERTI, *Il tramonto dell’Occidente nella lettura di Heidegger e Jaspers* (1975-1984), Feltrinelli, Milano 2005 e in particolare la Parte XIII: “L’essenza del nichilismo e il senso del tramonto”.

<sup>9</sup> F. NIETZSCHE, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1887-1888*; tr. it. *Frammenti postumi 1887-1888*, in *Opere*, cit., 1971, vol. VIII, 2, fr. 9 (35), p. 12.

# The Uncanny Guest

(Excerpt)

1

Nihilism and the devaluation of all values

Nihilism has no goal, no answer to “why”. What does nihilism mean? – *It means the supreme values losing their value.*

F. Nietzsche, fr. 9 (35), *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 1887–1888

## 1. Decentralisation of the universe

Men have never lived in the world but always and only in its descriptions, given in turn by myth, religion, philosophy, or science. These descriptions have been phrased in set words, placed at the edges of the universe to mark its boundaries, and inside the universe for its articulation. Between “the things from above” and “the things from below”, to use the terms of Plato’s geography, which is the most eloquent and the most descriptive, it was possible to recognise a hierarchy of stability which helped to decide between right and wrong, just and unjust, precious and base. The order of ideas formed an ascending route leading from the earth to the sky, and this path had a direction, a sense, an end. In the attainment of the end there lay the promise of salvation and truth.

One day Greek philosophy encountered the Judeo-Christian message, which spoke of a promised land and the ultimate homeland. The soul as conceived by Plato, finding itself oriented towards a goal, began to live in the restlessness of waiting and of the time separating it from its goal. This time was no longer described as the cyclical repetition of cosmic events but as a radiation of sense, transfiguring the course of events into a *history* which would fulfil in the end what had been announced in the beginning.

But even this cosmology and temporality soon began to crumble, taking with them all the ideas which had marked and accentuated them. By announcing that it was the earth that revolved around the sun, which was in its turn launched into an aimless course, science provided a new description of the world, one permitting the recognition of the relative character of any movement and any position in space. Space, on the other hand, became increasingly confused with time, until the language of philosophy and religion finally lost all normative ideas of orientation and stability.

The result was a decentralisation of the universe. The new description still employed the old words, but in indicating things these no longer defined their essence, only their relationships. Without “high” and “low”,

“inside” and “outside”, “far” and “near”, the universe lost its order, sense and hierarchy, offering itself to man as a pure machine which could be investigated with the instruments of reason turned to calculation. This reason disclosed the artificial, powerful world of technology in which man discovered its essence, long hidden and unknowable due to the mythical descriptions of the world.

The earth turned from an earth-mother into indifferent matter, the sky ceded the mythology of stars to cosmic dust, and the human soul, bidding farewell to every horizon of sense, began to wander in the company of what Nietzsche calls “the uncanniest of all guests: nihilism”,<sup>1</sup> in which we recognise the cadence of our present thought and disoriented sense.

## 2. *The disenchantment of the world*

Nihilism is an old acquaintance: being and nothingness have opened a wide field of philosophy which has, in contrast to religion and science, found its place not in a positive expectation or realisation but between the positive and the negative, between being and nothingness, where the decision is more dramatic and the choice more mind-boggling. A choice, indeed, which is not between this or that entity, between God or the world, but between the sense of the totality of being and its implosion.

From Gorgias, who claims that “nothing exists; and, if something did exist, it could not be known; and, if it could be known, it could not be communicated”,<sup>2</sup> to Heidegger, who asks: “What about being? There is nothing to being. And what if it is precisely here that the essence of nihilism, hidden until now, should be revealed?”<sup>3</sup> – throughout the history of philosophy, the uncanny guest has made his presence felt. But it is only today, in our time, that this presence has become the pervasive atmosphere on earth, the disorientation of all landscapes laboriously constructed by men in their history so that they might live on earth. But why today of all time? According to Franco Volpi:

Today the traditional references – myths, gods, transcendences, values – have been eroded by the disenchantment of the world. The scientific-technological rationalisation has brought about an inability to decide the ultimate questions at the level of reason. The result is a polytheism of values and equivalence of decisions, the same inanity of prescriptions and the same uselessness of prohibitions. In a world governed by science and technology, the efficacy of moral imperatives seems on a par with that of bicycle brakes mounted on a jumbo jet. Beneath the steel cover of nihilism, there is no possibility of virtue or morals left.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> F. NIETZSCHE: *Nachgelassene Fragmente* 1885–1887: “Nihilism stands at the door: whence comes to us this uncanniest of all guests?”

<sup>2</sup> Gorgias, *On the Nonexistent or On Nature*, in: DIELS-KRANZ, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (1966).

<sup>3</sup> M. HEIDEGGER: *Nietzsches Wort “Gott ist tot”*, in *Holzwege* (1953).

<sup>4</sup> F. VOLPI, *Il nichilismo*, Laterza, Bari 2004, pp. 175–176.



Instead of ends to be realised, the technological-scientific paradigm merely sets out certain results to be attained in the course of its procedures. This abolition of ends fundamentally precludes all inquiry into sense by the type of westerner who was raised in the “culture of sense”, according to which life is viable only if inscribed on a meaningful horizon.

This question is not answered by technology because the category of sense lies outside its competence. But since technology has become the form of the world, the ultimate horizon beyond all horizons, the questions about sense wander, toiling and unanswered, over an earth which, abandoned by its sky, hosts the human event just as it does any other.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. *The decline of western culture*

The indifference of the world, that cry of ancient gnosis,<sup>6</sup> returns today in the form of nihilism accentuating the alienation of human events – events which the world hosts unwittingly, sending them nothing but a message of insignificance. Nietzsche, bearing valuable testimony to this atmosphere, writes:

“– And I saw a great sadness come over mankind. The best turned weary of their works. A doctrine appeared, a faith ran beside it: ‘All is empty, all is alike, all hath been!’ And from all hills there re-echoed: ‘All is empty, all is alike, all hath been!’ To be sure we have harvested: but why have all our fruits become rotten and brown? What was it fell last night from the evil moon? In vain was all our labour, poison hath our wine become, the evil eye hath singed yellow our fields and hearts. Arid have we all become; and fire falling upon us, then do we turn into dust like ashes: – yea, the fire itself have we made awarey. [...] All our fountains have dried up, even the sea hath receded. All the ground trieth to gape, but the depth will not swallow! ‘Alas! where is there still a sea in which one could be drowned?’ so soundeth our plaint – across shallow swamps.”<sup>7</sup>

The sadness come over mankind is the sadness of decline when the sun gives way to an evil moon – evil because it ends a day whose labour has been vain: the soil has become arid, the fruits have not answered our expectations, the fountains have dried up and no chasm has gaped to swallow man, who is thus still a witness to the drought of the earth, to the nothingness born from it.

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<sup>5</sup> See also: U. GALIMBERTI, *Psiche e techne. L'uomo nell'età tecnica*, Feltrinelli, Milan 1999, Chapter 54: “Il totalitarismo della tecnica e l'implosione del senso”.

<sup>6</sup> See also: U. GALIMBERTI, *La terra senza il male. Jung dall'inconscio al simbolo* (1984), Feltrinelli, Milan 2001, Chapter 11: “La metafora gnostica”.

<sup>7</sup> F. NIETZSCHE, *Also sprach Zarathustra. Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (1883–1885), English translation: *Thus Spake Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, trans. Thomas Common, <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/1/9/9/1998/1998.txt>, posting date: November 7, 2008 [EBook #1998], release date: December, 1999. Accessed May 15, 2009.

Nihilism ends the “evening land”, safeguarding the sense of decline.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Nietzsche perceives the modern man and his time as an end: the end of a moral and spiritual movement of more than twenty centuries, the end of metaphysics and Christianity, the end of every value judgment. Therefore his reply to the question “What does nihilism mean?” is: “It means the supreme values losing their value.”<sup>9</sup>

*Translated by Nada Grošelj*

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<sup>8</sup> See also: U. GALIMBERTI, *Il tramonto dell'Occidente nella lettura di Heidegger e Jaspers* (1975–1984), Feltrinelli, Milan 2005, esp. Part XIII: “L'essenza del nichilismo e il senso del tramonto”.

<sup>9</sup> F. NIETZSCHE: *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, 1887–1888.

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Andrea Grill se je rodila leta 1975 v Bad Ischlu v Avstriji. Preden je doktorirala iz evolucijske biologije na univerzi v Amsterdamu, je študirala biologijo v Salzburgu, Thessalonikih in Cagliariju. Njeno znanstvenorazi-  
skovalno delo se osredotoča na metulje, aktivna pa je tudi kot prevajalka  
iz albanščine. Na začetku svoje poti je bila pisateljica in esejistka, vendar  
se v najnovejših delih posveča poeziji. Objavila je tri dela: antologijo  
družinskih portretov *Der gelbe Onkel. Ein Familienalbum* (Rumeni stric:  
Družinski album, 2005); ter dva romana, *Zweischritt* (Dvokorak, 2007)  
in *Tränenlachen* (Solze smeha, 2008). Njen najnovejši roman se vrta okrog  
ljubezenske zgodbe med albanskim beguncem in avstrijsko študentko, v  
kateri Grillova skozi oči protagonistov obudi devetdeseta leta prejšnjega  
stoletja. Po več kot desetletju bivanja v tujini (v Tirani, Luxemburgu,  
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Andrea Grill was born in Bad Ischl, Austria, in 1975. She studied biology  
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work on butterflies, she is also a translator from Albanian. While starting  
out as a prose and essay writer, her most recent work focuses on poetry.  
She has published three books: an anthology of family member portraits,  
*Der gelbe Onkel. Ein Familienalbum* (The Yellow Uncle, A Family Album,  
2005); and two novels, *Zweischritt* (Two Step, 2007) and *Tränenlachen*  
(Laughing Tears, 2008). Her latest novel is an account of a love story be-  
tween an Albanian refugee and an Austrian student, in which she revives  
the decade of the 90s seen through the eyes of her protagonists. After  
living abroad for more than a decade, in Tirana, Luxembourg, Amster-  
dam, Neuchâtel, and Bologna, she now lives mostly in Vienna.

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# Andrea Grill



Foto © L.E.L. Raijmann

**MATI**

jé kot otrok,  
lepo govori,  
razvaja nas  
s slepimi  
očesnimi lisami,  
izvijaj se mi  
mirno vselej znova,  
ampak vedno  
si bova  
podobni, vsaj  
še do jutri  
če bi si lahko  
izposodila nos,  
bi jo dobro odnesla &  
ne bi bili več tako  
skladni, jaz sem  
kot otrok,  
lepo govorim,  
izvijam se  
ti vselej znova,  
ta plahost  
pred bližino,  
da te zasačijo,  
negotovih korakov  
se kot v rokavicah  
vrteti, moja  
mati zna vse vedno  
obrniti na dobro, s  
podlogo navzven

**MUTTER**

sie isst wie ein Kind  
sie spricht schön,  
verwöhnt uns mit  
den blinden  
Augenflecken,  
entwinde dich mir  
ruhig immer wieder  
nur gleich  
schauen werden wir uns  
ewig, mindestens  
bis morgen noch  
könnte man sich  
eine Nase borgen  
wäre man fein &  
herausen aus den Über-  
Einstimmungen, ich bin  
wie ein Kind, ich  
spreche schön,  
entwinde mich  
dir immer wieder  
neu, diese Scheu  
vor der Nähe  
ertappt zu werden,  
auf unsicheren Füßen  
wie in Handschuhen  
sich zu drehen, meine  
Mutter wendet immer  
alles zum Guten, mit dem  
Futter nach außen

**TI NISEM REKLA,**  
da si morava enkrat  
prav zares podati roko  
ne smem pozabiti da  
si zapomnim tvoj palec  
da si te moram enkrat  
za vselej dobro ogledati  
se odpraviti v gozd  
opustiti vsak dvom  
ti si v ogledalu  
že prej vse videl  
nikoli več ne bova tako  
daleč drug od drugega  
in tako blizu skupaj  
da je tvoja koža kot marelica  
bi te rada videla brez očal  
jih podržala v rokah  
prižela ob svoje lice  
očala, marelico in tebe

**ŽE KO SI**  
mi utrgal šipek,  
sem vedno znova

pomislila  
na bolj sočen sadež,  
zdaj, meni nasproti,  
drgneš, neutrudno,  
mizo do gladkega

nikoli si nisva podala  
rok, samo sadje,  
že ko si me prvič  
(predstavljaš si, da je bilo)

božaš polakiran les  
po krznu, kot bi bil  
moj največji ljubljencek

**HAB ICH ES DIR NICHT GESAGT,**

dass wir uns einmal richtig  
die Hand geben müssen  
ich nicht vergessen darf  
mir deinen Daumen zu merken  
dass ich dich einmal  
für immer anschauen muss  
in den Wald gehen  
keinen Zweifel haben  
du im Spiegel  
alles schon vorher gesehen hast  
wir nie mehr so weit  
voneinander fort sein werden  
und so nah beisammen  
dass deine Haut wie eine Marille ist  
ich dich ohne Brille sehen will  
sie in der Hand halten  
gegen meine Wange drücken  
die Brille, die Marille, und dich

**SCHON ALS DU**

mir die Hagebutte gepflückt  
hast, habe ich immer wieder

an eine saftigere Frucht  
gedacht  
jetzt, mir gegenüber  
reibst du, nimmermüde  
den Tisch glatt

nie haben wir uns die Hand  
gegeben, bloß Obst  
schon als du mich zum ersten Mal  
(stell dir vor, es wäre)

du streichelst dem lackierten Holz  
übers Fell, als wäre es  
mein allerliebstes Haustier



**GOZD**

je rekla  
ne drevesa ali zelenje  
ali na deželi,  
mar veš  
da ubiti komar  
na dlani  
diši po zemlji

**STOJIŠ TU VLEČEŠ**

rokave jopiča  
napol čez dlani  
obesiš plašč  
na stojalo  
da se le ne bi več  
zelo spreminjal

če boš prišel  
bi ti rada dala več  
kot le svojo dlan

že tedne in tedne  
na štedilniku  
čaka nate kava  
zaman

*Prevedla Ana Jasmina Oseban*

**WALD**

sagt sie  
nicht Bäume oder das Grüne  
oder aufs Land,  
hast du gewusst  
dass eine erschlagene Mücke  
nach Erde riecht  
auf der Hand

**DA STEHST DU ZIEHST**

die Ärmel halb über  
die Hände aus der Jacke  
hängst den Mantel  
an den Ständer  
wenn du dich nur  
nicht mehr sehr änderst

falls du kommst  
will ich dir mehr geben  
als meinen Arm

wochenlang schon  
halt ich auf dem Herd  
Kaffee für dich  
warm

**MOTHER**

eats like a child  
she speaks nicely,  
spoil us with  
her blind  
stained-eyes,  
feel free to disentwine  
from me again and again  
we will  
always look  
alike, at least  
until tomorrow  
if I could  
borrow a nose  
I would be sitting &  
pretty much in noncon-  
formity, I am  
like a child, I  
speak nicely,  
I disentwine from  
you again and  
again, this timidity  
from getting too close  
being caught red-handed,  
getting cold feet  
to treat the turns  
in kid gloves, my  
mother always turns  
everything for the better, with  
padding on the outside

**HAVEN'T I TOLD YOU**

that we should once properly  
hold hands  
I should not forget  
to remember your thumb  
that I must take a good look at  
you once and for all  
take a stroll through the forest  
erase all doubts  
in the mirror you  
have seen it all before  
we will not be so far away  
from each other any more  
and so close together  
that your skin feels like apricot  
to see you without glasses  
hold them in my hands  
press them against my cheek  
glasses, apricot, and you

**WHEN YOU ONCE**

picked a dog-rose berry  
for me, again and again

I kept thinking of  
a fruit more luscious  
now, facing me  
you are rubbing, tireless  
the table smooth

we never offered our  
hands, only fruit  
already when you first  
(imagine that)

you are stroking the lacquered  
wood's fur as if it were  
my favorite pet

**FOREST**

she says  
not the trees or the green  
or in the country,  
did you know  
that a squashed mosquito  
smells like earth  
on your palm

**YOU STAND HERE PULL**

your sleeves half over  
your hands out of the jacket  
hang the coat  
on a rack  
if only you would  
not change much any more

if you came  
I would give you more  
than my arm

week after week  
I keep the coffee warm  
for you  
on the stove

*Translated by Ana Jasmina Oseban*



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Miljenko Jergović se je rodil leta 1966 v Sarajevu, od junija 1993 živi v Zagrebu. Je pisatelj, pesnik, dramatik in novinar *Jutranjega lista* ter kolumnist sarajevskega *Oslobodenja* in beograjske *Politike*. Za svoje delo je prejel številne nagrade, med drugim nagrado Maka Dizdara in Goranovo nagrado (obe leta 1988) za pesniški prvenec *Opservatorija Varšava* (Observatorij Varšava), za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Sarajevski Marlboro* nagrado Ksaverja Šandorja Gjalskega (1994), nagrado Maticе Hrvatske za književnost in nagrado za umetnost Augusta Šenoae za zbirko novel *Buick Rivera* (2002), nagrado občine Grinzane (2003) za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Mama Leone* (1999), nagrado Društva pisateljev Bosne in Hercegovine (2003) za roman *Dvori od oraha* (*Dvori iz orehovine*), za roman *Ruta Tannenbaum* (2006) pa si je prislužil nagrado Meše Selimovića za najboljši roman leta na področju Bosne in Hercegovine, Srbije, Hrvaške in Črne gore (2007). Jergovićeve knjige so bile prevedene v dvajset jezikov. Slovenski prevod dela *Sarajevski Marlboro* je leta 2003 izšel pri dveh založbah – v prevodu Mateje Tirgušek pri založbi V.B.Z., v prevodu Sonje Polanc pa pri Centru za slovensko književnost. Založba Goga je leta 2003 izdala *Mama Leone* v prevodu Teje Kleč, pri založbi V.B.Z. pa so izšle še knjige *Buick Rivera* (2005) v prevodu Jurija Hudolina, *Dvori iz orehovine* (2005) v prevodu Aleša Čara in *Ruta Tannenbaum* (2007) v prevodu Mateje Tirgušek.

Miljenko Jergović was born in 1966 in Sarajevo; since June 1993 he has lived in Zagreb. Jergović is a writer, poet, dramatist and a journalist for *Jutranji list* as well as a columnist for the Sarajevo newspaper *Oslobodenje* and the Belgrade newspaper *Politika*. He has received numerous awards for his work, among them the Mak Dizdar Award and the Goran Award (both in 1988) for his first poetry collection *Opservatorija Varšava* (The Warsaw Observatory), the Ksaver Šandor Gjalski Award (1994) for the short story collection *Sarajevski Marlboro* (Sarajevo Marlboro), the Matica Hrvatska Literature Award and the August Šenoa Art Award for his collection of novellas *Buick Rivera* (2002), the Premio Grinzane Cavour prize (2003) for his short story collection *Mama Leone* (1999), the Bosnia and Herzegovina Writers' Association Prize (2003) for his novel *Dvori od oraha* (Mansions from Walnut Wood); his novel *Ruta Tannenbaum* (2006) won him the Meša Selimović Award for best novel of the year in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro (2007). His works have been translated into twenty languages. The Slovenian translation of the Sarajevo Marlboro was published by two publishing houses in 2003 – Mateja Tirgušek translated it for the V.B.Z. publishing house and Sonja Polanc for the Center za slovensko književnost publishing house. The Slovenian translation of *Mama Leone* by Teja Kleč was published by the Goga publishing house in 2003. In addition, the V.B.Z. publishing house published *Buick Rivera* (2005) translated by Jurij Hudolin, *Mansions From Walnut Wood* (2005) translated by Aleš Čar and *Ruta Tannenbaum* (2007) translated by Mateja Tirgušek.

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# Miljenko Jergović



Foto © Ivan Posavec



# Ruta Tannenbaum

(Odlomek)

I.

Nekaj mesecev po pogrebu narodnega vodje se je Salomon Tannenbaum odločil, da bo zasnubil Ivko Singer, hčer trgovca s kolonialnim blagom iz Mesniške ulice. Ivka je bila majhen drobiž od velike kupčije. Imela jih je že čez trideset, in če ne bi bilo Salomona, bi ostala neporočena. Vendar ne moremo reči, da je bila neprivlačna. Drobna, belopolta in s črnimi lasmi kot najbolj črna noč je bila videti kot kaplja španske krvi na asfaltu Ilice. Imela je največje oči, ki so kdajkoli pogledale Zagreb. V njene oči so se moški zaljubljali, ženske so se norčevale iz njih, otroci pa so se jih zaradi nečesa bali. Prihajale so v njihove sanje, iz njih so bile narejene njihove otroške more, zato so generaciji, rojeni v dvajsetih letih v ulicah okoli Ilice, oči Ivke Singer trajno ostale merilo strahu in groze. Vendar ti otroški glasovi niso bili razlog, da se Ivka tako dolgo ni poročila. Ne, prav nasprotno, Ivke se tako dolgo ni dalo dobiti za ženo, saj so te oči moški svet tako privlačile, da je stari Abraham Singer predolgo iskal najboljšega moža za svojo hčer.

Predolg je seznam vseh snubcev Ivke Singer, vendar so nekateri ostali dolgo v spominu, tako dolgo, dokler so živeli Singerji in Tannenbaumi, pa tudi, dokler je živelo čisto veselje do obrekovanja med tistimi, ki so jih poznali. Komaj je Ivka dopolnila petnajst let, jo je prišel snubit dubrovniški trgovec Mošo Benhabib, s katerim je oče trgoval že celih štirideset let, zato bi lahko rekli, da sta bila na neki način prijatelja. Mošo je imel hiše v Dubrovniku in Firencah, posestva na Madžarskem, Slavoniji in Banatu in je bil tako bogat, kot ne bo noben Singer nikoli. Nekoč zdavnaj je bil poročen, vendar je bil to čas mladosti, moči in oholosti, zato Mošo skoraj ni niti opazil, kdaj je njegova Rikica spustila dušico. Po njej se ni ženil, saj zaradi strašnih poslov ni imel časa, ko pa se je, v resnici prepozno, zavedel starosti, bližala so se mu že osemdeseta, si je zaželel kakšno, ki bi ga pospremila na drugi svet, še prej pa mu rodila naslednika.

»Ne bom dolgo živel, male ne bom mučil dolgo, zapustil pa ji bom tolikšno premoženje, da si bo pozneje lahko pripeljala celo abesinskega princa,« je rekel Abrahamu Singerju.

Oče tisto noč ni mogel zaspati. Prebedel je tudi naslednjo. Sedem dni in sedem noči Abraham Singer ni spal, na koncu pa odšel k Mošu in mu rekel, da Ivka ni zanj. Ta je to mirno sprejel:

»Tudi sam svojega otroka ne bi dal starcu,« je odgovoril Singerju, »nisem jezen nate, vendar ti želim, da niti ti niti tvoja lepa hči ne bosta nikoli obžalovala, da se ni poročila z menoj.«

Težko bi bilo uganiti, kdaj je Abraham prvič obžaloval, da Ivke ni dal Mošu Benhabibu, ali že čez mesec dni, ko je Mošo v Dubrovniku nepričakovano umrl in je vsa njegova imovina, saj ni imel nikogar od svojih,

# Ruta Tannenbaum

(Odlomak)

I.

Nekoliko mjeseci nakon sprovoda narodnoga vođe Salamon Tannenbaum odlučio je zaprositi Ivku Singer, kćer trgovca kolonijalnom robom iz Mesničke ulice. Ivka je bila sitan kusur od velike trgovine. Već je prešla tridesetu i ostala bi neudata da nije bilo Salomona. A ne bi se reklo da je bila neprivačna. Onako sitna, bjeloputa i kosa crnih kao najcrnja noć, izgledala je kao kap španjolske krvi na iličkome asfaltu. Imala je najkrupnije oči koje su ikada pogledale Zagreb. U te njezine oči muški bi se zaljublivali, ženske bi ih ismijavale, a djeca su ih se zbog nečega plašila. Dolazile su im u san, od njih su bile načinjene njihove dječje more, tako da su generaciji rođenoj dvadesetih godina u ulicama oko Ilice oči Ivke Singer trajno ostale mjerom straha i užasa. Ali nisu ti dječji strahovi bili razlogom zašto se ona tako dugo nije udavala. Ne, baš suprotno, Ivku se predugo nije dalo isprositi jer su te oči odraslu muškadiju toliko privlačile da je stari Abraham Singer predugo tražio najboljega muža za svoju kćer.

Predug bi bio popis svih prosaca Ivke Singer, ali neke se dugo pamtilo, toliko dugo koliko je bilo živih Singera i Tannenbauma, ali i čiste radosti ogovaranja među onima koji su ih poznavali. Jedva da je Ivka napunila petnaestu kada ju je došao prositi dubrovački trgovac Mošo Benhabib, s kojim je otac trgovao već punih četrdeset godina, pa bi se moglo reći da su bili i nekakvi prijatelji. Mošo je imao kuće u Dubrovniku i Firenci, posjede u Mađarskoj, Slavoniji i Banatu, i bio je bogat kako nikada nijedan Singer neće biti. Jednom davno bio je oženjen, ali bilo je to vrijeme mladosti, snage i oholosti pa Mošo skoro da nije ni primijetio kad mu je Rikica dušu ispustila. Nakon nje se nije ženio jer nije imao vremena od silnih poslova, ali kada je, istina prekasno, postao svjestan starosti, bližila mu se već osamdeseta, poželio je neku koja bi ga ispratila na drugi svijet, a prethodno mu rodila nasljednika.

– Nijesam ti ja od duga života, neću malu dugo mučiti, a ostavit ću joj blaga da si poslije može dovesti i princa abesinijskoga – rekao je Abrahamu Singeru.

Otac tu noć nije mogao zaspati. Probdio je i sljedeću. Sedam dana i sedam noći Abraham Singer nije spavao, da bi na kraju otišao k Moši i rekao mu kako Ivka nije za njega. Ovaj je to mirno primio:

– Ne bih ni ja svoje dijete dao za starca – kazao je Singeru – ne ljutim se na tebe, nego ti želim da ni ti, a ni tvoja lijepa kćer, nikada ne zažalite što nije za mene pošla.

Teško bi bilo pogađati kada je Abraham prvi puta zažalio što Ivku nije dao za Mošu Benhabiba, da li već za mjesec dana, kada je Mošo iznenada umro u Dubrovniku pa je sva njegova imovina, kako nije imao nikoga svoga

pa tudi oporoke ni zapustil, pripadla državi, ali je obžaloval pozneje, ko so na njegova vrata potrkali revnejši snubci.

Mošo Benhabib je v domu Singerjevih grenek spomin, zato ga niso omenjali, niti v šali ne, v vseh tistih vojnih in povojnih letih, medtem ko se je rušilo eno in ustvarjalo drugo cesarstvo, ko ni bilo kaj jesti, ko je pustošila španska bolezen, ko se je umiralo in hiralo na vse strani, od bolezni in viška zdravja, najhujše pa je bilo, da nisi mogel nikamor iti, pobegniti in se skriti, saj ni bilo denarja niti za ladijsko karto tretjega razreda.

E, Mošo, Mošo, zakaj nisi bil umrl kako leto prej in je sploh ne bi bil prišel snubit ali pa bi bil preživel še kakih deset let in se te ne bi spominjali po tvojem bogastvu ...

Prvi povojni Ivkin snubec je bil major kraljevske vojaške sanitete Ismael Danon, po rodu Beograjčan, uglajen in finih manir, vendar je stari Singer tudi njega zavrnil, saj se mu je zdelo, da je major malce preveč bučen in da morda sploh ni fin, če tako vpije. Morda se samo pretvarja in morda bo, kakor hitro mu bo dal Ivkin roko, pokazal svoj pravi neotesani srbski obraz. V tistem času Singerju vsi ti osvoboditelji in združitelji, ki so preplavili Zagreb in z blatom s svojih škornjev blatili mestne ulice, niso ravno zbujali občudovanja. Bal se je, da bi njihovo združevanje in osvobajanje lahko porodilo neko, še vedno nejasno, vendar nič manj resnično in strašno zlo. Odpravil je majorja Danona pri vratih, prenesel Ivkine solze, saj se je mala do ušes zaljubila v čednega Srba, ko pa je bilo že za vse prepozno, ko je major z zlomljenim srcem zaprosil in dobil premestitev v Skopje, je Abraham Singer od nekih klatežev in vojaških ogleduhov po naključju izvedel, zakaj je bil major Ismael Danon tako bučen. Na enem od njihovih *kajmakčalanov* ali *solunov* je ostal po eksploziji granate gluha na eno in naglušna na drugo uho, zato je hrumel, da bi slišal samega sebe. E, zakaj pa ni tega takrat povedal, je besnel stari Abraham, jaz pa sem mislil, da svojo hčer možim s paprikarjem in *larmadžijo*, rogoviležem, je kričal in nehote prevrnil veliko leseno skrinjo s pomarančami, da so se razsule po trgovini med nogami štirih klatežev in vojaških ogleduhov, tistih barab, ki so po Zagrebu štiri leta preganjali zeleni kader, zdaj pa so postali glavni karađorđevci v mestu.

»Nič vam ne bom plačal,« se je Singer drl na njih, »tudi če mi zažgete trgovino in razbijete izložbo.«

Odšli so s sklonjenimi glavami in osramočeni, da vohunijo in špijonirajo za nekoga drugega, verjetno pa je to s požiganjem trgovine in razbijanjem izložbe tudi njim čudno zvenelo. Še vedno ni prišel čas za take stvari, a tudi nikomur, razen staremu Abrahamu Singerju, ni padlo na pamet, da bi kdaj lahko prišel. Vendar ni bil on, da ne boste napačno razumeli, nikakršen prerok, ampak je imel samo slabe živce, kdaj pa kdaj ponorel, kot da je v morfijskem deliriju in se mu prikazujejo prizori, ki jih ne vidi nihče razen njega. Bogve, od katere babe je dobil to norost in histerijo, ampak po njej je bil Abraham Singer znan.

Leto ali dve po incidentu z naglušnim majorjem se je med snubci, katerih imena in usode so se že zdavnaj izbrisale in izgubile iz vsakogaršnjega spomina, na pragu doma Singerjevih pojavil Emil Kreševljak, mladenič v

niti je ostavio testamenat, pripala državi, ili je zažalio kasnije, kada su mu na vrata pokucali siromašniji prosoci.

Mošo Benhabib gorka je uspomena u domu Singerovih pa se zato i nije spominjao, makar i u šali, svih onih ratnih i poratnih godina, dok se rušilo jedno a stvaralo drugo carstvo, nije se imalo što za jesti, harala je španjolka, umiralo se i ginulo na sve strane, od bolesti i od viška zdravlja, ali najgore je što se nigdje nije moglo otići, pobjeći i sakriti se, jer nije bilo novca ni za brodsku kartu trećega razreda.

E, Mošo, Mošo, što ne umrije koju godinu ranije, pa da je ne dođeš prositi, ili što ne poživi još deset godina, pa da te se ne sjetе po tvome bogatstvu...

Prvi poslijeratni Ivkin prosac bio je major kraljevskoga vojnog saniteta Ismael Danon, rodом Beograđanin, uglađen i finih manira, ali je stari Singer i njega odbio jer mu se učinilo da je major malo previše bučan i da možda i nije tako fin ako toliko viče. Možda se samo pravi i možda će, čim mu da Ivkinu ruku, pokazati svoje pravo, geđžovansko srpsko lice. U to vrijeme Singeru baš i nisu imponirali svi ti osloboditelji i ujedinitelji koji su preplavili Zagreb i blatом sa svojih čizama zakaljali gradske ulice. Plašio se da bi od njihovih ujedinjenja i oslobodenja moglo doći neko, još uvijek nejasno, ali zato ne manje stvarno i strašno zlo. Otprovio je majora Danona s vrata, istrpio je Ivkine suze, jer se mala bila zaljubila do ušiju u zgodnoga Srbijanца, a kada je sve već bilo kasno, kada je major slomljena srca zatražio i dobio premještaj u Skoplje, Abraham Singer slučajno je, od nekih potukača i vojnih uhoda, saznao zašto je major Ismael Danon bio tako bučan. Na nekom od tih njihovih kajmakčalana ili soluna ostao je nakon eksplozije granate gluh na jedno i nagluh na drugo uho, pa je galamio da bi čuo samoga sebe. E, pa što onda to nije rekao, bjesnio je stari Abraham, nego da mislim kako svoju kćer dajem za paprikara i larmadžiju, vikao je i nehotice prevrnuo veliki drveni sanduk s narančama pa su se rasule po dućanu, među noge četvorice potukača i vojnih uhoda, onih propalica koje su četiri godine po Zagrebu i okolici gonili zeleni kadar, a sad su glavni karađorđevićevci u gradu.

– Ništa vam neću platiti – vikao je Singer na njih – pa taman da mi zapalite dućan i razbijete izlog.

Otišli su pokunjeni i osramoćeni da uhode i špijuniraju za nekoga drugog, a vjerojatno je i njima čudno zvučalo to s paljevinom dućana i razbijanjem izloga. Još uvijek nije došlo vrijeme za takve stvari, niti je kome, osim starome Abrahamu Singeru, padalo na pamet da bi moglo doći. A ni on, da se pogrešno ne shvati, nije bio nekakav prorok, nego je samo bio slab na živcima, katkad bi pomahnitao kao da je u morfijskome deliriju, pa bi mu se priviđali prizori koje nitko osim njega nije vidio. Bog zna od koje je babe to ludilo i tu histeriju pokupio, ali po njoj je Abraham Singer bio poznat.

Godinu ili dvije nakon incidenta s nagluhim majorom, među proscima čija su imena i sudbine već odavno prebrisani i izgubljeni iz bilo čijeg sjećanja, pojavio se na pragu doma Singerovih Emil Kreševljak, mladić ranih tridesetih, kojega je Abraham znao jer mu je jednom, tada kao

zgodnjih tridesetih, ki ga je Abraham poznal, saj je nekoč, tedaj kot zaobljubljeni duhovnik, prišel k njemu z naročilom za sedemsto enakih paketkov s kandiranim sadjem in *kitnkezom*, želejem iz melone, za neko sirotišnico v Bosni. Potreboval je tri dni, da je takšne paketke pripravil, potem pa ga je prečastiti Kreševljak prisilil, da je vse odvil, on pa jih je nato meril in tehtal, koliko je v katerem sadja, koliko pa *kitnkeza*, da se ja ne bi zgodilo, da bi kakšen otrok dobil manjše darilo od drugega. V njegovi pravičnosti je bilo nekaj temačnega, kar se ne da preprosto pojasniti in kar je Singer pozneje opisoval kot veliko zlo, nastalo iz samih dobrih del. Še tri dni je potreboval Abraham, da je ob nenehnem nadzoru prečastitega tako odtehtal vsak paketek, da niti kandirana malina v enem ni imela več kroglic kot kandirana malina v drugem paketku.

Potem pa je, nekaj let pozneje, stal Emil Kreševljak pred Abrahamom Singerjem, v obleki pariškega kroja, sešiti iz surove svile, z robčkom v žepu in diamantno iglo v kravati, cel okopan v kolonjski vodi, in navajal razloge, zakaj bi mu stari moral dati svojo hčer. To je počel prav tako pedantno, kot je tehtal sadje in odmerjal *kitnkez*, Singer pa ga je kot očaran poslušal, čeprav je že vnaprej vedel, da takšnemu človeku Ivke ne bo pustil, četudi bi bil zadnji mož in zadnji ženin na tem svetu.

Emil Kreševljak se je hvalil z duhovniškim poklicem. Le-ta človeku daje občutek odgovornosti za celo življenje, pa tudi urejenost. Bog ima rad urejene, tega se v semenišču najprej naučiš. To pa, da je pustil božjo službo, to je njegova stvar in se drugih ne tiče, tudi Emilovih najbližjih ne. Misterij, ki človeka pripravi, da se zaobljubi, je isti misterij, ki ga pripelje nazaj, da bo spet samo ovčica v čredi, je modroval Kreševljak in napletal svoje štrene okoli lepe Ivke Singer.

Videl jo je in se vanjo grešno zagledal že tisti dan, ko je prišel po paketke za sirotišnico.

Ko je snubec to priznal, se je v Abrahamu Singerju razpočil in se razlil po drobovju neki grenek sadež. Kljub temu ni rekel nič, še namrščil se ni, kot se mrščijo boleči trebušni končiči, ko jih na pomlad in na jesen obiščejo njihovi kronični čiri. Če bi bilo kaj pravice, bi zdaj tega bivšega popa, nosljajočega, kot da je sam škof, in mehkega kot slabo premešani *patispanj*, testo za biskvit, na glavo vrgel iz hiše, da se nikoli več ne bi vrnil, da bi ga izbrisal iz misli in izpred oči, kot vedra duša izbriše grde sinočnje sanje, ampak pravice ni in je tudi nikoli ne bo, niti za to mesto niti za ljudi v njem, saj nikoli ne povedo, kar v resnici mislijo, in vsa njihova nesreča izvira iz tega. Kako pa bi obstajala pravica za nekega Abrahama, judovskega šufta, kot bi rekla pijana Roža, če ji po tridesetih letih jemanja na kredo, na kredit, ki se nikoli ne vrne, ne bi več dal vsakdanjega litrčka vina. Zato stari Singer Emila Kreševljaka ni vrgel ven, ko mu je le-ta priznal, da je kot duhovnik gledal Ivko, takrat še deklenco, katere oče je zavrnil komaj dva, tri snubce, ampak je pustil, naj našteva razloge, zaradi katerih bi mu moral dati njeno roko.

»Težki časi so, gospod Singer,« je vzdihoval Kreševljak, »težki, težki, zelo težki. Pa še težji bodo,« je poskočil kot petelinček in postal takoj zaskrbljen, »še posebej za tiste, ki so ostali Kristusu za hrbtom, vi pa ste, gospod Singer,

zaređeni svećenik, došao s narudžbom za sedam stotina istovjetnih paketića s kandiranim voćem i kitnkezom, za nekakvo sirotište u Bosni. Trebala su mu tri dana da takve paketiće sastavi, a onda ga je velečasni Kreševljak tjerao da ih sve odmota, pa je mjerio i vagao koliko u kojemu ima voća a koliko kitnkeza, da se ne dogodi da neko dijete dobije manji dar od drugoga. U tom njegovom pravedništvu bilo je nečega mračnog, što se ne da lako objasniti ali što je Singer kasnije opisivao kao veliko zlo načinjeno od sve samih dobročinstava. Još tri je dana Abrahamu trebalo da, uz stalni nadzor velečasnog, tako odvagane svaki paketić da ni kandirana malina u jednome nije imala više bobica od kandirane maline u drugome paketiću.

I onda je, nekoliko godina kasnije, Emil Kreševljak stajao pred Abrahamom Singerom, u odijelu pariškoga kroja, sašivenom od sirove svile, s maramicom u džepiću i dijamantnom iglom u kravati, sav okupan u kolonjskoj vodi, i iznosio razloge zašto bi mu stari trebao dati svoju kćer. Činio je to pedantno, jednako kao što je vagao voće i mjerkao kitnkez, a Singer ga je kao opčinjen slušao, iako je unaprijed znao da takvome čovjeku Ivku neće pustiti, pa neka je zadnji muž i zadnji ženik na ovome svijetu.

Emil Kreševljak hvalio se svećeničkim zvanjem. Ono čovjeku pruža osjećaj odgovornosti za cijeli život, ali i urednost. Bog voli uredne, to se prvo u sjemeništu nauči. A to što je napustio službu Božju, to je njegova stvar i ne tiče se drugih, čak ni Emilovih najbližih. Misterij koji čovjeka navede da se zaređi isti je misterij koji ga vrati natrag, da opet bude samo ovčica u stadu, mudrovao je Kreševljak i vezao svoj vez oko lijepe Ivke Singer.

Vidio ju je, i u nju se grješno zagledao, još onoga dana kada je došao po paketiće za sirotište.

Kako je prosac to priznao, neka gorka voćka raspuknula se u Abrahamu Singeru i razlila mu se po utrobi. Ali ništa nije rekao, nije se čak ni namrgodio, kao što se mrgode trboboljni nervčici kada ih, s proljeća i s jeseni, posjete njihovi kronični ulceri. Da je pravde, sad bi tog raspopa, unjkavoga kao da je glavom biskup i mekanog kao slabo umiješena patišpanja, naglavce izbacio iz kuće, da mu se više nikada ne vrati, da ga iz misli i iz očiju izbriše, kao što vedra duše briše ružne sinoćnje snove, ali pravde nema, niti će je ikada biti, za ovaj grad i za ljude u njemu, jer oni nikada ne kažu ono što zaista misle i sva njihova nesreća je iz toga. A kako bi bilo pravde za jednoga Abrahama, židovskoga šufta, kako bi to kazala pijana Roža, kada joj, nakon trideset godina veresije, više ne bi, na kredit koji se nikada ne vraća, dao svakodnevnu litrenku vina. Zato stari Singer nije izbacio Emila Kreševljaka kada mu je priznao da je kao pop gledao Ivku, tada još djevojčicu, od koje je otac tek odbio dva-tri prosca, nego ga je pustio da nabraja razloge zbog kojih bi mu trebao dati njezinu ruku.

– Teška su vremena, gospodine Singer – uzdisao je Kreševljak – teška, teška, jako teška. Ali bit će još teža – poskočio je poput pjetlića pa se odmah zabrinuo – pogotovu za one koji su ostali Kristu za ledima, a vi ste, gospodine Singer, dobar čovjek, na čast sebi i svojoj obitelji, ali znate kako je, ljudi su gladni, sirotinje je na svakome koraku, a u takvim prilikama

dober človek, v čast sebi in svoji družini, vendar veste, kako je, ljudje so lačni, revščina je na vsakem koraku, v takšnih okoliščinah pa najprej trpijo ravno takšni, kot ste vi. Morate se zaščititi, gospod Singer, zdaj imate priložnost: jaz sem se v Ivko zagledal, zaradi nje sem prelomil duhovniške zaobljube, in nobena druga me ne zanima. Če ji pustite, da me vzame, boste tudi vi prišli pred oči našega Gospoda in nihče več vas ne bo vprašal, kaj ste in kdo ste in katere veroizpovedi ste. Če mi boste dali Ivčico, boste svoboden človek.«

Stari Abraham je poslušal Emila Kreševljaka, celo ukazal je, naj ga zadržijo na kosilu, in ga za nedeljsko mizo posadil zraven Ivke, njene roke pa mu ni dal.

»Lahko ostaneva prijatelja,« je začel sredi kosila, »vendar ona ni za vas.«

Kreševljaku se je zaletela piščančja perutnička, zakašljal je in odprl usta, da bi nekaj rekel, ampak Singer se je nagnil čez mizo in ga prijel za roko:

»Piščančja koščica je lahko nevarnejša od ribje. Pazite, ne bi vas rad imel na vesti.«

Kmalu potem, ko je zavrnil bivšega duhovnika, se je prikazal novi snubec, študent Hajim Abeatar. Abraham ga je vprašal po družini, on pa je odgovarjal, da sta njegova oče in mama mrtva, bližnjih sorodnikov nima, z daljnimi je prekinil vse stike. Nobene lastnine nima, razen štipendije nekakšnega judovskega društva iz Sarajeva, ki redno prihaja, tako da nikomur ne bi bil v breme, preden konča študij in najde službo.

»Zakaj pa bi pustil svoji hčeri, da bi se poročila s tabo?« je vprašal Singer.

»Zato ker je prišel njen čas za poroko,« je skomignil z rameni mladenič.

Njega si je zapomnil, ker je bil edini, ki ni ničesar obljubljal, pa tudi ničesar zahteval. Hajim je bil blede, neizrazitih potez obraza, niti majhen niti visok, takšen, da ga z lahkoto pozabiš in da ne bo nikoli nikomur, razen tistemu društvu, ki ga je štipendiralo, niti malce v breme.

Kdo ve, morda je bil pravi možki za Abrahamovo hčer.

Potem pa dolgo ni bilo nikogar, sosedje so se že spraševali, kaj je narobe z Ivko Singer, da se ni poročila, ko se je pojavil Salomon Tannenbaum.

*Prevedla Mateja Tirgušek*

najprije stradaju baš takvi kao što ste vi. Morate se zaštititi, gospodine Singer, sad vam je prilika: ja sam se u Ivku zagledao, zbog nje sam svećeničke zavjete raskinuo, i nijedna me druga ne zanima. Ako je pustite da za mene pođe, i vi ćete Gospodinu našem pred oči doći i više vas nitko neće upitati što ste i tko ste i od kojega ste vjerozakona. Date li mi Ivčicu, bit ćete slobodan čovjek.

Saslušao je stari Abraham Emila Kreševljaka, i još je naložio da ga se zadrži na ručku pa ga je, za nedjeljnim stolom, postavio da sjedi uz Ivku, ali mu nije dao njezinu ruku.

– Možemo ostati prijatelji – započeo je usred ručka – ali ona nije za vas.

Kreševljak se zagrcnuo pilećim krilcem, pa se nakašljao i zaustio da nešto kaže, ali se Singer nagnuo preko stola i uhvatio ga za ruku:

– Pileća koščica zna biti gora od riblje. Nemojte da vas nosim na duši.

Malo nakon što je odbio raspopa, stigao je novi prosac, student Hajim Abeatar. Pitao ga je Abraham za familiju, a on je odgovarao da su mu otac i majka mrtvi, nema bližih rođaka, dok je s daljima prekinuo svaki kontakt. Nikakve imovine nema, osim stipendije nekakvoga židovskog društva iz Sarajeva, ali ona mu redovito stiže pa nikome ne bi bio na brizi prije nego što završi studije i nađe posao.

– A zašto bih pustio svoju kćer da pođe za tebe? – upitao je Singer.

– Zato što joj je vrijeme da se uda – slegnuo je ramenima mladić.

Njega je zapamtio jer jedini ništa nije obećavao, niti je što tražio. Hajim je bio blijed, nerazabranih crta lica, pognut, ni malen ni visok, takav da ga se lako zaboravi i da nikada nikome, osim tom društvu koje ga je stipendiralo, nimalo ne bude na teret.

Tko zna, možda je bio pravi čovjek za Abrahamovu kćer.

A onda dugo nije bilo nikoga, već su se susjedi pitali što to ne valja na Ivki Singer da se nije udala, kada se pojavio Salamon Tannenbaum.



# Ruta Tannenbaum

*(Excerpt)*

I.

A few months after the funeral of the nation's leader, Salamon Tannenbaum decided to ask for the hand of Ivka Singer, the daughter of a dealer in colonial goods in Mesnička Street. Ivka was the small change in a big transaction. She was already past thirty and would have remained unmarried had it not been for Salamon. And no one would have said that she was unattractive. Petite as she was, fair-skinned and with hair as black as the darkest night, she looked like a drop of Spanish blood on the asphalt of Ilica Street. She had the biggest eyes that ever beheld Zagreb. Men would fall in love with her eyes, women would mock them, and children were afraid of them for some reason. Her eyes would come to them in dreams, and were the stuff of their nightmares, so that Ivka Singer's eyes remained the essence of fear and horror for the generation born in the twenties in the streets around Ilica. But those childhood fears weren't the reason why it took so long for her to marry. No, quite the contrary, Ivka's hand was not given in marriage for so long because those eyes were so attractive to adult men that old Abraham Singer took too long looking for the best man for his daughter.

A register of all of Ivka Singer's suitors would be too long, but some were remembered for a long time, as long as there were living Singers and Tannenbaums as well as the pure joy of gossip among others who knew them. Ivka had barely turned fifteen when the Dubrovnik merchant Mošo Benhabib came to court her, with whom her father had had business dealings for a full forty years, so that one could say that they were friends of a sort. Mošo had houses in Dubrovnik and Florence, estates in Hungary, Slavonia and Banat, and was far richer than any Singer ever would be. He had been married once long ago, but that had been a time of youth, strength and arrogance and so Mošo had hardly noticed when his Rikica gave up the ghost. After her he hadn't married because he didn't have time due to all of his business dealings, but when he became aware of his age—too late to be sure—he was already nearly eighty, and he wished to have a woman see him off to the other world, and beforehand to bear him an heir.

"I'm not long for this world, you see, I won't torment the little lady too long, and I'll leave her wealth enough to bring over the prince of Abyssinia," he told Abraham Singer.

That night her father couldn't get to sleep. He spent the following night awake, too. Adam Singer didn't sleep for seven days and seven nights, and in the end he went to Mošo and told him that Ivka wasn't for him. The latter took the news calmly:

"I wouldn't give my child to an old man either," he told Singer, "I'm not angry with you; I hope rather that neither you nor your beautiful daughter ever regret her not marrying me."

It would be difficult to say when was the first time that Abraham regretted not having given Ivka's hand to Mošo Benhabib, whether it was only a month later, when Mošo suddenly died in Dubrovnik and his estate went to the state, as he had no surviving family and hadn't left a will, or whether he regretted it only later, when poorer suitors started knocking on his door.

Mošo Benhabib was a bitter memory in the Singer household and therefore wasn't mentioned, not even in jest, all those years during and after the war, as one empire was collapsing and another was coming into being, and there was nothing to eat, the Spanish flu raged, people died or were killed in droves, from disease or a surfeit of health. But worst of all was the fact that there was nowhere to go, to flee and hide, because no one had enough money for a third-class ticket on a ship.

Eh, Mošo, Mošo if only you had died a month earlier, so you wouldn't have come to ask for her hand, or lived ten more years, so no one would remember you for your wealth...

Ivka's first post-war suitor was one Ismael Danon, a major in the Royal Army's sanitation corps, a Belgrader, polished and with fine manners, but the old Singer refused him too because he got the impression that the major was a little too noisy and maybe wasn't so fine if he raised his voice so much. Maybe he was only putting on an act and would show his true, boorish, Serbian face as soon as he received Ivka's hand. At that time, Singer was not exactly impressed by all those liberators and unifiers who had flooded Zagreb and soiled its streets with the mud from their boots. He feared their unifications and liberations might lead to some, still undefined, but no less real and terrible evil. He turned Major Danon away at his doorstep, endured Ivka's tears, because his little girl had fallen in love from head to toe with the handsome Serb; and when it was already too late for anything, when the brokenhearted major had sought and received a transfer to Skoplje, Abraham Singer found out by chance from some vagabonds and spies why Major Ismael Danon was so loud. On one of those campaigns of theirs in Kajmakčalan or Salonika, Ismael Danon had completely lost the hearing in one ear and partially in the other from a grenade explosion, and so he made so much noise just to hear himself. *Well, why didn't he say that*, the old Abraham wondered enraged, *instead of me thinking I was giving my daughter off to pepper farmer and loud-mouth*, he shouted and accidentally knocked over a large wooden box of oranges, which rolled all over his shop, between the feet of the four vagabonds and spies, those good-for-nothings who had been chasing the greencoats around Zagreb for four years and were now Karadordević's main agents in the city.

"I'm not going to pay you anything," Singer shouted at them, "even if you set my shop on fire and smash the windows."

They left, humiliated and ashamed that they had been spying for someone else, and that bit about setting the shop alight and smashing the display windows probably sounded strange to them, too. The time had not yet come for such things, nor did it occur to anyone apart from old Abraham Singer that it could. And, to make things clear, it wasn't that he was some kind of prophet; he merely had weak nerves. Once in a while he would go crazy as if he were in some morphinic delirium and he would have visions that no one else could see. God knows who of the women in his family he had inherited that madness and hysteria from, but Abraham Singer was known for that.

A year or two after the incident with the deaf major, among the suitors whose names and fates have been erased and lost from anyone's memory, there appeared on the Singer's doorstep one Emil Kreševljak, a young man in his early thirties, whom Abraham knew because he had once come to him as an ordained priest with an order for seven hundred identical packages of candied fruit and quince curd for some poor children in Bosnia. It took him three days to put the packages together, but then Father Kreševljak made him unwrap all of them, and measured and weighed how much candied fruit and quince there was in each of them, so that no child would receive a smaller gift than any other. There was something dark in that fairness of his, something that is hard to explain but that Singer later described as a great evil made of nothing but good deeds. It took Abraham three more days under the constant supervision of the priest to weigh out every package to make sure that the candied raspberries did not weigh a gram more in one package than in another.

And then, several years later, Emil Kreševljak was standing before Abraham Singer, in a suit of Parisian cut, sewed out of pure silk, with a kerchief in his pocket and a diamond pin in his tie, awash in the scent of eau de cologne, and enumerating the reasons why the old man should give him his daughter. This he did pedantically, just as he had weighed out the quince curd, and Singer listened to him as if spellbound, though he knew beforehand that he would never give Ivka to such a man, no matter if he were the last man and last eligible bridegroom on the face of the earth.

Emil Kreševljak boasted of his priestly rank. It lends a man a sense of responsibility throughout his entire life, as well as a certain orderliness. God loves orderly people, that's the first thing one is taught in seminary school. And the fact that he had left the Divine service, that was his business and did not concern anyone else, not even Emil's closest family. The mystery that leads a man to take up the cloth is the same mystery that leads him to give it up, to become again a sheep in the flock, Kreševljak philosophized and wove his net around the beautiful Ivka Singer.

He had seen her, and lusted after her, the very day that he had come for the little packages for the poor children.

When her suitor confessed to that, a bitter fruit burst inside Abraham Singer and its juice spread through his insides. But he said nothing, he didn't even frown, as nervous men sick in the gut frown in the spring and

autumn when visited by their chronic ulcers. If there were any justice, he would have thrown that unfrocked priest, who spoke in nasal tones as if he had a bishop's head on his shoulders, and whose skin was soft like a badly kneaded stollen, headlong out of his house, so he would never come back, to erase him from his thoughts and his sight, just as a cheerful soul erases last night's bad dreams. But there is no justice, nor will there ever be, for this city and its people, because they never say what they're really thinking, and that is the root of all their misfortune. And how could there be justice for one Abraham Singer, a Jewish creep, as drunken Roža would put it, when after thirty years of credit, he would not give her her daily liter of wine and put it on a tab that would never be paid? That was why the old Singer didn't throw out Emil Kreševljak when he admitted that while still a priest he had looked upon Ivka, who at that time was still a little girl, and from whom her father had just refused two or three suitors, but let him continue counting the reasons why he should give him her hand.

"Times are hard, Mr. Singer," Kreševljak sighed, "hard, hard, very hard. But they'll be harder still," and he jumped up like a cockerel and his face immediately showed concern, "especially for those who turned their back on Christ. And, Mr. Singer, you are a good man, to your own credit and that of your family, but you know how it is, the people are hungry, you meet them every step of the way, and in such circumstances it is people like you who suffer first. You must protect yourself, Mr. Singer. Now you have an opportunity: I lusted after Ivka, I renounced my priestly oath because of her, and no other woman holds any interest for me. If you let her come with me, you too will find favor in the eyes of our Lord and no one will ask you any more what you are and who you are and what your confession is. If you give me little Ivka, you'll be a free man."

Old Abraham listed to what Emil Kreševljak had to say, and even ordered arrangements for him stay for lunch and set him next to Ivka at the Sunday dining table, but he did not give him her hand.

"We can still be friends," he began in the middle of the lunch, "but she's not for you.

Kreševljak choked on a chicken wing, cleared his throat and opened his mouth to say something, but Singer leaned across the table and took him by the hand:

"Those little chicken bones can be worse than fish bones. Please don't let me have you on my conscience."

Not long after he refused the unfrocked priest, another suitor appeared, Hajim Abeatar, a student. Abraham asked him about his family, and he answered that his father and mother were dead, that he had no other close relatives, and that he had broken off all contact with those more distant. He had no property apart from a stipend from some Jewish society in Sarajevo, but it arrived regularly so he wouldn't be a burden to anyone before he completed his studies and found work.

"And why would I let my daughter go off with you?" Singer asked him.

"Because it's time for her to marry," said the young man and shrugged his shoulders.

He remembered him because he hadn't promised or sought anything. Hajim was pale, with no distinguishing facial features, neither short nor tall, so that it was easy for him to be forgotten and to be no burden at all on anyone other than the society that gave him his stipend.

Who knows, maybe he was the right man for Abraham's daughter?

And then there was no one for a long time. The neighbors were already wondering what it was about Ivka that kept her from getting married when Salamon Tannenbaum appeared.

*Translated by Stephen M. Dickey*



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Štefan Kardoš se je rodil leta 1966 v Murski Soboti v Sloveniji. Na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani je diplomiral iz slovenščine in sociologije kulture, zaposlen je kot profesor slovenščine na Dvojezični srednji šoli Lendava. Skupaj z Normo Bale in Robertom Titanom Felixom je soavtor romana *Sekstant* (2002), ki se je uvrstil med pet finalistov za nagrado kresnik leta 2003. Objavlja pesmi, prozo in strokovna besedila v slovenskih literarnih in strokovnih revijah, kot so *Mentor*, *Dialogi*, *Sodobnost*, *Slavistična revija* in *Lindua*. Skupaj z R. Titanom je pripravil in izdal zbornik *Stolpnica na brazdah* (2002), v katerem je predstavil mlajše umetnike, prevajalce in strokovnjake s področja humanistike iz Pomurja. Bil je predsednik Slavističnega društva Prekmurja in Prlekije, kot urednik je sodeloval tudi pri založbi Franc-Franc. Njegov roman *Rizling polka* (2007) je prejel nagrado kresnik 2008 za najboljši slovenski roman leta.

Štefan Kardoš was born in 1966 in Murska Sobota, in Slovenia. At the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana he graduated in Slovene language and literature and the sociology of culture. Kardoš works as a teacher of Slovene at the Bilingual Secondary School in Lendava. He co-authored (together with Norma Bale and Robert Titan Felix) the novel *Sekstant* (Sextant, 2002), which became one of the five finalists for the 2003 Kresnik Prize. He publishes poems, prose and professional articles in Slovene literary magazines and other specialised magazines such as *Mentor*, *Dialogi*, *Sodobnost*, *Slavistična revija* and *Lindua*. Together with R. Titan he prepared and published the almanac *Stolpnica na brazdah* (A Skyscraper on Furrows, 2002), in which he presented younger artists, translators and humanists from Prekmurje. He was President of the Slavistic Society of Prekmurje and Prlekija, and as editor he also worked with the Franc-Franc publishing house. His novel *Rizling polka* (Riesling Polka, 2007) received the 2008 Kresnik Prize for the best Slovene novel of the year.

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Štefan Kardoš





## Pobočje sončnega griča

V tistem nesrečnem Dolu nikdar ni bilo ne deklic ne deklet. Še danes jih ni, žensk, so le postarani samski moški, ki jim ni uspelo pravočasno pobegniti od tam. Redke gospodične, ki jih je morda kdaj vendarle zaneslo v zatohlo grapo, se v tamkajšnji senci nikoli niso poskušale odpočiti. Še manj v objemu katerega od moških. Že kot otrok si vedel, da je življenje lahko le drugje ... tam, kjer ne živijo samo moški. Pot do tja pa je vodila čez pobočja sončnih gričev, ki so obdajali dolinico in zastirali pogled v prihodnost. A čeprav smo se tega zavedali vsi, je pobegniti uspelo le redkim. Tisti, ki so si drznili kreniti po položnih pobočjih bregov, so bili skoraj vedno privedeni nazaj, še preden so se dotaknili obzorja za njimi. Poskušali smo vsi, a večina se jih je po nekaj poskusih vdala v samotarsko usodo, ki je bila za ljudi v tistih krajih neizprosno zakoličena.

Že leta živim spodaj na ravnici, v hiši na samem obrobju mesta, tik ob poljih. Pogled s terase na dvorišču se razprostira čez ravnico proti vzhodu, tukaj ni ničesar, kar bi ga lahko ustavilo, ni ne sončnih gričev, pa tudi nikogar ne, ki bi te privedel nazaj, če bi želel oditi. A že dolgo več ne želim oditi, zdaj je, kar je, in dobro je tako, kot je.

Ta nepričakovani spomin na Dol in gorečo deško željo po pobegu od tam je priplaval na površje moje zavesti ob srečanju s podarjeno sliko, na kateri je upodobljena krajina, podobna tisti iz dežel mojega otroštva. Slika zdaj že dober teden visi na steni dnevne sobe. Ob ugodju, ki sem se mu v tem času z veseljem predajal ob ogledovanju podobe (ugodje je najbrž vzbujal spomin na tisti že davno pozabljeni občutek popolne varnosti, lasten le preprosti otroški duši), se je vse pogosteje začel oglašati tudi občutek nelagodja, najbrž povezan prav s tisto gorečo otroško željo po begu. Komaj zaznaven, a nadležen občutek, ki bi se ga na vsak način rad znebil, kajti v hišo je prinesel nepotreben nemir.

Sliko sem dobil v dar od mesta ob zadnjem prazniku: olje na platnu ne povsem običajnih dimenzij (35 x 120 cm), upodobitev blago gričevnate pokrajine, ki počiva v močnem soju pozno popoldanskega poletnega sonca. Ni ravno tipična slika za slikarja, ki je znan po temačnih oljih: že leta z njegovih platen zevajo spiralaste črne luknje, ta pravokotna emanacija svetlobe pa se mi je že ob prvem pogledu nanjo zdela nekaj povsem drugega.

Krajina je zažarela s stene slikarjevega ateljeja takoj, ko mi je tistega zimskega večera odprl vrata in me - neodločnega, mencajočega, po Dušinem posredovanju napotenega k njemu na dom - zvabil čez prag, da bi skupaj izbrala; morda je zažarela bolj, kot bi sicer, tudi zato, ker sem pred tem dolgo taval po večernih, skoraj povsem zapuščenih in v led okovanih ulicah v bližini Kanala, to na steni pa je bilo pravo nasprotje temačnosti in zmrzali tam zunaj: toplo, svetlo, tako domače ... nasprotno tudi vsemu drugemu v ateljeju. A se sliki vseeno nisem posvetil takoj, takrat se mi je zdelo, da si je treba že iz vljudnosti ogledati vse, kar se ponuja na

## The Sunny Hill Slope

There have never been any girls at sad old Dol, little or big. There are none today, either – no women, only elderly single men who have not managed to escape in time. The few damsels who may have stumbled by chance on the musty gorge have never sought rest in its shade. Still less in the arms of any of the men. Even as a child you knew that life could only be elsewhere ... somewhere where not only men lived. And the road there led across the slopes of the sunny hills surrounding the dell, blocking the view into the future. Yet even though we were all aware of this, it was few who managed to escape. Those who ventured on the gentle hill slopes were almost always brought back before they had touched the horizon beyond. We all tried, but after a few attempts most resigned themselves to a loner's fate, which was inexorably marked out for the people of those parts.

I have lived for years on the plain below, in a house on the very edge of town, next to the fields. The view from the courtyard terrace stretches over the plain to the east, nothing there to stop it, no sunny hills and nobody to bring you back if you wanted to leave. But I have not wanted to leave in a long time, things are as they are, and they are good as they are.

This sudden memory of Dol and of my burning boy's desire to escape from it surfaced in my mind as I encountered a painting, a gift, featuring a landscape like the lands of my childhood. The painting has hung on my living-room wall for more than a week now. The pleasure in which I have happily indulged when viewing the picture (probably awakened by an echo of that long-forgotten feeling of perfect security peculiar to a child's simple soul) has lately been accompanied by ever more frequent stabs of uneasiness, probably linked to that burning childhood desire to escape. A barely perceptible yet annoying feeling that I should have dearly liked to shake off, for it had brought into the house a needless unrest.

The painting had been the town's gift to me at the last festival: oil on canvas of slightly uncommon dimensions (35 by 120 cm), the picture of a gently rolling landscape resting in the mellow glow of the late-afternoon summer sun. Hardly typical of a painter famous for his murky oil-paintings: for years, his canvases have yawned with spiralling black holes, while this rectangular emanation of light had struck me as completely different at the very first glance.

The landscape had glowed from the wall of the painter's studio as soon as he opened the door on that winter's evening, luring me – uncertain, fidgeting, having been directed to his home address by Duša's arrangement – across the threshold so that we might choose together; perhaps it glowed more brightly than it would have done ordinarily, in part because I had long been wandering through the almost deserted and ice-bound evening streets near Kanal, and what was hanging on the wall was a stark contrast to the gloom and frost out there: warm, bright, so homely ... a contrast, too, to everything else in the studio. Still, I did not attend to the

ogled, in se obnašal kot otrok, ki najprej z muko gloda trdo krušno skorjo samo zato, da bi bila naslada, ko se bo naposled lotil mehke sredice kruha, toliko večja: natančno in po vrsti sem si ogledoval razstavljene eksponate, samo da bi pogled čim dlje odvrčal od zelene slike.

Na steni je viselo še eno platno podobnih dimenzij, prav tako krajina, spokojno hladna: lesketajoči se okljuki lene reke, ki se počasi vije med jelševjem v zamolko svetlobo večernega somraka. Malo višje nad obema pravokotnima platnoma je svetlobo požirala ena od njegovih črnih slik, menda zgodnjih, obešenih je bilo še dvojje platen drugih avtorjev, slikarjevih prijateljev. Na slikarskem stojalu nedaleč od vrat pa je prav tako samevala »črna«, še nedokončana, ta je bila res tipična zanj – kot iz katalogov in priročnikov!

Da bi spila kavo, je v nekem trenutku predlagal slikar, hotel se je izkazati kot vljuden gostitelj, me poskušal zamotiti in sprostiti s pogovorom, ljudje se velikokrat pogovarjamo samo zato, da bi preglasili tišino, odgovoril sem mu, da kave ne bi, prepozno je bilo za kavo, kava mi zvišuje že tako previsok krvni tlak, ponoči bi se zbujal še pogosteje, kot se sicer.

»Ti si z družino v Ljubljani,« je potem bolj zatrdil kot vprašal in bil je zelo presenečen, ko sem mu povedal, da ne. Moral me je s kom zamenjati, ne vem, ali bi mu moral razlagati, kdo sem, bila je pač pomota, zagotovo, nesporazum; sicer pa – bi se kar koli spremenilo, če bi mu pojasnjeval, da sem nekdo drug, kot misli, da sem, je to sploh bilo pomembno!

Medtem ko sem nemirno prestopal pred »črno« na stojalu in iskal pravi položaj, je slikar zastiral svetlobo nad platnom in me opozarjal, da je treba ujeti resice svetlobe na črnini pod pravim kotom, le tedaj te nebarva potegne vase; te slike se pač ne da obesiti kamor koli, pa tudi gledati ne od koder koli. In res, že majhen premik glave v levo je bil dovolj, da se je črni monolit usločil v svetlobno spiralo, ki se je potem počasi ugrezala v črnino.

»Le zakaj se mi je potem zdelo, da živite v Ljubljani!«

Da bo »črna« ostala na stojalu, je bilo slikarju jasno mogoče celo prej kot meni, človek ima izkušnje s pogledi, ki otipavajo platna v njegovem ateljeju. (Mimogrede: skoraj dvajset let je že od Ljubljane, študentski časi, niti predstavljam si ne več, da bi ... slikar je le prikimal, da on tudi ne.) Namignil je proti krajinama na steni: da mora včasih pobegniti iz vse te črnine, se je skoraj že opravičeval, a da v bistvu gre za isti princip, za iskanje svetlobe. Lesketajoča se reka na zamolkli pravokotni je Krka na Dolenjskem, na tisti drugi sliki – naposled sva prišla tudi do tega – je Goričko. Saj ne da pokrajine ne bi z gotovostjo prepoznal sam, to je vendar pokrajina mojega otroštva, le širokokotni izrez me je nekoliko begal, tak je najbrž lahko le pogled človeka, ki odraste na ravnici.

Slika prikazuje položno, s popoldanskim soncem obsijano pobočje tipične goričke krajine; v središču podobe leži zlato žitno polje, v katero se zajeda trikotna senca, ki jo meče drevje na njegovi levi, na vrhu pobočja so vidni obronki gozda v sončnih barvah, pod poljem je travnik; slikarjev pogled je podobo ujel z druge, osojne strani dolinice, po kateri morda teče potok, a tega je mogoče le zaslutiti. Svetlobni kontrast tvorita temno

painting at once: I felt that, for politeness' sake alone, I had to inspect everything on view, and acted like a child who begins by gnawing laboriously at the hard bread crust, only to feel an even keener pleasure on getting round to the soft inside part at last: I viewed the exhibits on display carefully, one after the other, only to keep my gaze away from the coveted painting as long as possible.

The wall sported another canvas of similar dimensions, again a landscape, serenely cool: the shimmering curves of a lazy river slowly winding its way among alders into the muted evening twilight. A little above the two rectangular canvases, the light was being devoured by one of his black paintings – the early ones, as he said – and there hung two more canvases by other authors, the painter's friends. The easel not far from the door held another lone "black", unfinished, perfectly typical of him – a textbook or catalogue example!

A cup of coffee was suggested by the painter at some point, he wanted to prove himself a polite host, trying to distract and set me at my ease by chatting, we often chat only to drown the silence, I replied that I would rather not, it was too late in the day for coffee, coffee raises my already high blood pressure, I would wake at night even more often than I do now.

"You live in Ljubljana with your family," he stated rather than asked, and was very surprised when I told him I did not. He must have mistaken me for someone, I wonder if I should have explained who I was, it was a mistake, surely, a misunderstanding; but after all – would it have made any difference if I had set about explaining that I was someone other than he thought, did it even matter!

While I was shifting restlessly in front of the "black" on the easel, seeking the right vantage point, the painter screened the canvas from the light overhead, reminding me that the tassels of light on the black had to be caught under the right angle, only then would the non-colour suck you in; this painting simply could not be hung just anywhere, nor watched from anywhere. Indeed, it took but a tiny movement of the head to the left for the black monolith to swirl into a spiral of light, slowly sinking into the blackness.

"I wonder what made me think, then, that you lived in Ljubljana!"

Perhaps the painter knew even before I did that the "black" would stay on its easel, the man had experience with the glances crawling over the canvases in his studio. (By the way: it has been almost twenty years since Ljubljana, college days, I cannot even imagine any longer that I ... the painter merely kept nodding that he could not, either.) He motioned towards the landscapes on the wall, almost apologetic: sometimes he had to escape from all that blackness, but it was essentially the same principle, a search for light. The shimmering river in the muted rectangle was the Krka in the Dolenjsko region, while that other picture – finally we had come round to it – was Goričko. Not that I could not have recognised the landscape with certainty myself, this is, after all, the landscape of my childhood, but it was the wide-angle cut that had me slightly confused, a gaze that must be peculiar to one who has grown up on the plain.

zelena, skoraj črna krošnja drevesa v desnem spodnjem kotu slike in ozek pas sinjega neba brez slehernega oblčka na drugem koncu diagonale; vmes so v vodoravnih pasovih odtisnjeni različni odtenki zelene in rumenkasto ali rdečkasto rjave, ki je najsvetlejša, skoraj že rumena prav sredi platna. Poleg polj je edina sled človeškega kolovoza, ki spodaj, s sredine slike pelje čez travnik med nekaj osamljenih dreves na levi strani, in dve skoraj nevidni leseni sohi, ki v komaj zaznavni diagonali od leve spodaj proti desni zgoraj čez polja vodita električni vod. Senca vabi popotnika – seveda zgolj v domišljiji! – s popoldanske pripeke, da stopi z zaprašena kolovoza in se zlekne v travo pod drevjem. In košček sinjega neba obljublja brezmejnost in svobodo onkraj horizonta.

Nobene zares prave identičnosti med pokrajino s slike in pokrajinami svojega otroštva nisem odkril – morda z izjemo neke poteze v zgornji desni polovici platna, ki je prizivala v spomin polja in z grmičevjem obrasel gozdiček na Martininem – pa vendar sem bil prepričan, da vsa svetloba in toplina pronicata skozi sliko prav od tam, iz sveta mojega detinstva. To je bila svetloba že davno pozabljenega, pa zdaj spet obujenega pogleda dolskega dečka, ki hrepeni po življenju onkraj sončnih gričev in ga ob tem po eni strani obhaja nepopisno veselje, saj verjame, da mu bo nekega dne gotovo uspelo pobegniti iz te tople, varne, a zatohle doline, po drugi strani pa ga že pesti rahel občutek krivde zaradi neizogibne izdaje domačije.

Še enkrat sem si natančno ogledal desni zgornji del slike: najbrž res golo naključje, da gozdiček tako zelo spominja na zaplato hrastja sredi polj na Martininem. Tudi tam se teren, tako kot na sliki, položno vzpenja proti Šintarskemu bregu na severu, na drugi strani – tam nekje pod nebesno modrino – bi lahko bili Peskovci ali Šalovci, takoj za gozdičkom proti vzhodu pa bi se moralo začeti domanjševsko. A tam, kjer je na platnu drevje, med katero pelje kolovoz, bi morale biti dedove gorice in travnik z dvema orehoma ob njih, na sliki pa ni ne enega ne drugega. Že me je zsrbel jezik, da bi slikarju povedal o podobnosti med delom pokrajine z njegove slike in tistega nesrečnega Dola, v katerega nikoli niso prišle ženske; da bi mu povedal o priletnih samskih fantih, ki si niso drznili čez prav tako sončno pobočje, kot je to, ki žari z njegovega platna, a je volja po razlagi uplahnila, še preden sem našel pravo besedo. Potrdil sem mu le, da sliko vzamem.

Malo pozneje me je pospremil čez dvorišče do ulice. Po večernem nebu so bile nasute zvezde, če si le dovolj dolgo upiral pogled tja gor, so izplavale – kljub pritlehni svetlobi uličnih svetilk – iz veselja kot resice svetlobe iz črne slike na stojalu v ateljeju. Spet je stekel pogovor o Ljubljani, o študiju pa o družini, ni mu dalo miru. Otožno sem pomislil, da je bila Ljubljana morda res edini kraj, kjer sem si nekoč, čeprav samo za hip, zaželel živeti. Pomislil sem tudi, da si nikoli nisem na podoben način želel, da bi moj dom postalo to panonsko, na ravnico zamrznjeno mestece, pa sem vseeno ostal, celo dovolj dolgo, da so se mi za to začeli zahvaljevati s priznanji in nagradami. Potem sem mu naposled moral povedati, ne brez nejevolje – kar je takoj zaznal, in mi je bilo še v istem hipu žal, človek ni mislil nič

The painting presents the gentle rise of a typical Goričko landscape, bathed in the afternoon sun; in the centre lies a golden cornfield with an encroaching triangular shadow cast by the trees on its left, the top of the rise reveals sun-coloured forest slopes, and below the field is a meadow. The painter's gaze has caught the scene from the opposite, shaded part of the dell, with its suggestion of a brook. The light contrast is formed by the dark green, almost black tree-top in the right corner below and by the narrow band of a cloudless blue sky at the other end of the diagonal; between the two are printed horizontal bands in various shades of green, buff or sorrel, which is brightest, already verging on yellow, in the very centre of the canvas. Beside the fields, the only human traces are the cart track below, leading from the centre of the picture across the meadow among the few scattered trees on the left, and two almost invisible wooden supports carrying an electric cable in a barely perceptible diagonal across the fields, left below to right above. The shade invites the traveller – in the imagination, of course! – in the afternoon heat to leave the dusty track and sink into the grass beneath the trees, while the patch of blue sky promises boundlessness and freedom beyond the horizon.

I could discover no true identity between the landscape in the painting and the landscapes of my childhood – except, perhaps, for a feature in the upper right half of the canvas, which called to mind the fields and the shrubby grove at Martini – and yet I was sure that it was from there, the world of my childhood, that all the light and warmth came seeping through the picture. It was the light of the long-forgotten but now reawakened gaze of a Dol boy, longing for a life beyond the sunny hills, overcome with joy beyond words in his belief that one day he would surely escape from this warm, secure but musty dell, while already plagued by twinges of remorse for the inevitable betrayal of his home.

I took another close look at the right upper part of the picture: pure coincidence, must have been, that the grove evoked so strongly the patch of oaks in the fields at Martini. There, like in the painting, the ground gently rose towards the hill of Šintarski breg in the north; on the other side – somewhere under the blue of the sky – might lie Peskovci or Šalovci, and immediately behind the grove, towards the east, there should begin the Domanjševci neighbourhood. But where the canvas had trees and the cart track disappearing among them, there should have stretched Grandfather's vineyard hills and, at their feet, a meadow with two walnut trees, while the painting showed neither. My tongue itched to tell the painter about the partial likeness between the landscape from his painting and sad old Dol where women never came; to tell him about the aging bachelors who never ventured across a sunny slope just like the one glowing from his canvas, but my will to explain had faded before I found the right word. I only confirmed that I would take the painting.

A little later he walked me across the courtyard to the street. The evening sky was sprinkled with stars, and if you only gazed up long enough, they would surface – despite the low light of the street lamps – from the universe like those bright tassels from the black painting mounted in the

slabega – da nikoli nisem imel družine, ker tako pač je, in da je dobro tako, kot je, da že od nekdanj živim na drugem koncu tega mesta sam, čisto sam in potem ... potem se nisva pogovarjala o ničemer več.

Pobočje sončnega griča se zdaj že dober teden blešči s stene moje dnevne sobe. Začetno navdušenje nad sliko plahni – kot sem že omenil – zaradi nemira, ki se naseljuje v hišo. Ob svetlobi, ki sije s platna in vzbuja prijetna, topla občutja, zagotovo povezana s srečnimi dnevi otroštva, je na sliki še nekaj, kar sviri in vznemirja. Danes sem prvič pomislil, da bi bilo bolje, če bi se takrat v slikarjevem ateljeju odločil za »črno«. Razmišljal sem tudi že o tem, da bi pokrajino za nekaj časa uskladiščil na podstrešju in znova poskusil z njo kdaj pozneje. Vse stvari počakajo na svoj trenutek, tudi slika bi se čez čas naselila v dnevno sobo čisto drugače, mogoče z več miru, kot se naseljuje sedaj. A povsem mogoče je tudi, da sem v teh dneh preobčutljiv in da bo občutek nelagodja izginil tako hitro in nepričakovano, kot se je pojavil. Dan ali dva zato še počakam.

studio. The conversation returned to Ljubljana, to my college years and my family, he could not get over it. Wistfully, I reflected that Ljubljana may in fact have been the only place where I had ever, although only for a moment, longed to live. I also reflected how I had never wanted in the same way to make my home this little Pannonian town, frozen to its plain, but had stayed on nevertheless, stayed long enough to start receiving thanks in the form of awards and prizes. At last I had to tell him, not without reluctance – which he sensed at once, to my instant regret because the man had meant no harm – that I had never had a family because it had turned out that way, and that it was good the way it was, that I had always lived at the other end of this town alone, quite alone and then ... then we talked about nothing more.

The slope of the sunny hill has been glowing from my living-room wall for more than a week now. My first enthusiasm for the painting has been waning – as I have mentioned – in the unrest taking over the house. Beside the light shining from the canvas, evoking a pleasure and warmth which are linked, no doubt, to the happy days of childhood, there is something else in the painting, something warning and unsettling. Today it has first occurred to me that I should have settled on the “black” in the painter’s studio instead. I have also considered storing the landscape in the attic for a while and giving it another try sometime later. All things wait their time, and in a while the painting, too, might take its place in the living-room quite differently, with more calm perhaps than now. On the other hand, I may simply have been oversensitive these days, and the uneasiness will pass as abruptly and unexpectedly as it came. I will give it a day or two.

*Translated by Nada Grošelj*



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Herkus Kunčius se je rodil leta 1965 v litovskem mestu Vilnius. Je pisatelj, dramatik in esejist. Kunčius, ki je eden izmed najbolj plodovitih in hkrati kontroverznih litovskih pisateljev, je diplomiral iz umetnostne kritike na državnem umetnostnem inštitutu v Vilniusu. Njegova dela so bila prevedena v ruščino, poljščino, nemščino in švedščino. Je član Društva litovskih pisateljev in mednarodnega PEN-a. V njegov obsežni opus spadajo tudi naslednji romani: *Būtasis dažninis kartas* (Ponavljajoči se pretekli dogodki, 1998), *Pelenai qsilu kanopoje. Smegenų padažas. Ekskursija: Casa Matta* (Pepe na oslovem kopitu. Omaka iz možganov. Ekskurzija: Casa Matta, 2001), *Gaidžiu milžinkapis* (Petelinja gomila, 2004), *Nepasigailėti Dušanskio* (Ne se usmiliti Dušanskega, 2006) in gledališke igrice, med njimi *Vunderkindas arba šokoladinis Mocartas* (Vunderkind ali čokoladni Mozart, 2000) in *Sučiuptas velnias* (Zasačeni vrag, 2001). Objavil je tudi zbirko esejistične proze *Pilnaties linksmybės* (Veseljačenje ob polni luni, 1999) in zbirko kratkih zgodb *Išduoti. Išsižadėti. Apšmeižti* (Izdani. Izigrani. Oklevetani, 2007).

Herkus Kunčius was born in 1965 in the Lithuanian city of Vilnius. He is a writer, a dramatist and essayist. Kunčius, who is considered to be one of the most prolific and controversial authors in Lithuania, graduated in art history and theory at the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts. His works have been translated into Russian, Polish, German and Swedish. He is also a member of the Lithuanian Writers' Association and the PEN International Association of Writers. His extensive oeuvre includes the following novels *Būtasis dažninis kartas* (Past Continuous Tense, 1998), *Pelenai qsilu kanopoje. Smegenų padažas. Ekskursija: Casa Matta* (Ashes On the Donkey's Hoof. Brain Sauce. Excursion: Cassa Mata, 2001), *Gaidžiu milžinkapis* (The Tumulus of Cocks, 2004), *Nepasigailėti Dušanskio* (Don't Pity Dushansky, 2006) and plays, among them *Vunderkindas arba šokoladinis Mocartas* (Wunderkind or the Chocolate Mozart, 2000) and *Sučiuptas velnias* (The Devil Caught, 2001). He has also published a collection of literary essays *Pilnaties linksmybės* (The Pleasures of the Full Moon, 1999) and the short story collection *Išduoti. Išsižadėti. Apšmeižti* (To Betray. To Renounce. To Slander, 2007).

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# Herkus Kunčius



Foto © Alis Balbierius

# Ne se usmiliti Dušanskega

(Odlomek)

Naravnih pojavov se ni treba sramovati

Splošno znano je, da je za pitje s trdnim namenom napiti se ga obvezna čedalje močnejša vsebina ...

Dušanski se je v svojem zrelem obdobju, ali kadar je bil v ilegali, trdno držal tega pravila, čeprav ga je sem in tja celo njemu uspelo prekršiti.

Dogajalo se je, da je, ko je zaključil z vodko, tovariš Aaron Dušanski prešel na temno pivo, kasneje na mošt, potem pa je že pil likerje in šampanjec. Neredko so službene okoliščine pripeljale do tega, da se je njegov dan začel z brendijem in skodelico kave, kasneje je spil kakšen čaj, potem pa vzel baldrijanove kapljice, validol ali pil vino. Ampak, ah ne, fuj, vina Dušanski ni nikoli maral. Ni ga cenil. Kadar koli so mu kolegi iz sindikalne zveze komunistične partije ali CK LKP(b) govorili o romunskem, gruzinskem vinu ali o tistem iz Bordoja, Burgundije, Čila, celo iz rasistične Južne Afrike, je Dušanski vse zavrnil kot oslovsko scanje, dobro le za splaknit rit. Če pa se je že zgodilo, da je pil vino, ga je premagal predvsem okus trpkega »kagora«. Polsladkemu, polsuhemu se je izogibal, čeprav ni nikoli rekel nikoli. Na dušek je izpraznil tudi madžarskega tokaja – a to le ob posebnih (mačkastih) priložnostih. Največkrat je, če je že pil trpkega kagora ali kakšno podobno gnusobo, to zmešal z vodko, celo pivom, govoril je, da se tako izgubi ogabna vinska aroma.

Aaron Dušanski tudi ni maral raznih zeliščnih aperitivov in spodbujevalcev prebave, prav lahko je živel brez njih: »fernet«, »trejos devynerios«, »starka«, »senas ažuolas«, »dainava«, »palanga« ... Zgodilo pa se je, da je zadnjih dveh, ko so ga službene obveznosti zanesle iz glavnega mesta republike v Center, spil več kot celo cisterno. Takole ... »palanga«, »dainava« ... »palanga« ... »dainava« ... »Palanga« ...

Poletje.

Bil je jubilejni kongres sindikatov v Kremlju.

Delegat Dušanski je kot po navadi prispel v Moskvo dobro založen, nikakor ne praznih rok. V njegovi aktovki so bili razen mila, brisače, nekaj parov spodnjic tudi prekajeni želodec, domače klobase, škatlica bonbonov »asorti«, slanina in, jasno, »palanga«, »dainava«, »šaltrez«, »žalgiris«, »benediktin«, »bočiai«, eksotični domači šnops in celo slivovka, ki jo je dobil za darilo iz v tistih časih bratske Prage.

Ko je tovariš Generalni sekretar odprl sindikalni kongres, so delegati vstali, dolgo in navdušeno ploskali povedanemu govoru, se zahvaljevali s pogledi in se radostno smehljali; vedeli so: nad vsem bedijo kamere Državne varnosti.

Ko pa so spet sedli, jih je navdal čemeran občutek praznine in žalosti.

Kaj početi na kongresu? ...

# Nepasigailėti Dušanskio

*romano fragmentas*

## Natūralių dalykų nereikia gėdytis

Visi žino, kad gerti, norint deramai apsvaigti, privaloma stiprėjančia tvarka.

Brandžiame amžiuje, o ir pogrindyje, Dušanskis uoliai laikėsi šios taisyklės, tačiau retkarčiais net ir jam tekdavo ją sulaužyti.

Atsitikdavo, kad po degtinės draugas Aaronas Dušanskis išlenkdavo tamsaus alaus, vėliau sidro, o tada jau pereidavo prie likerių ir šampano. Neretai aplinkybės tarnyboje priversdavo dieną pradėti nuo brendžio ir kavos puodelio, o vėliau apsisototi ties arbata, imtis valerijono, validolio ar vyno. Ne, tfu, Dušankis vyno niekada nemėgo, nevertino. Kad ir ką kolegos iš profsajungų ar LKP(b) CK jam kalbėdavo apie rumuniškus, gruziniškus vynus, Bordo, Burgundijos, Čilės, net rasistinės Pietų Afrikos, visus juos Dušanskis vadino asilų myžalais, tinkančiais nebent užpakalius apsiplauti. Tiesa, jei Dušanskiui jau tekdavo gerti vyną, jis labiau linko prie klampaus “Kagoro”. Pusiau saldaus, pusiau sauso vengė, nors niekada nesakydavo “niekada”, mosteldavo ir vengriško “Tokajaus” – ypatingomis (pagirių) progomis. Dažniausiai, jei jau gerdavo tirštą “Kagorą” ar kitą bjaurastį, skiesdavo jį degtine, net alum, sakydavo, neva tokiu būdu dingsta šleikštus vyno aromatas.

Trauktinių, užpiltinių Aaronas Dušanskis taip pat nemėgo, galėjo ir be jų gyventi: fernetas, “Trejos devynerios”, “Starka”, “Senas ažuolas”, “Dainava”, “Palanga”... Paskutiniųjų, kai tik tekdavo darbo reikalais vykti iš respublikos sostinės į Centrą, išgėrė ne vieną cisterną. Taip ... “Palanga”, “Dainava”... “Palanga”... “Dainava”... “Palanga”...

Vasara.

Buvo jubiliejinis Profsajungų suvažiavimas Kremliuje.

Delegatas Dušanskis, kaip visada, atvyko į Maskvą pasiruošęs, ne tuščiomis. Portfelyje, be muilo, rankšluosčio, kelių porų apatinių, buvo skilandžio, naminės dešros, saldinių “Asorti” dėželė, lašiniai, ir, žinoma, “Palangos”, “Dainavos”, “Šaltrezo”, “Žalgirio”, “Benediktino”, “Bočių”, egzotiškosios samanės, net slivovicos, gautos dovanų iš tuo metu broliškos Prahos.

Kai Profsajungų suvažiavimą pasveikino draugas Generalinis sekretorius, delegatai žvaliai atsistojo, ilgai plojo už pasakytą kalbą, dėkojo žvilgsniais, džiaugėsi, šypsojosi; žinojo: viską filmuoja Valstybės Saugumo kameros.

Atsisėdus, pasidarė nyku, tuščia, liūdna.

Ką veikti suvažiavime? ...

Sieloje – vaakumas. Miegoti – dar ankstoka. Generalinis sekretorius išskubėjo svarbesniais reikalais – nebebuvo net į ką akių paganyti ...

V duši – vakuum. Spati – še prezgodaj. Generalni sekretar je odhitel novim pomembnim obveznostim naproti – zdaj ni bilo več mesta, kamor bi človek lahko položil oči ...

Tako je v trenutku, ko je na tribuni začel svoj dolgočasni govor neki ne tako pomemben tovariš, Dušanski skrivaj pokleknil, kot bi si hotel zavezati odvezano vezalko na čevlju. Ko je odprl aktovko, je odvil prvi dosegljivi zamašek, steklenico pa je prestavil v kot, da je lahko skozi odprtino med aktovko in njenim pokrovom neopazno vlekel iz vratu steklenice. Komaj je končal in privil zamašek, je zaslišal:

– Kaj pa jaz? ...

Ni mu bilo treba imeti posebej izostrenega vida, da je lahko ob sebi takoj prepoznal Muslima Mohamajeva – lepotca iz Tartuja. Ta veliki babjek je lakomno cmokal in požiral slino.

– Hočeš? je Dušanski povprašal estonskega(?) tenorista.

– Še vprašaš, je bil nestrpen pevec in že je hlastno vlekel kalvados iz aktovke.

– Za popizdit, se je zasmeljal.

– Tudi jaz bi, je pripomnil majhen kozmonavt Titov.

– Ne pozabite name, se je kot le mogoče tiho vmešala atletska Valentina Tereškova; dogajanje na tribuni je bilo v nekih številkah, navajali so nekakšne termine, govorili o planih, obljubljali velike zmage.

Dušanskemu je bilo nekoliko žal aktovkine odtekajoče vsebine, vendar ga je Valentina Vladimirova Tereškova tako milo pogledala, da ji ni mogel odreči – to ni bilo kar tako, ženska, kozmonavtka z jajci, mama, seks simbol ZSSR.

Nedolgo zatem – ko je svoje poročilo bral vodja revizijske komisije – je Dušanskemu uspelo odmašiti že drugo steklenico, tokrat brezbarvni »nemun«. Tiho tiho se je v Kremlju izlivala reka Nemun v Kurski zaliv.

– Na Gagarina! je dvignil k ustom aktovko konstruktor Koroliov.

– Na Jurija! ga je zarotniško podprla balerina Zikina.

– Kaj pa mi, a mi naj pa crknemo? je bolj ko ne sam zase vprašal delegat Muslim Mohamajev, ko je zvrnil vsebino podane mu aktovke.

– Da se ne boš uscal od strahu, ga je izzivala kozmonavtka.

– »Nemun« ni še nikomur škodil, je trdil Aaron Dušanski, zdaj že močno rdeč v glavo. – »Nemun« je dober. Zmeraj je naš Nemun dober. In tudi reka Neris je lepa, je dodal, pa tudi Dubysa, Nevėžis, Šešupė, Merkys ...

– Ti ... ti pankrt, si prav tako eden od nas, se je spet pridružil konstruktor Koroliov.

Valentina Tereškova je, da ne bi padel sum nanjo, odvalila od sebe prazno steklenico kalvadosa.

Aaron Dušanski pa je vnovič odprl.

Aktovka je bila čedalje lažja, razpoloženje delegatov pa je raslo, dvigala ga je steklenica letoviščarske »palange«.

Zrak v dvorani ni bil prav nič zatohel.

– Bi lahko – malo tiše! Ne zganjajte no takega kravala! je posegel vmes Josif Kobzon, general z otroškim obrazom, zanj, za vojaškega finančnika, so bili izsledki revizijske komisije zanimivi.

Štai tą akimirką, kai tribūnoje nuobodžiai ėmė kalbėti kažkuris ne toks reikšmingas draugas, Dušanskis paslapčia pasilenkė, neva norėjo susirišti atsimazgiusį batų raištelį. Kai pradarė portfelį, atsuko pirmą pasitaikiusį kamštelį, o butelį perstatė į portfelio kraštą, kad pro tarpelį galėtų nematomas truktelėti iš kakliuko. Vos tik užsivertė susigūžęs, išgirdo:

- O man?..

Nereikėjo būti nuovokiam, Dušanskis iškart pažino šalia sėdėjusį Muslimą Mohomajevą – gražuolį iš Tartu, šis lovelasas godžiai sučepsėjo, nurijo seilę.

- Nori? – pasiteiravo estų(?) tenoro.

- Tik greičiau, - paragino dainininkas ir gerokai truktelėjo iš portfelio kalvadoso. – Zajabis, - pralinksmėjo.

- Aš taip pat noriu, - prisipažino nedidukas kosmonautas Titovas.

- Manęs nepamirškite, - kaip įmanydama tyliau priminė apie save atletiška Velentina Tereškova; pranešėjas iš tribūnos oriai vardino skaičius, minėjo kažkokius terminus, kalbėjo apie planus, žadėjo dideles pergales.

Dušanskiui buvo šiek tiek gaila portfelio turinio, tačiau Valentina Vladimirovna Tereškova taip liūdnai pažvelgė, kad Aaronas negalėjo jai atsakyti – ne juokas, moteris, kosmonautė su pautais, mama, TSRS seks simbolis.

Netrukus, kai revizijos komisijos pirmininkas skaitė ataskaitą, teko atkimšti ir kitą butelį, tai buvo bespalvis “Nemunas”, - tyliai tyliai upė tekėjo į Kuršių marias Kremliuje.

- Už Gagariną! – pakėlė portfelį konstruktorius Koroliovas.

- Už Jurijų! – suokalbiškai paantrino jam balerina Zykina.

- O mums nebus pizdiec? – veikiau savęs, nei delegatų paklausė Muslimas Mahomajevas, kai užsivertė jam perduotą portfelį.

- Nemyžk į kelnes, - padaršino dainininką kosmonautė.

- “Nemunas” dar niekam nepakenkė, - patikino jau gerokai įraudęs Aaronas Dušanskis. – “Nemunas” yra gerai. Visada mūsų Nemunas gerai. Ir Neris graži, - pridūrė. – Dubysa, Nevėžis, Šešupė, Merkys...

- O tu, bliat', savas vyras, - pasidžiaugė pažintimi konstruktorius Koroliovas.

Valentina Tereškova, kad nekiltų įtarimų, dėl visa pikta parideno toliau nuo savęs tuščią kalvadoso butelį.

Aaronas Dušanskis atkimšo dar.

Portfelis vis lengvėjo, delegatų nuotaika taisėsi, - tai kurortinė “Palanga” ją kėlė.

Tvanku nebuvo.

- Ar jūs galite - tyliau! Nebarškinkit! – sudraudė draugus vaikiško veido generolas Josifas Kobzonas, jam, kariuomenės finansininkui, buvo įdomios revizijos komisijos išvados.

- Duok ir tam žydui, - pasiūlė estų(?) kilmės Muslimas Mahomajevas.

- Neišsikalinėk, - perspėjo Dušankį Zykina. – Nebūk žmotas, - siekė atimti portfelį iš Aarono.

- Tau ką, bliat', gaila?.. – šiek tiek per garsiai nusistebėjo konstruktorius Koroliovas ir, paplekšnojęs per petį, pakvietė prisijungti kukliai priešais sėdėjusius akademikus Landau, Kurčatovą ir Kapitsą.

- Daj še temu židu, je predlagal Estonec(?) Muslim Mahomajev.

- Ne izmikaj se, je Dušanskega posvarila Zikina, - ne bodi no tak škot, mu je uspela iztrgati aktovko.

- Saj ti ne bi bilo žal, pankrt? je nekoliko preglasno siknil konstruktor Koroliov in med trepljanjem po ramenih povabil akademike Landava, Kurčatova in Kapitsa, ki so skromno sedeli nasproti, naj se pridružijo.

- Dajmo fantje, jih je spodbujala Tereškova in podala aktovko proti učenjakom fizike. - Odjebite, tole je boljše od seciranja dreka v laboratoriju, ni izbirala besed svetovna ženska Nr. 1. - Labusas časti, je pokazala na Aarona Dušanskega, - »jūrmala«? je ugibala ime pijače.

- »Višnjevača«, je Dušanski zakotalil prazno steklenico proti komiteju.

Na tribuni so se vrstili govori. Zdelo se je, da ne bo nikoli konec.

Aarona Dušanskega je začenjalo skrbeti, da ne bo dovolj do odmora, ampak, hvala Bogu, da je doma pridobljeno žganje - čisti alkohol.

Ko so izpraznili tudi to, po »trejos devyneros« in »starki«, je kozmonavt Titov začel škodoželjno brenčati *Znaješ, ty, kakim on parniem byl ...*<sup>1</sup>

Prva se mu je pridružila Zikina; dekle je lepo pelo, a žal ni bila na dobrem glasu, preveč slabotno je zvenela. Muslim Mahomajev je čuval svoj tenor, zato je le s stopali udarjal ritem, tleskal je s prsti in skrit pred prezidiumom kadil. Tereškovi ni bilo prav nič do pesmi in govorov, nerazločno je moledovala Dušanskega, naj mu ne bo žal zanjo po starem hrastu poimenovane žganice iz aktovke. Ženska Nr. 1 je kar naprej ponavljala, da je v veselju (v eksperimentalne namene) poskusila ogabno Titovo gorivo.

Na vso srečo in v veselje vseh se je pokazalo, da tudi Nobelov nagrajenc Peter Kapitsa ni odšel od doma nepripravljen - za vsak primer je imel pri sebi eksperimentalno zeliščno žganje - dobil ga je od romunskih kemikov.

Ko je slednje izpuhtelo, je konstruktor Sergej Pavlovič Koroliov darežljivo izvlekel termofor, napolnjen z letalskim gorivom »saliut«. Zdaj se tudi Muslim Mahomajev iz Tartuja(?) ni mogel več izmikati, z velikim naporom je v aktovko Dušanskega postavil karelski konjak - za poscat, s kakšno natančnostjo ga je pogledala »baletna slavčica« Zikina.

Izpili so.

Še so izpili.

Nekdo je zatrdil, da je najboljši armenski konjak iz Karabaha.

Potem pa jim je postal na smrt potreben prigrizek.

Kljub temu da ga je Dušanski poskušal ustaviti, je kozmonavt Titov odlično odigral omedlevico in se odplazil iz glavne dvorane ter se kmalu vrnil iz vladnega bifeja s trilitrskim kozarcem bolgarskega graha in majonezno omako.

Tovariš Aaron Dušanski, duša zadnje klopi kongresa, je z rokami mazal majonezo na koščke prekajenega mesa in obmetaval družbo z grahom kot s hostijami, zelo natančno je ciljal v odprta usta delegatov.

*Prevedla Bernarda Pavlovec Žumer*

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<sup>1</sup> Ko bi le vedel, kakšen fant je to bil ...

- Vaikiniai, drąsiau, - paragino Tereškova ir perdavė fizikos išminčiams portfelį. - Čia jums, nachui, ne šūdus laboratorijoje tirti, - neieškojo žodžių kišenėje pasaulio moteris Nr.1. - Labusas vaišina, - parodė į Aaroną Dušanskį. - "Jūrmala"? - pasitiksino gėrimo pavadinimą.

- "Žagarės vyšnių", - parideno prezidento pusėn tuščią butelį Dušanskis.

Tribūnoje liejosi kalbos. Pabaigos, atrodo, niekada nebus.

Aaronas Dušanskis ėmė nerimauti, kad iki pertraukos neužteks, tačiau, ačiū Dievui, kad jo išimesta samanė - grynas spiritas.

O tada, kai po jos jau gėrė "Trejas devynerias", beje, užsigerdami "Starka", kosmonautas Titovas ėmė piktdžiugiškai niūniuoti *"Znaješ, ty, kakim on parniem byl"*...

Pirmoji prisijungė Zykina, - gražiai mergina dainavo, deja, negarsiai, labai silpnas turėjo balso stygas. Muslimas Mahomajevas saugojo savo tenorą, todėl pėda mušė ritmą, spragsėjo pirštais ir paslapčia nuo prezidento rūkė. Tereškovai buvo nusipjaut į dainas ir kalbas, ji painkšdama meldė Dušanskio, kad jis nepagailėtų jai besibaigiančio "Seno ažuolo" iš portfelio. Vis kartojo ir kartojo moteris Nr.1, kad kosmose ne tokių Tytovo bjaurasčių (eksperimento vardan) ragavusi.

Bet čia, pasirodo, laimei, Nobelio premijos laureatas Piotras Kapitsa į suvažiavimą atėjęs taip pat ne tuščiomis - apdairiai turėjo eksperimentinės stumbrinės - rumunų chemikai įdavę.

Kai stumbrinę įpusėjo, konstruktorius Sergejus Pavlovičius Koroliovas dosniai išsitraukė pūslę aviacinio spirito "Saliut". Dabar ir Muslimui Mahomajevui iš Tartu(?) nebuvo kur trauktis, jis labai nenoriai pastatė į Dušanskio portfelį "Trijų statinių" kareliško konjako, - šūdino, kaip taikliai pastebėjo baletu lakštingala Zykina.

Išgėrė.

Dar išgėrė.

Kažkas prasitarė, kad armėniškas konjakas iš Karabacho yra geresnis. Verkiant dabar reikėjo užkandos.

Nors Dušanskis stabdė kosmonautą, tačiau Titovas, puikiai suvaidinęs nuomario priepuolį, išsmuko iš suvažiavimo salės ir netrukus grįžo iš vyriausybės bufeto su bulgariškais žirneliais ir majonezo padažo trilitrinium.

Draugas Aaronas Dušanskis, suvažiavimo "galiorkos" siela, kabino saujomis, tepė majonežą ant kindziukų, it komunią svaidė žirnelius, labai taikliai pataikydamas į pražiodytas delegatų burnas.



## Don't Pity Dushansky

*(Excerpt)*

Be not ashamed of natural things

Everyone knows that if you want to get properly blotto when drinking, it is essential to do so with the proper rising scale of alcohol content.

At his ripe age, as he had done while serving in the underground, Dushansky was strict about keeping to this rule, though even he was known to break it on rare occasions.

It would so happen that after drinking vodka, Comrade Aaron Dushansky would put back some dark ale, and then some cider, and then move on to liqueurs and champagne. Not infrequently his professional circumstances dictated that he begin the day with a cup of coffee and a spot of brandy, later switching to tea, and then falling back on Valerian root, Validol, or wine. Actually, no, Dushansky never liked wine – he couldn't bring himself to appreciate its finer qualities. No matter how much his colleagues in the trade unions or at the Lithuanian Communist Party's Central Committee would praise Romanian and Georgian wines; Bordeaux or Burgundy; wines from Chile or even racist South Africa; Dushansky referred to them all as donkey piss fit only for rinsing one's behind. Truth be told, when Dushansky did end up drinking wine for some reason or other, he favoured a glass of thick, viscous Kagor. He avoided semi-sweets and semi-dries, though he never said never, and was known to knock back a Hungarian Tokai on exceptional (hair-of-the-dog) occasions. Most often, if he was already drinking some of that thick Kagor or some similar abomination, he would cut it with vodka or even beer, thinking it might get rid of the wine's nauseating aroma.

Dushansky also disliked fruit, berry, or herb aperitifs and digestifs, and was quite capable of moving through life without them: Fernet Branca, Trejos Devynorios, Starka, Senas Ažuolas, Dainava, Palanga... He had had occasion to drink more than one cistern's worth of these latter two, especially whenever a business trip saw him leave the republic's capital to travel to the *Centre*. Yes indeed – Palanga... Dainava... Palanga... Dainava... Palanga...

Summer.

The jubilee year Congress of Trade Unions at the Kremlin.

Delegate Dushansky, as he always did, arrived in Moscow well prepared and far from empty handed. In his briefcase – along with a bar of soap, a towel, a few pairs of underpants, some Lithuanian smoked sausage, a box of "Asorti" chocolate, and a smoked side of pork – there were, of course, bottles of Palanga, Dainava, Šaltrezo, Žalgiris, Benediktinas, and Bočiu; as well as a bottle of some exotic home-made grain alcohol; and even some Slivovitz he had received as a gift from Prague, which was still a brotherly place at that time.

After Comrade General Secretary addressed words of greeting to the congress, the delegates rose to their feet cheerfully, applauded him heartily for his speech, gave him looks of gratitude, and smiled joyfully – they knew that State Security cameras were trained on them.

After they had once again taken their seats, things became glum, empty, and sad.

What to do for the remainder of the congress?

One felt a vacuum in one's soul, but it was still too early to doze off. The General Secretary took his leave hurriedly since he had other pressing affairs, so there was now no safe spot upon which to fix one's gaze.

The very moment that some not particularly consequential comrade stepped up to the podium and started his stifflingly dull address, Dushansky quietly bent forward, as if to tie a shoelace that had come undone, opened his briefcase, unscrewed the cap of the first bottle and shifted it so that its neck was sticking out of a small breach and, crouching, took a pull. He had just begun drinking when he heard:

“And what about me?”

Dushansky did not need to be keen-sighted to immediately recognise the man sitting beside him, Muslin MogoMayev, a very handsome lady-killer from Tartu who was smacking his lips and swallowing his saliva.

“Want some?” Dushansky inquired of the Estonian (?) tenor.

“Be quick about it,” the singer urged, and proceeded to take a long swig of Calvados from the briefcase. “Bloody good stuff,” he said, his spirits buoyed.

“I want some too,” admitted Titov, a diminutive cosmonaut.

“Don't forget me,” the athletic Soviet Citizen Tereshkova chimed in, as quietly as possible. From the podium lectern, a speaker rhymed off statistics, mentioned some sort of targets, spoke of plans, and promised a resounding victory.

Dushansky began to lament the dwindling of his briefcase's contents, but Soviet Citizen Tereshkova had given him such a mournful look that it was impossible for him to refuse her: she, a woman who was a sex symbol in the USSR, a cosmonaut with balls, was not a person to be trifled with.

Not long thereafter, as the chairman of the audit commission read his report, he was forced to uncork another bottle, of colourless Nemunas – named after Lithuania's largest river, and quietly, ever so quietly, did it flow from the lagoon of Lithuania's Curonian Spit into the Kremlin.

“To Gagarin's health!” said Koroliov, the famous engineer, raising the briefcase to his lips.

“To Yuri!” seconded Zykina, the ballerina, conspiratorially.

“Are we going to get ourselves in the shit?” asked Muslin MagoMayev when it was again his turn to tip the briefcase, addressing no one in particular.

“Don't pee your pants,” said the woman cosmonaut to the singer, a note of encouragement in her voice.

“A spot of Nemunas has never harmed anyone,” Dushansky, who had turned beet red, assured him. “Nemunas is jolly good stuff. Our Nemunas

is always jolly good stuff. And the Neris River is a pretty one too,” he added, “as is the Dubysa, the Nevėžis, the Šešupė, the Merkys...”

“You, you bastard, are one of us,” said Koroliiov, the engineer, overjoyed by his new acquaintance.

To avoid any suspicions falling on her, Soviet Citizen Tereshkova rolled the empty bottle of Calvados away from her feet, as far as possible.

Dushansky uncorked another.

The briefcase was growing lighter. The delegates’ mood was improving – helped along by the Palanga, a drink named after a popular Lithuanian beach resort.

The congress hall did not feel stuffy.

“Could you be a bit quieter?! Stop that clattering!” said Kobzon, a baby-faced sergeant, scolding his comrades, because for him, an army quartermaster, the review commission’s conclusions were pertinent.

“Oh, give some to that Jew,” suggested Muslin MagoMayev the Estonian (?).

“Stop your shenanigans,” Zykina warned Dushansky. “Don’t be a Scrooge,” she said, attempting to pull the briefcase away from him.

“Would it hurt you to offer some, tight-arse?” said Koroliiov, the engineer, in a voice that was just a titch too voluble and, with a slap on the back, invited Landau, Kurchatov, and Kapitsa – three academicians who were sitting across from them and being quite coy – to join them.

“Come on boys,” urged Tereshkova, handing the briefcase to the egg-headed physicists. “This is a lot fucking better than sitting in the lab and staring at shit through a lens,” said the world’s No. 1 woman, who was never at a loss for words. “The Lithuanian is treating us,” she said, pointing to Dushansky. “Jūrmala?” she asked, guessing the brand.

“Žagarės Vyšninė” said Dushansky, rolling an empty bottle in the direction of the committee.

Speeches flowed from the podium. It seemed they would never come to an end.

Aaron Dushansky started feeling panicked, fearing he might run out of supplies by the time the break came around. Thank God for the homemade moonshine he’d thrown in – pure alcohol.

And after that bottle had been downed, as well as the Trejos Devynerios, which in turn was washed down with the Starka, Titov, the cosmonaut, started humming gloatingly: “If you only knew what a fine fellow he was...”

Zykina was the first to join in the singing. She sang nicely but, unfortunately, too softly – her vocal chords were very weak. Muslin MagoMayev decided to rest his tenor’s voice, which is why he tapped out the tempo with his foot, cracked his knuckles, and smoked on the sly, out of view of the podium. Tereshova couldn’t have given a damn about the speeches and songs, and whimperingly begged Dushansky for some of the Senasis Ažuolas which had nearly been polished off. Woman No. 1 kept repeating, over and over, that while in outer space she had savoured Titov’s jet-fuel abominations (for experimental purposes) countless times.

At that point, luckily, the Nobel laureate Piotr Kapitsa showed up. He too had not arrived at the congress empty handed – having circumspectly brought with him some experimental sweetgrass liqueur that had been given to him by Romanian chemists.

When the bottle was half finished, Sergei Pavlovich Koroliov, the engineer, generously pulled out a hot-water bottle filled with Saliut aircraft fuel. Which meant Muslin MagoMayev had no choice but to ante up his bottle of Karelian cognac and place it in Dushansky's briefcase, and a shitty liqueur it was as Zykina, the State Ballet Company's nightingale, remarked with great accuracy.

They quaffed it.

And they quaffed some more.

Someone made the remark that Armenian cognac from Karabakh was better.

At that point it became clear that they were in dire need of snacks.

And though Dushansky tried to restrain him, Titov, the cosmonaut, feigned a bout of epilepsy and darted from the congress auditorium, returning promptly with a three-liter container of Bulgarian peas and some mayonnaise snatched from the buffet table for the party brass.

Comrade Aaron Dushansky, the life of the gallery seats, used his hands to scoop mayonnaise and spread it on slices of smoked meat, and lobbed peas into the gaping mouths of the delegates, as if distributing communion.

*Translated by Darius James Ross*

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Luljeta Lleshanaku se je rodila leta 1968 v Elbasanu v Albaniji. Diplomirala je iz književnosti na univerzi v Tirani. Je avtorica naslednjih pesniških zbirk: *Femijet e Natyres* (Otrok narave, 2006), *Palca e Verdhe* (Rumeni kostni mozeg, 2000), *Antipastorale* (1999), *Gjysem-kubizem* (Polkubizem, 1997), *Kembanat e se djeles* (Nedeljski zvonovi, 1995) in *Syte e somnambules* (Somnambulistove oči, 1994). Njena knjiga *Antipastorale* je 2006 izšla v Italiji, izbor njenih pesmi z naslovom *Fresco* pa 2002 v angleščini v ZDA. Pri istem ameriškem založniku bo v kratkem izšla še pesniška zbirka z naslovom *Child of nature* (Otrok narave). Njene pesmi so bile objavljene v vseh večjih ameriških literarnih revijah in so postale del vseh pomembnih antologij moderne albanske literature in mnogih tujih antologij. Leta 1996 je prejela nagrado za najboljšo knjigo založbe Eurorilindja in nagrado international vision. Je tudi dobitnica nacionalne nagrade srebrno pero 2000. Leta 1999 se je udeležila Mednarodnega pisateljskega programa na univerzi v Iowi. Udeležila se je mnogih mednarodnih literarnih festivalov, med drugim Mednarodnega festivala literature v Berlinu leta 2002. Trenutno gostuje na Black Mountain Institute univerze v Nevadi v ZDA.

Luljeta Lleshanaku was born in 1968, in Elbasan in Albania. She graduated in literature at the University of Tirana. Lleshanaku is the author of the following poetry collections: *Femijet e Natyres* (Child of Nature, 2006), *Palca e Verdhe*, (Yellow Marrow, 2000), *Antipastorale* (1999), *Gjysem-kubizem* (Halfcubism, 1997), *Kembanat e se djeles* (The Bells of Sunday, 1995) and *Syte e somnambules* (The Eyes of the Somnambulist, 1994). Her book *Antipastorale* (2006) has been published in Italy and a selection of her poetry, *Fresco* (2002) in the USA. Another collection of her poems in English entitled *Child of Nature* is forthcoming soon from the same American publisher. Her poems have been published in major American literary journals and appeared in all important anthologies of modern Albanian literature as well as in many foreign anthologies. In 1996, she received the Eurorilindja Publishing House best book of the year award and International Vision Prize; she is also the winner of the Silver Pen 2000 national prize. In 1999 she took part in the International Writers Program at the University of Iowa. She has been invited to a number of international literary festivals; the International Literature Festival Berlin 2002 was one of them. She is currently a fellow at the Black Mountain Institute, University of Nevada, USA.

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# Luljeta Lleshanaku



Foto © Aaron Mayes

## Zaznamovani

Moj sošolec v osnovni šoli  
je imel modrikaste nohte, modrikaste ustnice in veliko nezaceljivo rano  
na srcu.  
Smrt ga je zaznamovala. Bil je neviden. Pazil je na obleke drugih, sede na  
kamnu  
ob igrišču, tej alkimiji potu in prahu.

Ta, ki nosi znamenje kralja,  
je hladen, pripravljen na prosti pad,  
rojen predčasno iz nesrečne maternice.

Rdečelasa ženska, ki čaka na pijanega moža,  
ga bo še naprej čakala na enak način, še sto let.  
Ne zaradi alkohola. Zaznamovalo jo je »čakanje« na njenem obrazu.  
In on je kriv le toliko kot tisti gledalec,  
ki ga je dež potisnil s ceste v dvorano.

Še več, ni kriva vojna, da je vzela življenje mladeniča  
z žalostnimi očmi. Rojen je bil za naborniški seznam.  
Otožnost je osnovni arzenal armad.

In potem je ta, ki mu je pisano preživeti,  
še naprej bo žrl svoje mlade kot polarni medved,  
niti opazil ne bo, da se je vreme otoplilo.

Vsi so zaprti kot teoremi. Njihovo nebo  
je najeta hiša,  
kjer ne smeš zabiti niti žeblja.

Čakajo na drug ukaz, ki ga bodo seveda  
preslišali kot Odisejevi možje, ki jim ušesa maši vosek,  
ko veslajo mimo siren.

## Me fatin e shkruar në fytyrë

Shoku im i bangës në shkollën fillore  
kishte gishta blu, buzët blu dhe një vrimë të pariparueshme blu në zemër.  
I shënuar ne vdekje. I padukshëm. Ai ruante rrobat i ulur mbi nje gur  
jashtë fushës së lojës, nje alkimije pluhuri dhe djerse.

I vulosuri për të qenë mbret  
është i ftohtë, i gatshëm për një rënie të lirë  
i lindur parakohe nga një mitër e palumtur.

Gruaja flokekuqe që pret përnatë burrin e pirë  
do të vazhdojë ta presë kështu edhe njëqind vjet.  
Nuk është faji i alkoolit. Ajo ka pritje në fytyrë  
Ai është i papërfillshëm aq sa spektatori i rastit  
që shiu e futi nga rruga në sallë.

Dhe as nuk është faji i luftës që i merr jetën djaloshit  
me sy melankolikë. Ai ishte i prerë për listat e rekrutimit.  
Melankolia është arsenali bazë i ushtrisë.

Dhe ai që është i stampuar me mbijetesë  
do të vazhdojë të ushqehet me të vegjlit e tij si ariu polar  
pa e marrë kurrë vesh se moti është ngrohur.

Te gjithë të mbyllur si teoremat. Qielli i tyre  
është një shtëpi e marrë me qera  
ku nuk mund të ngulësh as edhe një gozhdë më tepër.

Në pritje të një një urdhëri të dytë, të cilin do ta injorojnë gjithsesi  
me veshët zënë më dyllë,  
si njerëzit e Odiseut gjatë vozitjes në shtegun e nimfave.



## Skrivnost molitve

Pri nas doma  
smo molili na skrivaj,  
nežno smo mrmrali skozi prehlajene nosove  
pod odejami,  
vzdih pred in vzdih potem,  
tenak in sterilen kot obveza.

Zunaj hiše  
je bila samo lestev, po kateri si se vzpel,  
lesena, celo leto prislonjena ob zid,  
za popravilo strešnikov avgusta pred dežjem.  
Nobenih angelov, ki bi se vzpenjali po njej,  
in nobenih angelov, ki bi se po njej spuščali,  
samo možje, ki jih je mučil išias.

Molili so, da bi za hip uzrli Njega,  
da bi si izpogajali boljše pogodbe  
ali podaljšali roke.

»Gospod, daj mi moč,« so rekli,  
bili so potomci Ezava  
in zadovoljiti so se morali z edinim blagoslovom,  
ki je ostal po Jakobu,  
blagoslovom meča.

Pri nas doma je veljala  
molitev za znak šibkosti,  
kakor ljubljenje.

In kakor pri ljubljenju  
je sledila dolga noč strahu,  
biti tako sam s telesom.

## Misteri i lutjeve

Në familjen time  
lutjet bëheshin fshehtas  
me zë të ulët, me një hundë të skuqur nën jorgan,  
gati mërmëritje,  
me një psherëtimë në fillim dhe fund  
të hollë, e të pastër si një garzë.

Përreth shtëpisë,  
kishte vetëm një palë shkallë për t`u ngjitur  
ato të drunjtat, të mbështetura gjithë vitin pas murit,  
për riparimin e tjegullave në gusht para shirave.  
Në vend të engjëjve,  
hipnin e zbritnin burra  
që vuanin nga shiatiku.

Ata luteshin duke u shikuar sy më sy me Të,  
si në një marrëveshje kryezotësh  
duke kërkuar nje shtyrje afati.

„Zot, me jep forcë!” e asgjë më shumë,  
se ishin pasardhësit e Esaut,  
të bekuar, me të vetmen gjë që mbeti prej Jakobit,  
-shpatën.

Në shtëpinë time  
lutja ishte një dobësi,  
që nuk përflitej kurrë,  
si të bërit dashuri.

Dhe njësoj  
si të bërit dashuri  
pasohej nga nata e frikshme e trupit.

## Stare novice

Novice v vas med gorami ponavadi zamujajo cel mesec.  
Na poti se prečistijo, oplemenitijo: omenjajo zgolj tiste, ki so umrli in šli  
v nebesa,  
in da je coup d'etat »božja volja«.

Pomlad ubija samoto s svojo samoto. Domišljija je  
sok, ki te ščiti pred tvojim telesom. Drugače se košat kostanjev gozd  
in pijani možje zbudajo s premrzlimi rameni prislonjeni ob zidove.

Dekleta se raje poročajo daleč proč,  
nedotaknjen kip petnajstletnice pustijo  
za sabo.

In možje poročajo žene doma pet vasi stran,  
žene, ki bodo rodile preroke med steljo in slamo v hlevu.  
Ah, oprostite, hotela sem reči, le eden od njih bo prerok;  
drugi bodo večči metanja kamenja  
(tudi to je del prerokbe).

V avgustovskem opoldnevu, kot je to,  
bodo šli iz šole kot jata vran, ki jo vzemirja vonj po krvi,  
in se podili za poštarjevo kripo,  
dokler se ne spremeni v prah, ki izginja za vogalom.

In nato bodo rabutali divje hruške s »kurbinega dvorišča«.  
Nihče jim ne bo preprečil. Dvema je ljubica ... Zasluži si!  
Med hruškami v šolski torbi je knjiga  
»Ana Karenina«. Literatura.  
Ki jo bodo brali nepotrpežljivo od zadnje strani naprej,  
očiščena in oplemenitena kot stare novice.

## Lajme te vonuara

Ne fshatin me midis maleve lajmi vjen nje muaj me vonesë.  
Gjate rruges pafajësohet: ai qe vdiq shkoi doemos në parajsë  
e nje grusht shteti “është vullneti i zotit”.

Perroi mbyt vetmine me vetmi. Imagjinata është rreshire  
qe te mbron nga trupi. Perndryshe, pylli i rende i geshtenjave  
dhe burrat e dehur, gdhihen me shpatulla te ftohta, ngjeshur pas murit.

Vajzat preferojne te martohen larg.  
Per te lene prapa, te paprekur  
bustin e pesembedhjetevjecares.

Dhe pertej pesë fshatrave vijne nusët,  
nusët qe do te lindin femijë- profete midis sanes dhe kashtës në plevicë.  
Ah, desha te them vetem njeri do te jete profet  
te tjeret do te praktikohen per të gjuajtur me gurë  
(kjo është gjithashtu pjesë e profecisë).

Ne nje mesdite vjeshte si tani,  
ata do te dalin nga shkolla si nje tufë e trazuar sorrash prej eres se gjakut,  
per t'iu vënë pas makines- rrangallë të postës  
deri në kthese, kur të zhbëhet në pluhur.

E pastaj do te shkojne te vjedhin dardhe te egra ne “oborrin e kurvës”  
Askush nuk i ndalon. Tre burra rresht...Hak e ka!  
Midis dardhëve te egra ne cantë- nje libër  
me porosine per t'u mbajtur mirë. Nje “Ana Kareninë”  
qe do te lexohet me padurim duke filluar nga faqja e fundit.  
e paster dhe e pafajshme, si nje lajm i vonuar.

## Ponedeljek v sedmih dneh

Polomljene igrače so bile moji tovariši pri igri:  
zebre, navite kitajske punčke, sladoledarski vozički,  
ki mi jih je oče dal za novo leto.  
Toda niti ene ni bilo vredno imeti.  
Bile so videti kot torte, katerih okrasje  
je polizal nagajiv otrok ...  
Dokler jih nisem pokvarila,  
strla in preiskala njihove notranjosti, drobnih prestav, baterij,  
nisem se zavedala, da vadim  
svoje razumevanje svobode.

Ko sem prvič gledala pravo sliko,  
sem nagonsko stopila nekaj korakov nazaj, po petah,  
in našla natančno mesto,  
kjer sem lahko raziskovala njeno globino.

Z ljudmi je bilo drugače:  
zgradila sem jih,  
ljubila, toda namerno ne popolnoma.  
Nihče ni bil tako visok kot moder strop.  
Kot pri nedokončanih hišah, namesto strehe jih je prekrivala plastična ponjava  
na začetku deževne jeseni mojega razumevanja.

*Iz angleščine prevedla Veronika Dintinjana*

## E hena ne shtate dite

Lodrat e prishura ishin argëtimi im.  
Zebra, karroca kineze e akullores me kurdisje,  
që im atë m' i solli dhuratë për Vit të Ri,  
asgjë nuk vlenin  
ishin si torta me kremin e lëpirë fshehtas në kuzhinë  
derisa diçka metalike u thyhej përbrenda  
dhe hidheshin tej të panevojshme ...  
Atëherë ua hapja barqet, ingranazhet mikroskopikë, bateritë  
pa e ditur se kisha bërë hapin tim të parë drejt të kuptuarit,  
si liri nga funksioni.

Kur për herë të parë pashë një pikturë të vërtetë,  
bëra disa hapa mbrapa, instiktivisht, me thembra,  
po zgjidhja pikën e vdekjes,  
nga ku mund të hyja në brendinë e gjërave.

Ndërsa me njerëzit ishte tjetër gjë,  
ata i ndërtova vetë. Njerëzit i desha,  
qëllimisht jo deri në fund. Asnjëri prej tyre  
nuk preku tavanin e kaltër me kokë,  
si shtëpitë e lëna në mes, me një plasmas në vend të çatisë  
kur sapo ka filluar vjeshta e lagësht e të kuptuarit.

## Marked

My desk mate in elementary school  
had blue nails, blue lips and a big unrepairable hole in his heart.  
He was marked by the death. He was invisible. He used to watch the clothes  
of others sitting on a stone  
confronting the playground, that alchemy of sweat and dust.

The one who is marked to be king  
is cold, ready for a free fall  
born before his time from an unhappy womb.

The red-haired woman who waits for her drunk husband  
will go on waiting for him in the same way, for one hundred years.  
It is not the alcohol. She is marked with "waiting" in her face  
And he is as guilty as much as the spectator  
that rain pushed from the street to the hall.

What's more, it is not the fault of the war that took the life of the young boy  
with melancholy eyes. He was born to be on the recruiter's list.  
Melancholy is the basic arsenal of armies.

And then there is one who is marked for survival  
will continue to eat his infants like a polar bear  
without ever noticing that the weather got warmer.

All of them are closed like theorems. Their sky  
is a rented house  
where you can't even hammer another a nail.

They are waiting for a second order, which they will ignore anyway  
like the men of Ulysses with their ears blocked with wax,  
rowing on the siren's path.

*Translated by author & Henry Israeli*

## The Mystery of Prayers

In my family  
prayers were said secretly,  
softly, murmured through sore noses  
beneath blankets,  
a sigh before and a sigh after,  
thin and sterile as a bandage.

Outside the house  
there was only a ladder to climb,  
a wooden one, leaning against a wall all year long,  
ready to use to repair the tiles, in August before the rains.  
No angels climbed up them,  
and no angels climbed down them,  
only men suffering from sciatica.

They prayed to catch a glimpse of Him,  
hoping to renegotiate their contracts,  
or to postpone their deadlines.

“Lord, give me strength,” they said,  
for they were descendants of Esau,  
and had to make do with the only blessing  
left over from Jacob,  
the blessing of the sword.

In my house praying  
was considered a weakness,  
like making love.

And like making love  
it was followed by a long night of fear,  
so alone with the body.

*Translated by Shpresa Qatipi & Henry Israeli*



## Old News

The news usually comes one month late in the village between the mountains  
On its way it gets purified, ennobled: mentioning only who died and  
went to the paradise  
And that a coup d'etat is "God's will".

Spring kills solitude with its solitude. Imagination is  
the sap which protects you from your body. Otherwise, the heavy chestnut  
forest  
and drunken men wake up with cold shoulders leaning against the walls.

Girls prefer to marry far away  
leaving the untouched statue of a 15-year-old  
behind them.

And men take their wives from five villages far,  
wives who will give birth to prophets between grass and straw in the barn.  
Ah, sorry, I wanted to say that only one of them will be prophet;  
the others will be practised at throwing stones  
(this is a part of prophecy, too).

In an Autumn noon like this one  
they will go out of school like a disturbed band of crows by the blood smell  
running after the skeleton-car of the postman  
till it turns to dust, disappearing around a corner.

And then, they will steel wild pears from the "bitch's courtyard"  
Nobody will stop them. She is the lover of the two men... and deserves it!  
There is a book between the pears in a school bag.  
"Anna Karenina". Literature.  
It will be read impatiently starting from the last page  
Purified and ennobled like old news.

*Translated by author & Henry Israeli*

## Monday in Seven Days

Broken toys were my playthings:  
zebras, wind-up Chinese dolls, ice-cream carts  
given to me as New Year presents by my father.  
But not one was worth having.  
They looked like cakes whose icing had been  
licked off by a naughty child,  
until I broke them,  
cracked and probed their insides, the tiny gears, the batteries,  
not aware then that I was rehearsing  
my understanding of freedom.

When I first looked at a real painting  
I took a few steps backwards instinctively on my heels  
finding the precise place  
where I could explore its depth.

It was different with people:  
I built them up,  
loved them, but stopped short of loving them fully.  
None were as tall as the blue ceiling.  
Like in an unfinished house, there seemed to be a plastic sheet above  
them instead of a roof,  
at the beginning of the rainy autumn of my understanding.

*Translated by Shpresa Qatipi & Henry Israeli*

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Dan Lungu se je rodil leta 1969 v romunskem mestu Botoșani. Je predavatelj na oddelku za sociologijo univerze Al. I. in urednik revije *Au Sud de l'Est* v Jassyju. Po doktorskem študiju je vpisal postdoktorski študij na Sorboni. V letih 2001 in 2002 je bil glavni urednik revije o kulturi *Timpul*. Lungu piše poezijo, kratke zgodbe, romane in igre. Med njegovimi deli je neleposlovna študija *Construcția identității într-o societate totalitară. O cercetare sociologică asupra scriitorilor* (Konstrukcija identitete v totalitarni družbi: Sociološka študija pisateljev, 2003), pesniška zbirka *Muchii* (Robovi, 1996), zbirke kratkih zgodb *Cheta la flegmă* (Podaj naokrog ravnodušnost na krožniku, 1999), *Proză cu amănuntul* (Proza na drobno, 2003), *Băieți de gașcă* (Dobri fantje, 2005), igre *Cu cuțitul la os* (Nož na kost, 2002), *Nuntă la parter* (Pritlična poroka, 2003) ter romani *Raiul găinilor* (*Kokošji raj*, 2004), *Sînt o babă comunistă!* (Jaz sem komunistični piščanec!, 2007) in *Cum să uiți o femeie* (Kako pozabiti žensko, 2009). Roman *Kokošji raj* je v slovenskem prevodu Aleša Mustarja leta 2007 izšel pri Društvu Apokalipsa. Njegova dela so med drugim prevedena tudi v francoščino, nemščino in madžarščino. Spletna stran: <http://www.danlungu.eu/>

Dan Lungu was born in 1969 in the Romanian city of Botoșani. He is a lecturer at the sociology department of the Al. I. Cuza University and the editor of *Au Sud de l'Est* magazine in Jassy. After completing his PhD, he attended post-doctoral studies at the Sorbonne. In 2001 and 2002, he was editor-in-chief of *Timpul* cultural review. Lungu writes poetry, short stories, novels and plays. Among his works are the non-fiction work *Construcția identității într-o societate totalitară. O cercetare sociologică asupra scriitorilor* (The Construction of Identity in a Totalitarian Society: A Sociological Study of Writers, 2003), the poetry collection *Muchii* (Edges, 1996), the short story collections *Cheta la flegmă* (Pass the Phlegm Plate Round, 1999), *Proză cu amănuntul* (Retail Prose, 2003), *Băieți de gașcă* (Good Guys, 2005), the plays *Cu cuțitul la os* (Knife to the Bone, 2002), *Nuntă la parter* (Ground-floor Wedding, 2003) as well as the novels *Raiul găinilor* (Hens' Heaven, 2004), *Sînt o babă comunistă!* (I'm a Communist Biddy!, 2007) and *Cum să uiți o femeie* (How to Forget a Women, 2009). The Slovenian translation of the novel Hens' Heaven by Aleš Mustar was published in 2007 by the Apokalipsa Association. Lungu's works have also been translated into French, German and Hungarian, among other languages. His website can be found at <http://www.danlungu.eu/>

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# Dan Lunggu



Foto © Matei Bejenaru

## Buldožerist

Če izstopiš iz tramvaja na postajališču Pekarna in greš skozi prehod bloka, kjer je v pritličju trafika, ter mimo prevrnjenega zabojnika za smeti, prideš do vrste nekoč oranžnih štirinadstropnih blokov, s katerih se je oluščila barva. Za njimi se začne polje, kjer ljudje v tistih nekaj hišah, ki so jih pozabili med bloki, pasejo kokoši, svinje in krave. Prav tam se igrajo tudi otroci. V teh blokih živijo delavci TORD-a, Tovarne orodja in rezervnih delov, torej, takšen odgovor bi dobil radovednež, če bi postavil vprašanje. Večina jih je sinov kmetov iz bližnjih ali daljnih vasi, ki so končali poklicno šolo in »jo popihali v mesto, da bi uživali bolj bel kruh«. Poročili so se s hčerkami kmetov, ki so tudi končale poklicno šolo, in so skupaj zaposleni v istem podjetju. Imajo stanovanje, »dobro ali slabo, tako pač je!« v bloku iz plošč v industrijski coni, »kar pa je dobro, saj je služba blizu«.

Buldožerist ni sin kmetov in se mu zato drugi posmehujejo, sprašujejo ga, koliko kočnikov ima ovca zgoraj. Njegovi starši so bili delavci, stanovanje so imeli v bližini centra. Z njimi se je sprl zaradi dekleta, ki jo je vzel za ženo. Končal je poklicno šolo in se z ženo in vsem, kar je imel, preselil v blokošnjake. To je bilo že pred leti. Zdaj jih ima 42, visok je in krepak. Ima vranje črne brke, govori glasno in z zobmi tre orehe. Je miren človek in se pri backgammonu ne jezi, rad čepi v buldožerju, ki je kot ulit zanj. »Ime mi je Virgil, sem buldožerist!« se ti priporoči, ko ti stisne roko in se ti prisrčno nasmehne. »Velik si, Virgil, na višini si!« mu vsakič zakliče slaboten možak na tleh, navdušen nad svojimi besedami.

»Moje sožalje, gospod Virgil,« mu je rekla starka, bivša računovodkinja. To je bilo takrat, ko mu je umrla žena. Bil je na buldožerju, bilo je spomladi. Geto so sprejeli v bolnišnico zaradi lažje operacije »vse skupaj nič, tovariš!«. Najprej je šlo za dva dneva, potem za ves teden, »ker se je pokazal manjši zaplet«; in ko sta minila dva tedna, je k njemu prišel sosed, da bi mu povedal, da mora takoj v bolnišnico. »Tovariš, ali naj naredimo obdukcijo?«

Pravzaprav so bili vsi dogodki v njegovem življenju nekako povezani z buldožerjem. Geto je spoznal nekega sobotnega dopoldneva. Bil je mladostnik, nor na žerjave, dvigala, buldožerje ali rovokopače. Vedel je za nek kraj na obrobju mesta, kjer so gradili blok. Tam je ob sobotah in nedeljah na vzpetini stal buldožer kot kutina, ki se bo vsak hip skotalila. Hodil ga je gledat vsak konec tedna. Usedel se je na kup zemlje in ga občudoval. Med vsem, železobetonom, sodi smole ali kupi peska, je bil buldožer videti najlepši. Ne betonski podporniki, ne kupi siporeksa in ne gore rdeče opeke ga niso toliko privlačili. Nekega sobotnega jutra sta streljaj stran dva smrkavca prekrizala pot nekemu dekletu. Dražila sta jo z dvema dolgima vrbovima šibama in ji govorila svinjarije. Postavil se ji je v bran in jo pospremil do mesta. Vračala se je iz gozda, kamor se je odpravila s šolo, a ji je postalo dolgčas in se je odločila, da se vrne sama. Ime ji je bilo Geta in zanj je postalo to ime najlepše na svetu. Potem je prišla Ana, še eno lepo ime. Ana se jima je rodila v prvem letu zakona. Novica o njenem rojstvu ga

## Buldozeristul

Cum cobori în stația de tramvai de la Fabrica de Pâine, dacă o iei prin gangul blocului cu tutungerie la parter și treci pe lângă tomberonul revărsat, ajungi la un șir de blocuri cu patru etaje, coșcovite, care au fost cândva portocalii. În spatele acestora începe câmpul, unde oamenii de la cele câteva case uitate printre blocuri dau drumul la găini, porci și vaci. Tot acolo se joacă și copiii. În aceste blocuri locuiesc muncitorii de la IUPS, adică Întreprinderea de Utilaje și Piese de Schimb, cum ar afla un curios dacă ar pune o întrebare. Majoritatea sunt fii de țărani din satele mai apropiate sau mai îndepărtate, care au făcut o școală profesională și „s-au aciuat la oraș, că se mănîncă o pâine mai albă”. Ei s-au însurat cu fiice de țărani, care au făcut la rîndul lor o școală profesională, și lucrează împreună în întreprindere. Au un apartament „bun, rău, asta e!” „la blocurile de plăci” în zona industrială, „da-i bine, că-i aproape de servicii”.

Buldozeristul nu e fiu de țărani și ceilalți rîd de el, îl întrebă cite măsele are oaia sus. Părinții lui fuseseră muncitori și aveau apartament aproape de centru. S-a certat cu ei de la o fată, pe care a luat-o de nevastă. A făcut profesionala și s-a mutat cu soție cu tot „la blocotețe”. Dar asta mai demult. Acum are 42 de ani, e înalt și vînjos. Are o mustață neagră, cănită, vorbește tare și sparge nucile în dinți. E un om liniștit, nu se enervează la table și-i place să stea cocoțat pe buldozer, care parcă-i numărul lui. „Mă numesc Virgil și sunt buldozerist!”, se recomanda strîn-gîndu-ți mîna și rîzînd din toată inima. „Ești mare, Virgile, ești la înălțime!”, îi striga, de fiecare dată, pipiriul de la parter, încîntat de propriile cuvinte.

„Condoleanțe, domnu' Virgil!”, îi spuse o bătrînică, fostă contabilă. Asta cînd i-a murit soția. Era pe buldozer și era primăvara. Geta se internase pentru o operație ușoară, „o nimica toată, tovarășe!”. La început a fost vorba de două zile, apoi de o săptămînă, „că s-a ivit o mică complicație”, de două săptămîni, apoi a venit un vecin să-l anunțe că-l cheamă de urgență la spital. „Să-i facem autopsie, tovarășe?”

De fapt, toate evenimentele importante din viața lui sunt legate cumva de buldozer. Pe Geta o cunoscuse într-o sîmbătă dimineată. Era adolescent, nebun după macarale, elevatoare, buldozere sau ifroane. Știa un loc la marginea orașului unde se construia un bloc. Acolo stătea sîmbăta și duminica, pe-o rînă, un buldozer ca o gutuie gata să se rostogolească. La fiecare sfîrșit de săptămînă mergea să-l vadă. Se așeza pe un val de pămînt și-l admira. Printre cofraje, fier-beton, butii de smoală sau vrafuri de pietriș, buldozerul părea cel mai mișto. Nici grinzile de beton, nici stivele de *bca* și nici măcar munții de cărămidă roșcată nu-l atrăgeau mai mult. Într-o sîmbătă dimineată, la o zvîrlitură de băț, doi mucoși ațineau calea unei fete. O tachinau cu două vergi lungi de răchită și-i strigau porcării. I-a luat apărarea și a condus-o spre oras. Venea de la pădure, unde fusese cu școala, dar se plictisise și hotărîse să se întoarcă de una singură. O chema Geta și pentru el acest nume a devenit unul foarte frumos. Apoi a venit Ana, alt

je prav tako doletela na buldožerju, kot da se niti za hip ne bi premaknil z njega.

Bivša računovodkinja mu je rekla: »Moje sožalje, gospod Virgil!« Ni vedel, kaj naj ji odgovori, ali naj se ji zahvali ali ne, zato je raje molčal. Drugi sosedje so se Gete spominjali kot ženske, kot se šika, dobre po srcu, škoda, da je odšla tako mlada, zdravnike bi bilo treba obesiti na obcestne drogove. On je vsem dal prav. Tri dni se ni mogel povzpeti na buldožer. Očistil ga je, namazal z vazelinom, mu zamenjal olje, ga do vrha napolnil z nafto. Oskrbel ga je kot bolnika. Rad bi ga krstil Geta, kot je videl, da to počno v filmih, v katerih so poimenovali ladje. Ladja *Polarna*, dvojbornik *Upanje*, jahta *Oznanjenje*, buldožer *Geta*. Ana se je naučila kuhati, prati in pometati.

Vsake toliko sta šla na Getin grob. Zvaril je železno ograjico, ki jo je pobarval zeleno, Ana pa je posadila nekaj rož. Celo pokopališče so preplavile železne ograjice, samo modeli so bili različni. Vse so izdelali v TORD-u in jih odnesli pol prek ograde, pol pa mimo vratarja. Prešinilo ga je, da je pomirjujoče, če si ograjen z ograjo, ki so ti jo naredili sodelavci.

Ana je vsakič, tiho naslonjena na križ, smrkala. Bila je podobna starki. Tudi nekaj sveč je prižgala. Potem sta se vrnila domov, kar ni bilo daleč. Ko sta odhajala, se je Ana še vedno obračala nazaj. Novo pokopališče je nastalo skupaj z industrijsko cono. Kos zemlje, obkrožen z betonskimi ploščami in dovolj velikimi vrati, da so skozi njih lahko šli tudi vojaški tovornjaki, saj je bila v bližini vojašnica. Virgil je imel na tem pokopališču pokopanih veliko znancev: fanta Tănasea iz livarne, ki ga je scvrl topljeni aluminij, pa Brinză iz Ghireni, ki je umrl zaradi srca, čeprav je bil mlad, Amarieia, ki ga je pomendral železen drog ... mislim, da je bil še eden ... toda ne, Ailenia so odpeljali in ga pokopali v vasi, v Todireni. Na začetku cerkve sploh ni bilo, v cerkev so ga odpeljali v dolino in se šele potem povzpeli proti pokopališču. To je bilo vse do dneva, ko je direktor poslal ekipo dobrih varilcev in material. V enem tednu je bila končana. Cerkev je bila iz pločvine dobre kakovosti, s križi iz še boljše pločvine, ki so bili varjeni prvorazredno.

Revolucija ga je doletela – takšno je pač življenje! – ko je jahal buldožerja. Neke jame je zasipaval z ruševinami hiš na koncu ulice Naționalei. Nekaterim so vzeli samo vrtove, drugim gospodarska poslopja, večini pa kar hiše. Gradili so novo četrto za delavce nove tovarne.

Ko so zagledali majhnega in debelega Artimona, ki je kot podivjani konj preskakoval jame, so pomislili, da nekje gori. »Ceașescu je padel!« je uspelo reči Artimonu s hripavim glasom in rokama, oprtima na buldožer, kot da bi ga hotel potisniti proti mestu. »Kaj praviš, kaj?« ga je še enkrat ostro vprašal, da bi se prepričal, ali je prav slišal. »Cea ... Ceașescuja je konec!« Za trenutek je Virgil zazijal. Kaj takega ni pričakoval.

Na koncu so v podjetju vsi gledali televizijo, nekega mladeniča so poslali po vodko, se objeli, poljubili in na koncu na notranjem dvorišču med koluti žice, cevmi, zarjavlimi radiatorji in zvitki kartona zaplesali kolo Združitev. Vsi so razumeli, da se je v tistem trenutku začelo novo življenje.

nume frumos. Ana s-a născut în primul an al căsniciei lor. Vestea nașterii ei a primit-o tot pe buldozer, de parcă nu s-ar fi clintit nici o clipă de acolo.

Fosta contabilă i-a spus: „Condoleanțe, domnu’ Virgil!”. N-a știut ce să-i răspundă, dacă să-i mulțumească sau nu, așa că a tăcut. Ceilalți vecini își aminteau că Geta era o femeie de treabă, că fusese bună la suflet, că e păcat că s-a dus așa tânără, că doctorii ăștia ar trebui spînzurați de stîlpii de pe marginea străzii. El le-a dat tuturor dreptate. Trei zile n-a putut să mai încalce pe buldozer. L-a curățat, l-a uns cu vaselină, i-a schimbat uleiul, i-a făcut plinul cu motorină, l-a îngrijit ca pe cineva bolnav. Ar fi vrut să-l boteze „Geta”, așa cum văzuse în filme că puneau nume vapoarelor. Vaporul *Polar*, goeleta *Speranța*, iahtul *Bunavestire*, buldozerul *Geta*. După trei zile a pornit din nou treaba. Ana a învățat să facă mîncare, să spele rufe, să măture.

Din cînd în cînd mergeau la mormîntul Getei. Îi sudase un grilaj de fier pe care-l vopsise în verde și Ana sădise cîteva flori. Tot cimitirul se umpluse de grilaje de fier, doar modelele se deosebeau. Toate erau făcute la IUPS și scoase peste gard sau cu o jumate la portar. Îi trecu prin minte că e liniștitor să fii împrejmuț cu un gard făcut de colegii tăi de muncă.

Ana se smiorcăia de fiecare dată, tăcută și cocoșată peste cruce. Semăna cu o băbuță. Aprindea și cîteva lumînări. Apoi se întorceau acasă, nu prea departe. După ce ieșeau, Ana mai întorcea privirea. Cimitirul nou se născuse odată cu zona industrială. O bucată de pămînt, înconjurată cu plăci de beton și cu o poartă destul de mare, încît să poată trece și camioanele militare, căci pe aproape exista și o unitate militară. Virgil avea mai mulți cunoscuți îngropați în acest cimitir: un băiat, Tănase, de la turnătorie, care s-a fript cu aluminiu topit, unul Brînză, de la Ghireni, care a murit de inimă, cu toate că era tînăr, Amariei, pe care l-a strivit un drug de fier... și parcă mai era unul... dar nu, pe Ailenii l-au luat și l-au îngropat în sat, în Todireni. La început nici nu exista Biserica, îi duceau la o biserică mai la vale și după aia îi urcau înapoi spre cimitir. Asta pînă într-o zi, cînd a trimis directorul o echipă de sudori buni și materiale. Într-o săptămînă a fost gata. O biserică din tablă de cinci, cu cruci din tablă de șapte, sudate a’ntîia.

Revoluția l-a prins – asta-i viața! – călare pe buldozer. Astupa niște gropi cu dărîmăturile de la casele din capătul Naționalei. Unora le-au luat numai grădina, altora le-au prins acareturile, dar celor mai mulți le-au luat chiar casa. Se construia un cartier nou pentru muncitorii de la o fabrică nouă.

Cînd l-a zărit pe Artimon cel mic și gras sărind gropile ca un cal nărvaș, nu s-a gîndit decît că a luat foc undeva. „A căzut Ceaușescu!”, a mai apucat să zică Artimon, cu vocea gituită și cu amîndouă mîinile sprijinite de buldozer, de parcă voia să-l împingă spre oraș. „Ce zici, bă?” l-a mai întreat o dată, răstit, să fie sigur că a auzit bine. „Cea... Ceaușescu... s-a terminat!” Pentru o clipă, Virgil a rămas cu gura căscată. La așa ceva nu se așteptase.

În fine, s-au uitat la televizor cu toții, în întreprindere, au trimis un tinerel după vodcă, s-au îmbrățișat, s-au pupat și, la sfîrșit, au jucat și Hora Unirii în curtea interioară, printre colaci de sîrmă, țevi, elemente ruginiți de calorifer și suluri de carton. Au înțeles cu toții că din acea clipă încep o viață nouă.



Virgil je še naprej jahal buldožerja in nista minili dve leti, ko mu je sredi poletja, točneje 16. avgusta ob štirih popoldan, z roko, stisnjeno v pest ob ušesu, vratar od daleč pomignil, da ga nekdo kliče po telefonu.

Gledal je možica s čelado, se čudil in zase momljal: »Telefon imaš.« V življenju je samo petkrat govoril po telefonu, in to samo zaradi nuje. Splezal je z buldožerja, si oblekel karirasto srajco in se počasi odpravil proti vratarnici. Iz kosa plastike ga je prav tako plastični glas vprašal, ali je Virgil Crisnic. Hotel je opsovati tistega na drugi strani žice, a ga ni mogel, ker ga ni imel pred sabo. Le kako bi ga lahko? Prav z buldožerja so ga poklicali, prav njega in ne koga drugega, da bi ga vprašali, ali je on.

- Imate hčer Ano?

Zadržetal je in vse mu je postalo jasno. Po pričakovanju je hči v bolnišnici umrla. Vse zdravnike bi bilo treba obesiti na obcestne drogove. »Gospod Crisnic, bi radi, da naredimo obdukcijo? Zaradi srca je prišlo do tega. Veliko stresa, ali je doživela kakšna čustvena razočaranja? Naj pride Ghiță z avtom in jo odpelje domov. Bila je zelo čustvena, se vidi. Verjetno utrujenost ... prehrana ... majhne nesreče ... saj sami veste.« Moral je poklicati nekaj žensk, da bi kolikor toliko pripravile pogreb. »Na ulici se je zgrudila, točneje na avtobusnem postajališču. Bila je gneča, bilo je vroče ... Prinesla sta jo nek moški in neka ženska. Jo prepoznate?«

Majhno, blede dekle, s suhimi rokami v vzorčasti obleki ... Prikimal je. Njegovo veliko telo se je začelo počasi tresti, kot da bi sredi noči poskušal zbuditi otroka, ne da bi ga prestrašil.

Domov so jo pripeljali pozno, poklical je tistih nekaj sorodnikov, kolikor jih je imel. Več je prišlo sosedov. Ker je bilo zunaj soparno, so šepetali, da jo je treba hitro pokopati. »Še posebej tiste zaradi srca. Ja, ja ... Tisti s srcem ne zdržijo dolgo ...«

Na pokopališču je duhovnik rekel, da potrebuje mrliški list, tako je po zakonu, drugače je ne more pokopati.

Na sodišču so zahtevali nekaj od zdravnika in upravne koleke.

V kiosku na sodišču niso imeli kolekov. Morda jih imajo pri Mladinskem domu.

Pri Mladinskem domu jih niso imeli. Morda jih imajo pri kinu Lucaefărul.

Tudi tam jih niso imeli. Nikjer v mestu jih niso imeli.

- Nikjer jih ni, dajte mi tisti papir in bomo zadevo že nekako rešili ... Saj veste ... vroče je ... in ... danes je tretji dan.

Uslužbenec majhne rasti z resnim začetkom pleše se je stoje z dlanmi opiral na pisalno mizo. Vročini navkljub je imel suknjič zapet do vratu. Gledal je resno s pepelnatimi očmi, polnimi pomembnosti svojega delovnega mesta. Uslužbenca.

- Gospod Crisnic, zelo mi je žal, toda ne morem vam pomagati. Je v nasprotju z zakoni države in mojim osebnim načelom. Še več, če bi naredil to, kar zahtevate od mene, bi to stoodstotno pomenilo zapor.

- Dajte mi ta papir, saj smo razumni ljudje, saj bom podpisal, kaj za vraga?!

- Gospod Crisnic, postavljate me v kočljiv položaj (oddaja znake živčnosti). Če ni zakonito, ni zakonito! Ali smo zato delali Revolucijo, da bi počeli nezakonite stvari?

Virgil a rămas în continuare călare pe buldozer și n-au trecut doi ani că, într-un miez de vară, mai precis în ziua de 16 august, la ora 4 după amiaza, portarul fabricii i-a făcut semn de departe, cu mâna rotită în dreptul urechii și pumnul strâns în dreptul obrazului, că-l cheamă cineva la telefon.

Privi la omulețul cu caschetă și se miră, îngînînd pentru sine: „La telefon?!” Nu vorbise decît de vreo cinci ori în viața lui, și numai forțat de împrejurări. Coborî de pe buldozer și-și îmbrăcă o cămașă în carouri, apoi porni agale către gheretă. În bucata de plastic, o voce tot de plastic îl întrebă dacă se numește Virgil Crîsnic. Ar fi vrut să-l înjure pe ăla de dincolo, dar nu putea înjura pe cineva pe care nu-l avea în față. Cum adică? Îl chema tocmai de la buldozer, adică îl chemase pe el și pe altul, tocmai să-l întrebe dacă-i el.

- Aveți o fiică, Ana?

Tresări și totul îi fu limpede. La spital, așa cum se aștepta, fata murise. Toți doctorii aștia meritau spînzurați de stîlpii de pe stradă. „Domnu' Crîsnic, doriți să-i facem autopsie?” „E din cauza cordului, să știți. Mult *stress*, a suferit cumva niște deziluzii sentimentale?” Doar să vină Ghiță cu mașina și să o ducă acasă. „Era o ființă sensibilă, se vede. Probabil oboseala... alimentația... micile necazuri... știți și dumneavoastră...” Trebuia să cheme cîteva femei și să pregătească o înmormîntare, cît de cît. „A căzut pe stradă, mai bine zis în stația de autobuz. Era aglomerat, era cald... Au adus-o un bărbat și o femeie. O recunoașteți?”

Fața mică și albă, miinile slăbuțe, rochia de stambă cu buline... Dădu din cap că da. Trupul lui mare începu să se zgîlție încet, ca și cum ai încerca să trezești un copil, în puterea nopții, fără să-l sperii.

Într-un tîrziu a adus-o acasă și și-a chemat neamurile, puține la număr. S-au adunat mai mulți vecini. Cum afară era nădușeală, se șușotea că trebuie îngropată repede. „Mai ales cei cu inima... Da, da... Cei cu inima nu țin mult...”

La cimitir, părintele-i spuse că are nevoie de certi-ficat de deces, altfel, asta-i legea, n-o poate înhuma.

La tribunal i-au cerut ceva de la medic și niște timbre fiscale.

La chioșcul tribunalului nu aveau timbre. Poate lîngă Casa Tineretului.

Lîngă Casa Tineretului nu aveau timbre. Poate lîngă cinema Luceafărul.

Nu aveau nici acolo. N-aveau nicăieri în oraș.

- Dom'le, nu găsesc nicăieri, dați-mi hîrtia aia și om rezolva-o noi cumva... Știți... e cald... ee... azi e a treia zi.

Amplouaiatul, în picioare, mic de statură, cu un început serios de chelie, se sprijină cu palmele de tăblia biroului. În ciuda căldurii, sacoul gri e încheiat pînă la ultimul nasture. Privește grav, cu ochii cenușii, plini de importanța locului său. De funcționar.

- Domnule Crîsnic, regret foarte mult, dar nu vă pot ajuta cu nimic. E împotriva legilor țării și a principiilor mele personale. În plus, dacă eu procedez la ce mă îndemnați dumneavoastră, asta înseamnă pentru mine detenție sută la sută.

- Dați-mi hîrtia aia, că doar suntem oameni de înțeleș, semnez pentru ea, ce naiba?!

- Ne morem je pokopati na polju ... kot psa ... krščena je! Kaj naj z njo?

- Ne zanima me! Ne vem!

- Ko jo bom pokopal, bom po državi iskal koleke ... in vam jih prinesem ... in potem bomo s tem opravili ... opravili.

Gospod izza pisalne mize se skloni k Virgilovemu ušesu in mu zaupno zašepeta: - Ne iščite več kolekov, ker jih ni. Tistih s Socialistično republiko ne tiskajo več, zaloge so pošle, novih pa še ni naprodaj ... ne vem, če so že natisnjeni. Raje jo pokopljite, tako kot sem vam rekel, na vrtu, brez popa.

- Kako naj jo pokopljem kot psa, če pa je kristjanka?

- Potem jo imej pa doma, da se usmradi, je zarohnel uslužbenec in s pestjo udaril po kupu spisov.

Sorodniki so se s takšnim ali drugačnim izgovorom razbežali. Teta Sanda je odšla zadnja, rekoč, da ve za potegavščino s koleki na starih dokumentih, da je tako naredila njena sosedka, ki je pred kratkim pokopala moža. Vonj se je počasi širil po stopnišču in pronical pod sosedovimi vrati. Ni si drznil sneti rjuhe z Aninega obraza. Nek sosed mu je potožil, da je vonj postal neznosen, da bi bilo bolje, če bi jo nesel ven na zrak. »Oprosti, Virgil, toda niti otroci nočejo več jesti!« Nekdo je trkal po radiatorju. Verjetno gospa računovodkinja ali pa sosed, ki živi poleg, ki je bil strugar. Po moško je zgrabil krsto in jo odnesel za blok na polje. Korak za korakom je vedel, kaj mu je storiti, le da Ane ni mogel pustiti same. Iz ščavja, posušenih kravjekov in plastičnih vrečk je zakuril ogenj. Nek bradač z vodenimi očmi ga je prosil, če se lahko pogreje. Costico je poznal, večkrat mu je dal krajec kruha. Bil je izgubljen pameti in je živel od miloščine, si se pa z njim v določenih trenutkih lahko razumel. Rekel mu je, da je lahko mirne volje tam in naj počaka, da mu nekaj prinese.

Šel je za tovarno, k jamam. S človeško kretnjo je zbudil svoj traktor, ki je začel tiho brneti. Preveril je bencin in ga pobožal. Rekel mu je, da imata delo. »Vzela bova Ano in greva v mesto. Navsezgodaj zjutraj jo bo našel na pisalni mizi. Boš videl, kako bo vesel!« Še dvakrat ga je po moško potrepljal po križu, ga zajahal in spodbodel z ostrogami. Od rezgetanja so mu šli mravljinici po hrbtenici, vzvod pa se je svetil kot sablja v mesečini.

*Prevedel Aleš Mustar*

- Domnule Crîsnic, mă puneți într-o situație delicată (dă semne de nervozitate). Dacă nu-i legal, nu-i legal! De asta am făcut noi Revoluție, să ne ținem de ilegalități?

- Nu pot s-o îngrop în cîmp... ca pe un ciine... e botezată creștină! ce să fac cu ea?

- Nu mă interesează! Nu știi!

- După ce o îngrop, pornesc prin țară după timbre... vă aduc... și terminăm... terminăm cu toate astea.

Domnul de la birou se apleacă spre urechea lui Virgil, șoptindu-i confidențial: „Nu mai căutați timbre, că nu sunt. De cele cu Republica Socialistă nu se mai fabrică, s-au terminat stocurile, iar de cele noi nu s-au pus în vânzare... nici nu știu dacă s-au tipărit. Mai bine îngropați-o așa cum v-am spus, în grădină, și fără popă.”

- Dar e creștină, cum s-o îngrop ca pe un ciine?

- Atunci ține-o în casă, să se impută!, răbufnește funcționarul izbind cu pumnul într-un teanc de dosare.

Rudele, sub un pretext sau altul, fugiseră. Mătușa Sanda a plecat ultima, spunînd că știe ea o șmecherie cu timbre de pe acte mai vechi, că așa făcuse o vecină de-a ei, care tocmai își îngropase bărbatul. Mirosul începuse să coboare încet pe scări, strecurîndu-se pe sub ușile vecinilor. Nu îndrăzni să ridice cerșaful de pe fața Anei. Un vecin i se plînsese că mirosul a ajuns insuportabil, că poate ar fi mai bine să o scoată afară la aer. „Te rog să mă scuzi, Virgil, dar nici copii nu mai vor să mănînce!” Cineva bătu în calorifer. Poate doamna contabilă sau poate strungarul de alături. Puse voinicește sicriul pe umăr și-l duse în spatele blocului, pe cîmp. Știa pas cu pas ce are de făcut, numai că n-o putea lăsa pe Ana singură. Aprinse un foculeț cu scaieți, balebă uscată și pungi de plastic. O figură bărboasă, cu ochi apoși, îi ceru voie să se încălzească. Îl știa pe Costică, de multe ori îi dăduse chiar el un colț de piine. Avea mintea rătăcită și trăia din pomană, dar, la nevoie, te puteai înțelege cu dînsul. Îi spuse să stea liniștit acolo și să-l aștepte, că-i aduce ceva.

Trecu în spatele fabricii, la gropi. Cu un gest firesc, își trezi buldozerul, care începu să fornăie cuminte. Îl controlează de benzină și îl mîngîie. Îi spuse că aveau treabă. „O luăm pe Ana și mergem în oraș. Dimineață, la prima oră, o s-o găsească pe birou. Să vezi ce-o să se bucure!” Îl mai bătu de două ori bărbătește pe crupă, îl încălecă și-i dădu pineni. Nechezatul îi înfioră șira spinării. Iar levierul luci ca o sabie în bătaia lunii.

## The Bulldozerist

As you alight at the bread factory tram stop, if you head through the passageway of the tenement house with the tobacconist's on the ground floor and past the upturned dustbins, you will come to a row of flaking four-storey blocks which were at one time orange. Behind them stretches a field where the folk from the few houses forgotten among the blocks let loose their hens, pigs, and cows. It's also where the children go to play. In these blocks live workers from the TSPM, which is to say the Tools and Spare Parts Mill, as anyone curious enough to ask will discover. Most of them are the sons of peasants from villages nearby or farther afield, who have been to trade school and "taken refuge in town, because the bread's whiter there." They married the daughters of peasants, who in their turn went to trade school and work alongside them in the factory. They have a flat - "good, bad, that's all there is to it!" - "in the prefab bocks" of the industrial zone. "But it's alright, 'cause it's near work."

The bulldozerist is not a peasant's son and the others make fun of him. They ask him how many teeth a sheep has in its upper jaw. His parents had been labourers and lived in a flat near the centre of town. He quarrelled with them over a girl, whom he took as his wife. He went to trade school and moved lock, stock and barrel "to the blocklets." But that was long ago. Now he is forty-two. He is tall and brawny. His moustache is tinted black. He speaks loudly and cracks nuts with his teeth. He is a peaceable man. He never gets annoyed when playing checkers. And he likes to sit perched on his bulldozer, which seems made to measure. "My name's Virgil and I'm a bulldozerist!" he would introduce himself, shaking your hand and beaming from the bottom of his heart. "You're a big'un, Virgil, you're way up there!" the scrawny little fellow from the ground floor would always shout out to him, delighting in his own words.

"Condolences, Mr Virgil!" an old woman, a former accountant, said to him. That was when his wife died. He was up on his bulldozer and it was spring. Geta had been admitted to hospital for a minor operation - "a trifle, comrade!" At the beginning, it was a matter of two days; then a week, "because a small complication has arisen"; then two weeks; then a neighbour came to inform him that he was summoned urgently to the hospital. "Shall we do an autopsy on her, comrade?"

In fact, all the important events in his life are somehow connected to the bulldozer. He had met Geta one Saturday morning. He was a teenager, crazy about cranes, elevators, bulldozers, and excavators. He knew a spot at the edge of town where they were building a block of flats. On Saturdays and Sundays, there would be a bulldozer sitting there, tilting to one side like a quince about to topple. Every weekend he would go to see it. He would sit on a mound of earth and admire it. Out of all the casings, iron, concrete, barrels of tar, and heaps of gravel, the bulldozer looked the coolest. Not even the girders, or the stacks of autoclaved cellular con-

crete, or the ruddy mountains of bricks were more appealing to him. One Saturday morning, a stone's throw away, two snout-nosed kids were barring a girl's path. They were flicking her with two long willow switches and calling out dirty words. He leapt to her defence and led her off towards town. She had been coming back from the woods, where she had been on a school outing, but she had got bored and decided to go back home on her own. She was called Geta and for him this name became one that was very beautiful. Then came Ana, another beautiful name. Ana was born in the first year of their marriage. It was also on the bulldozer that he received the news of her birth, as though he had not budged from it for so much as a second.

The former accountant had said to him : "Condolences, Mr Virgil !" He did not know what to answer, whether to thank her or not, and so he said nothing. The other neighbours recollected that Geta was an upright woman, that she had had a good heart, that it was a shame she had departed so young, that those doctors ought to be hanged from the nearest lamppost. He agreed with them all. For three days he was unable to mount his bulldozer. He washed it, he greased it with Vaseline, he changed its oil, he filled its tank with diesel, he tended it like an invalid. He would have wanted to christen it Geta, just like he had seen in those films where they name ships. The good ship Polar, the schooner Hope, the yacht Annunciation, the bulldozer Geta. Three days later, he went back to work. Ana learned to cook food, do the laundry, sweep.

Now and then, they would visit Geta's grave. He had welded her an iron grating, which he painted green, and Ana had planted a few flowers. The whole cemetery was full of iron gratings, but the designs were different. They were all made at the TSPM and smuggled over the fence, with half for the porter. It crossed his mind that it is reassuring to be enclosed by a fence made by your workmates.

Every time, Ana would snivel, silent and hunched over the cross. She looked like a little old woman. She would also light a few candles. Then they would go back home, not far away. As they left, Ana would keep turning to look. The new cemetery had come into being at the same time as the industrial zone. A patch of earth, fenced in with concrete plates. The gate was big enough for military trucks to pass through, for there was also an army base nearby. Virgil had known many of the people buried in this cemetery : Tănase, a lad from the foundry, who had been scalded by molten aluminium ; a certain Brînză, from Ghireni, who had had a heart attack, even though he was only a young man ; Amariei, who had been crushed by an iron girder... and wasn't there another one... but no, they'd taken Ailenii and buried him in his village, up in Todireni. In the beginning there wasn't even a church, and so they used to take them to the church down the hill and after that back up to the cemetery. That was until one day, when the director sent a team of skilled welders and good materials. It was ready in a week. A church welded from sheet-metal, with sheet-metal crosses.

The Revolution caught him – that's life ! – riding his bulldozer. He was filling in some pits with the rubble from the houses demolished at the end of the High Street. From some folk they took only their gardens, from others their outhouses. But from most they took even their houses. They built a new district for the workers at the new factory.

When he spotted fat little Artimon leaping over the pits like a restive horse, the only thing he could imagine was that a fire had broken out somewhere. "Ceaușescu has fallen !" Artimon managed to blurt out, in a strangled voice, leaning with both hands on the bulldozer, as though he wanted to push it into town. "What's that you say ?" he asked him yet again, sharply, so as to be sure he had heard aright. "Ceau... Ceaușescu... it's all over !" For a moment Virgil was left with his mouth agape. He hadn't been expecting anything like that.

Finally, he watched it on telly with all the others in the factory, they sent a lad to fetch some vodka, they kissed and, in the end, they even danced the Ring-dance of Union in the inner courtyard, among the coils of wire, the pipes, the rusty radiator elements, and the rolls of cardboard. To a man they all understood that from that moment a new life was beginning.

Virgil continued to ride his bulldozer, and not even two years had passed when, at the height of summer, at four o'clock in the afternoon on 16 August to be precise, the factory porter signalled him from afar that someone wanted him on the 'phone, rotating one hand next to his ear and holding the other in a fist next to his cheek.

He gazed at the little man in the hardhat and was amazed, murmuring to himself : "On the phone ? !" He had spoken on the phone no more than five times in his entire life, and that was only when constrained by circumstances. He climbed down from his bulldozer and put on his checked shirt. Then he set off briskly towards the cabin. From a piece of plastic a plastic voice asked him whether his name was Virgil Crîsnic. He would have liked to swear at the person on the other end, but he couldn't swear at someone unless he was there in front of him. What's all this ? He was calling him all the way from his bulldozer, which is to say he'd called him and no one else, just so he could ask him whether it was him ?

"Do you have a daughter, Ana ?"

He gave a start and everything became clear to him. In hospital, as they had been expecting, the girl had died. All those doctors ought to be strung up from the nearest lamppost. "Mr Crîsnic, do you want us to do an autopsy on her ?" "It was because of her heart, you know. A lot of stress. Had she suffered any disappointments in love ?" Just let Ghiță come with the car to take her home. "She was a sensitive soul, apparently. Probably exhaustion... poor diet... little misfortunes... you know the kind of thing..." He would have to call on some of the women to prepare a halfway decent funeral. "She collapsed on the street, at a bus stop to be precise. It was crowded, hot... A man and a woman brought her. Do you recognise her ?"

The small, white face, the thin arms, the polka dot dress... He nodded yes. His huge frame began to shake softly, as though he were a child some-

one was trying to waken in the middle of the night without frightening him.

Some time later, he brought her home and summoned the relatives, few in number. The neighbours outnumbered the family. As it was torrid outside, there were whispers about having to bury her quickly. "Especially them with a heart condition... Yes, yes... The ones with a heart condition don't last long..."

At the cemetery, the priest told him that he needed a death certificate, otherwise – that's the law – he couldn't bury her.

At the tribunal, they asked him for something from the doctor and for some fiscal stamps.

At the tribunal kiosk they didn't have any stamps. Maybe round by the Youth Club.

Round by the Youth Club they didn't have any stamps. Maybe round by the Hyperion Cinema.

They didn't have any there either. There wasn't anywhere in town that had any.

"Mister, you can't find them anywhere, give me that document and we'll try to sort it out somehow... You know... it's so hot... ah... today's the third day."

The clerk, on his feet, short in stature, with grave incipient baldness, is leaning his palms on the sheet metal of his desk. In spite of the heat, his grey jacket is buttoned up to the top. He gazes sternly, his ashen eyes brimming with the importance of his position. That of functionary.

"Mr Crisnic, I very much regret that I am unable to help you. It is against the laws of the land and my own personal principles. Moreover, if I proceed to do what you are urging me to do, it would mean prison, one hundred per cent."

"Give me that document, I'm asking you man to man, I'll sign for it, what the hell ? !"

"Mr Crisnic, you are putting me in a very delicate situation." (He shows signs of anger.) "If it's not legal then it's not legal ! Is this why we had a revolution, so that we could cling to illegalities ?"

"I can't bury her in a field... like a dog... she's a baptised Christian ! What am I to do with her ?"

"It's not my problem ! I don't know !"

"After I bury her, I'll search the whole country for stamps... I'll bring you them... and we'll have done... we'll have done with all of this."

The gentleman in the office leaned over towards Virgil's ear and whispered confidentially : "Don't keep looking for stamps, because there aren't any. They don't manufacture the Socialist Republic ones any more, the stocks have run out, and the new ones are not on sale yet... I don't even know whether they have printed any. Better bury her like I told you, in the garden and without a priest."

"But she's a Christian, how can I bury her like a dog ?"

"Then keep her in the house, to rot !" thunders the functionary, hitting a sheaf of files with his fist.



The relatives, under one pretext or another, had fled. Auntie Sanda was the last to leave, saying that she knew a trick with stamps from older documents, because that was what a neighbour of hers had done, who had just buried her husband. The stench had begun to creep down the stairwell, slipping under the neighbours' doors. He did not dare lift the sheet from Ana's face. A neighbour complained that the smell had become unbearable, that maybe it would be better if he took her outside, into the air. "Please forgive me, Virgil, but even the kids are off their food now!" Someone banged on the radiator pipes. Maybe the accountant lady or maybe the lathe turner from next door. He heaved the coffin up onto his shoulder and took it round the back of the block, into the field. He knew step by step what he had to do, except that he couldn't leave Ana all by herself. He lit a fire of thistles, dried cowpats, and plastic bags. A bearded figure with watery eyes asked him if he could warm himself. It was Costică, he knew him, and had often even given him crusts of bread. He was out of his mind and lived on people's charity, but at a pinch you could come to an understanding with him. He told him to wait there quietly for him and that he would bring him something.

He went behind the factory, to the pits. With a natural gesture, he wakened his bulldozer, which began to snuffle contentedly. He checked its diesel and stroked it. He told it they had business. "We're fetching Ana and going into town. First thing in the morning, he'll find her on his desk. Just you wait and see how happy he'll be!" He gave it another two manly slaps on the crupper, mounted, and revved it up. Its whinnying sent a shiver down his spine. And the lever gleamed like a sword in the rays of the moon.

*Translated by Alistair Ian Blyth*



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Tone Partljič se je rodil leta 1940 v Mariboru. Diplomiral je iz angleškega in slovenskega jezika na mariborski pedagoški akademiji. Poklicno pot je začel kot učitelj na osnovni šoli in nadaljeval kot dramaturg Slovenskega narodnega gledališča Maribor, kasneje je bil imenovan za umetniškega vodjo Mestnega gledališča ljubljanskega in zatem Drame SNG v Ljubljani. Leta 1990 je bil prvič izvoljen za poslanca v Državni zbor Republike Slovenije, prvemu so sledili še trije zaporedni mandati. Tone Partljič spada med najbolj priljubljene slovenske dramatik, piše pa tudi kratko prozo, romane in mladinsko literaturo. Med njegovimi najbolj znanimi deli so gledališke igre *Ščuke pa ni, ščuke pa ne* (1977), *Moj ata, socialistični kulak* (1983), *Štajerc v Ljubljani* (1995) in *Politika, bolezen moja* (1996); njegovo prozo je zaznamovala trilogija *Pri Mariji Snežni zvoni* (1994), *Starec za plotom* (1995) in *Grob pri Mariji Snežni* (2005), mlajšim pa bo ostal v spominu po zbirkah črtic *Hotel sem prijeti sonce* (1981) in *Slišal sem, kako trava raste* (1990). Je dobitnik nagrade Prešernovega sklada za satirične komedije, Levstikove nagrade, Grumove nagrade in Glazerjeve nagrade mesta Maribor za življenjsko delo na področju kulture. Živi v Mariboru, ki je zanj »edinstveno mesto«.

Tone Partljič was born in 1940 in Maribor. He graduated in English and Slovene languages at the Pedagogical Academy in Maribor. He started his career as a primary school teacher to become a dramaturge at the Slovene National Theatre Maribor. He was then appointed artistic director of the Ljubljana City Theatre and later on took over the same function at the Slovene National Theatre Drama Ljubljana. He was first elected as a Member of Parliament in 1990 and prides himself on altogether four consecutive mandates. Tone Partljič is one of the most popular Slovene dramatists but he also writes short prose, novels and youth literature. Among his most well known plays are: *Ščuke pa ni, ščuke pa ne* (The Pike Is Not Here, Not the Pike, 1977), *Moj ata, socialistični kulak* (My Dad, the Socialist Kulak, 1983), *Štajerc v Ljubljani* (A Man from Štajerska in Ljubljana, 1995) and *Politika, bolezen moja* (Politics, It's My Ailment, 1996). His prose has been marked by the trilogy *Pri Mariji Snežni zvoni* (It Tolls at Mary of the Snows, 1994), *Starec za plotom* (The Old Man Behind the Fence, 1995) and *Grob pri Mariji Snežni* (The Grave at Mary of the Snows, 2005), the younger audience will appreciate *Hotel sem prijeti sonce* (I Wanted To Hold the Sun, 1981) and *Slišal sem, kako trava raste* (I Heard How the Grass Grows, 1990). He is a winner of the Prešeren Fund Award for Satirical Comedy, the Levstik, Grum and the Glazer City of Maribor Prizes for his life's work in culture. He lives in Maribor, which in his words is "a unique city".

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# Tone Partljič

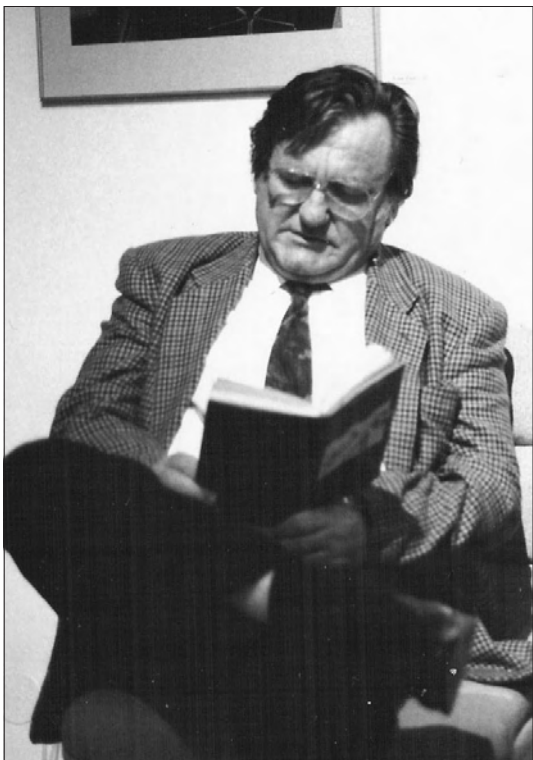


Foto © Tihomir Pinter

# Poroka čistilke Marije

*(odlomek iz monokomedije)*

Čistilka stopi v sobo, osupla sede.

Veste, kaj mi je rekla? Da je delo v domu specifično. Da pa če mi ni prav, da lahko grem. Takih, kot ste vi, jih samo prek javnih del ponujajo na stotine.

Če to ni sramota! Samo naj mi še kdo kaj reče proti socializmu! Naj poskusi! Takrat sem bila kljub vsemu človek. Zdaj sem številka na zavodu za zaposlovanje, prej pa sem bila delavka.

Sem imela službo in plačo. Ne veliko, a sem jo vsaj imela. V tekstilni tovarni Kroj. Sem lahko šla na počitnice v sindikalni dom v Jelso.

Za osmi marec smo se na stroške firme vse napile, razjokale in bruhale. Ker nismo bile vajene vina. No, nekatere so bruhale tudi še kak mesec kasneje. Od osmega marca. Ampak vseeno ti ni nobeden rekel, če ti ni kaj prav, pa pojdi! Danes pa povsod samo to.

Je žensk na zavodu ko smetja! Tudi v javnih delih same ženske. Pa tudi na svetu nas je baje preveč. Jebenti, demokracijo, kjer si manj vreden že zato, ker si ženska ... In te lahko starci v domovih za onemogle otipavajo za rit.

Socialna mi je rekla, da imajo tudi druge, tudi negovalke in sestre take izkušnje. Mislim, da jih starci večkrat pošlatajo.

Da so tudi taki, ki namigujejo še na hujše stvari. Mislim, no ... Ampak rajši bi prijela v roke mrtvega slepiča ... čeravno se bojim kač.

Pa tudi nekatere stare ženske baje govorijo nespodobnosti.

Ja, bit čistilka v domu za ostarele, je res specifično. Ampak tudi tu je več žensk. 150 žensk in 80 moških. Prekleti moški, koliko so na boljšem!

Če ostanejo sami, si hitro najdejo kako, ki doma skrbi za njih. Navadno celo mlajšo. Reče, ti bom prepisal stanovanje, če boš skrbela za mene. Če se pa poročiš, pa boš imela vdovsko penzijo. In ženske nasedejo.

No, vse ne nasedejo, ampak zračunajo, če se plača. Mnoge niti za tak dom nimajo pa si opomorejo s stanovanjem ali vdovsko penzijo.

Če je ne muči predolgo, se splača. Še edina sreča, da moške navadno prej vzame ... Mislim, Gospod k sebi. Ampak sem prepričana, da jih tri četrť takoj pošlje v pekel ... Saj zato pa je preveč žensk na svetu, ker moške prej pobere. Je trikrat več vdov kot vdovcev. In jaz sem med temi vdovami.

Še mlada. Ker je Franček tak znenada za zmeraj zaspal ... Ne vem, kaj je z njim naredil Gospod. Ampak četudi ga je zadržal gori, je sigurno skrit v kakem oddaljenem kotu ...

Kak smo ženske nore! Kaj vse so nam delali moški, me pa letamo na britofe, sadimo rožice, plejemo travo, prižigamo sveče. Pravijo, da imamo najlepše grobove v Sloveniji v celi Evropski uniji. Ker smo ženske take. Poznam ene, ki hodijo vsak dan na britof in našenejo vsako mravljo, ki gre prek groba. Druge enkrat na teden sadijo rožice, menjajo sveče; še jaz, ki nisem ne vem kako vzorna, grem vsakih štirinajst dni na Frančkov grob in ga oplejem, zbrišem ploščo. Mislite, da bi on šel vsakih štirinajst dni na

## The Wedding of Marija the Cleaner

*(Excerpt from a solo comedy)*

The cleaner enters, sits down flabbergasted.

You know what she told me? That work at a home was specific. That I could just pack it in if I didn't like it. We can get the likes o' you by the score through the public works alone.

Ain't that just a crying shame! Just let anyone say a word against socialism now! Just let 'em try! I was a human being then, no matter what. Now I'm a number at the employment office, back then I used to be a worker.

Had my own job and pay. Not much, but least I had one. At the textile factory, The Fashion Cut. I could go on holiday to the trade union's holiday home at Jelsa.

On the eighth of March, all of us would get plastered at the firm's expense and then bawl and throw up. 'Cause we wasn't used to wine. Well, some of them would still be throwing up a month later. From the eighth of March. But nobody ever said, You don't like something, just pack it in! And these days you won't hear nothing else.

There's tons of women at the employment office! And nothing but women doing public jobs. And they say there's too many of us in the world, too. What bloody democracy is this when you ain't worth shit just 'cause you're a woman ... And when geezers in old folks' homes can paw at your arse.

The social worker says that it happens to others too, like the nurses. Getting pawed, I mean.

That there's some geezers even hinting at worse things. Well, I mean ... But I'd rather handle a dead blindworm ... though I'm scared of snakes.

And they say there's some old women talking dirty, too.

Yep, being a cleaner in an old folks' home sure is specific. But there's more women even here. 150 women and 80 men. Bloody men, ain't they got the best of it!

If they're left stranded, they'll find some woman in a trice who'll take care of them at home. A younger woman, too. Says he, I'll make the flat over to you if you'll take care of me. And if you marry me, you'll have a widow's pension. And the women fall for it.

Well, they don't all fall for it, they work out if it's gonna pay. Lots of 'em can't even afford a home like that, so they do well out of a flat or widow's pension.

If he don't nag at her too long, it does pay. Lucky it's the men that usually go first ... to the Lord, I mean. But I bet he packs most of 'em off to hell straightaway ... Sure, that's why there's too many women in the world: 'cause the men peg out first. There's three times as much widows as there's widowers. And I'm one of them widows.

Still young. 'Cause Franček passed away so sudden ... Don't know what the Lord did with him. But even if he was allowed to stay up there, he's bound to be hiding in some out-of-the-way nook ...

moj grob, če bi bila jaz mrtva? Bi vraga! Enkrat na leto, za dan mrtvih. Moj sosed Fras je eden redkih vdovcev v tej deželi vdov. Za prvi november nese svečo, pa nikoli ne najde groba svoje žene Dragice. In se vsako leto znova razburja, ko išče. Pa lani je bila še tu, pravi, kam je te šla ... Ženske, ženske, pravi, nikoli jih ni tam, kjer bi morale bit. Ko jo najde, pravi, a tu si, porkafiks, jaz sem te pa tam iskal!

Ja, če bi moški skrbeli za grobove, naši britofi sigurno ne bi bili na prvem mestu v Evropski uniji.

Že zato je v nacionalnem interesu, da moški prej umrejo. Nu, tudi za nas ženske ni slabo, da živimo dlje, ha? Me prav zanima, kdo je šibki in kdo močnejši spol ... če bi bili močnejši, ne bi pomrli povprečno osem let prej ko me ...

Jaz tu govorim, moram pa nazaj v sobo gospoda Karla Frangeža. Če bo še enkrat poskusil, ga bom tak po taci ... Socialna je rekla, morate ga sami držat na distanci ... Pa je rekla, da je delal v gledališču in da je drugače fin gospod. Kolko jaz vem, so fini najhujši!

*(Vzame nekaj čistil in odide. Se vrne v sobico, pripelje s seboj voziček za čiščenje.)*

Zdaj pa bi res kar na ta zadno padla. Pripeljem ta voziček spet v sobo gospoda varovanca. Oni so vsi gospe in gospodje. Karl Frangež napol poklapano sedi na postelji, medtem ko čistim. Vse pobrišem. Mizo, tla, umivalnik. Ko se pripognem, da bi pobrala vedro, stegne roko.

Se zaderem, ne steguj tac, stari. Vem, da vas moram, gospod varovanec, spoštovati, ampak spoštujte tudi vi mene.

Samo to sem vam hotel dat in rečt oprostite. Preberte, da mi ne bo treba govorit.

Vzela sem papir. Prebrala in brez besed odšla iz njegove sobe. In kaj mi je napisal? Da na rit padeš!

ČISTILKA MARIJA IN ROKA

Saj glava ni hotela,  
je roka sama poletela.  
Jo je zvalila vaša ritka,  
ravno prav debela.

Zdaj me je sram,  
v oči pogledat vam.  
Ne pozabite, da sem v domu  
tako zlo sam!

Se mi bo na koncu še zasmilo!

Še jezna ne morem bit več!

Ampak vzpostavila sem distanco, kakor mi je svetovala socialna delavka.

*(Vstane in se ogleduje v ogledalu.)*

Ain't we just nuts, us women! The things the men did to us, and here we go running to the cemeteries, planting flowers, weeding, lighting candles. They say we've got the prettiest graves in Slovenia in the whole European Union. Because us women are like that. I know some as go to the cemetery every day and chase away every ant that crosses the grave. And there's others planting flowers and replacing candles every week; even I, and I'm no shining light, go to Franček's grave every fortnight to take out weeds, wipe down the plaque. You think he'd go to my grave every fortnight if I was the dead one? Like hell he would! Once a year, on All Hallows. My neighbour Fras, he's one of the few widowers in this country of widows. He brings a candle every November first but can't never find the grave of his wife, Dragica. And rants every year again while he's looking for it. She was here only last year, he goes, where's she gone to ... Women, women, says he, they're never where they're supposed to be. And when he finds her he goes, Well here you are, dammit, and I been looking for you all over there!

Yep, if it was the men that took care of them graves, our cemeteries definitely wouldn't be at the top in the European Union.

That's why it's in the national interest to have the men die sooner. Though it's not bad for us women either that we get to live longer, huh? Who's the weaker and who's the stronger sex here, I'd like to know ... if they was the stronger, they wouldn't be pegging out eight years before us on average ...

Well, here I am, chatting away when I oughtta be getting back to Mr Frangež' room. If he gets fresh again I'm gonna give him such a whack on the paw ... The social worker says, You got to keep him at a distance yourself ... And she says he used to work at the theatre and is a fine gentleman in other ways. As far as I know, them fine folks is the worst!

*(Picks up a few detergents and leaves. When she returns to the closet, she is pushing along a cleaning trolley.)*

You could've really knocked me down with a feather now. I bring this here trolley back to Mr Home Resident's room. They're misters and madams, all of'em. Karl Frangež is sitting on his bed, with this hangdog face, while I'm cleaning. I wipe down everything. The table, the floor, the sink. And as I bend down to pick up the bucket, he stretches out his hand.

Keep your paws to yourself, old man, I yell. I know I got to respect you, Mr Home Resident, but you got to respect me, too.

I just wanted to give you this and say I'm sorry. Read it so I don't have to talk.

I took the paper. Read it and left his room without a word. And what was it he'd written for me? Blimey!



»Vaša ritka ravno prav debela.« Mu bom že dala debela ... Je pa res, da moram malo shujšat. Ampak, da sem jaz dočakala, da je en moški napisal pesem samo za mene! In to zdaj, ko imam že skoraj petdeset let. Sem ponosna. Ne pa tak ko tista zacugnjena Julija, ki ji ni bilo prav, da je Prešeren napisal pesem s črkami Primicovi Juliji.

S Frančekom sem bila poročena dvajset let. Pa da bi on napisal kako pesem za mene? Je bi prevelko tele! No, enkrat sem res mislila, da mi govori v verzih. Ampak je bilo slučajno. On niti vedel ni! Je sredi noči začel. Ne morem spat, pa bi tak rad!

Kaj bi rad? Sem se zadržala, ker me je prestrašil v spanju.

Da mi daš. Kar imaš. Saj veš kaj!

Zaspi nazaj!

To je bilo edino pesništvo med nama. To je bilo že potem, ko se je vrnil iz Nemčije in od svoje Portugalke v Ludwigshafenu ... In sem se jaz malo nazaj držala ... Kdaj prej se ne bi!

Zdaj pa cela pesem o meni.

»Saj glava ni hotela,  
je roka sama poletela.  
Jo je zvalila vaša ritka  
Ravno prav debela.  
Zdaj me je sram,  
V oči pogledati vam.  
Ne pozabite, da sem v domu tak zlo sam!«

*(Se spet opazuje.)*

Veste, da ne vem, ali je res ravno prav debela.

MARIJA THE CLEANER AND THE HAND

There was no intent,  
The hand shot out itself.  
By your bottom teased,  
As plump as it should be.

Now I am ashamed  
To look you in the face.  
Don't forget that at the home  
I'm so alone!

Looks like I'm gonna end up feeling sorry for him!  
Can't even be cross any more!  
But I've established my distance, like the social worker said.  
*(Rises to inspect herself in the mirror.)*

"Your bottom as plump as it should be." I'll plump the geezer all right ...  
It's true I got to lose a little weight, though. But fancy that, I lived to have  
a man write a poem specially for me! And me nearly fifty. Proud of it, I am.  
Not like that prig Julija that turned up her nose when Prešeren wrote a  
poem with the letters "Primicova Julija".

Now Franček, we was married twenty years. But him write a poem for  
me? A great big lout like him? Well, once I did think he was talking to me  
in verse. But it was just an accident. He didn't even know! Started in the  
middle of the night. I can't drop off, and I do so want!

Want what? I yelled 'cause he scared me outta sleep.  
That you give me what you got. You know what!  
Oh, lay off!

That were the only poetry between us. After he'd already come back  
from Germany, and from that Portuguese woman of his in Ludwigshafen ...  
And I was holding back a bit ... Wouldn't have held back before!

And now a whole poem, all about me.

"There was no intent,  
The hand shot out itself.  
By your bottom teased,  
As plump as it should be.  
Now I am ashamed  
To look you in the face.  
Don't forget that at the home I'm so alone!"

*(Inspects herself again.)*

You know, I can't tell if it's really only as plump as it should be.

*Translated by Nada Grošelj with the help of Nick Catt*

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Jana Putrle Srdić, rojena leta 1975 v Ljubljani, je študirala bibliotekarstvo ter ruski jezik in književnost. Objavila je dve pesniški zbirki: *Kutine* (2003) in *Lahko se zgodi karkoli* (2007). Poleg prevajanja poezije iz angleščine, ruščine in srbščine občasno piše tudi o umetniškem filmu in se ukvarja s kulturno organizacijo. Njena poetika se ne spogleduje niti z akademskimi niti s popularnimi prijemi, prej spominja na čare nizkoprorračunske kinematografije, na zgodbe, kakršne se dogajajo v fizičnem dosegu snemalca, brez kakršnih koli efektov, ki pa omejitve rade volje vzamejo nase in jih imajo pravzaprav za bistveno postavko avtoričine estetike.

Jana Putrle Srdić, born in 1975 in Ljubljana, has been studying library science and Russian language and literature. She has published two poetry collections: *Kutine* (Quinces, 2003) and *Lahko se zgodi karkoli* (Anything Could Happen, 2007). Apart from translating from Russian and Serbian, she occasionally writes about art film and organizes cultural events. Her poetics inclines neither towards the academic, nor the popular approaches, it prefers to remind the reader of low budget cinematography and its charms, of stories happening within the grasp of the cameraman without any special effects and with well welcomed limitations, which form the essence of the author's aesthetics.

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# Jana Putrle Srdić



Foto © Sunčan Stone

## Druga stran kože

Želja po pesmi je kot vlaga  
v zraku, 80 % in narašča.

Ponoči grem čez mesto v obliki  
moke luže, luči v njej zabrisano valovijo

in suhi otočki življenja se imenujejo:  
pumpa, Nobel burek, Hot-horse,  
Noč in Dan. »Dobro jutro,« zareži  
ostarel motorist, ki v usnju, s čelado,  
z motorjem, z rokenrol mladostjo  
vstopa v trgovino.

Vsako gibanje se odbije od mojega  
telesa, dolgodlaka mačka vihravo  
puhne mimo mene, ta ura je iztrgana,

čas se spiralno sesipa  
vase, čakamo v vrsti,

vsak s svojo razcefrano avro,  
s frnikulami poželenja, razsutimi po tleh.

Mesto nam daje infuzijo bleščečih  
ritmov in nas rešuje prepotenega  
stanovanja, rož v lončkih, ki tiho odmirajo,

mesto je zatočišče iz celofana, v katerem  
potrpežljivo čakamo stekli psi.

## The Other Side of Skin

Wishing for a poem is like a dampness  
in the air, 80% and increasing.

At night I walk through the city in the shape  
of a wet puddle, lights blur in its waving

and dry islands of life are named:  
a pump, Nobel Burek, Hot-Horse,  
Day and Night. „Good morning,” grins  
an aged motorcyclist, who in leather  
with his helmet and motorbike  
and a rock-n-roll youth,  
enters the shop.

Everything moving repels off  
my body, a longhaired cat swiftly  
puffs beside me, this hour is torn out,

time spirally collapses  
into itself, we are waiting in queues,

everyone with his scraped aura,  
with marbles of lust, scattered over the ground.

The city gives us an infusion of glittering  
rhythms and saves us from a sweaty  
apartment, flowers in pots that are quietly dying away,

the city is a refuge of cellophane  
and we patiently await- the rabid dogs.

## Gradbišče ob koncu poletja

Marsikaj se lahko naučiš, če živiš  
poleg gradbišča. Najprej postavijo  
plastična stranišča v azurni barvi.

Lije že tri dni in rumene  
delavske čelade izpod napuščev,  
smeh iz skladišča. Listi so še zeleni,

a zdi se, kot da nas selijo nekam drugam,

vsako noč po malem, zbudjamo se v isti  
hiši, ob istem gradbišču, a nebo je

hladnejše in zvoki z ulice polni  
obveznosti. Kaj naj zdaj z vročimi  
kamni, ki smo jih celo poletje  
polagali na trebuh? Listi so še zeleni,

delavci nosijo rumene čelade.  
Vsak ima svoje trike za preživetje.  
Sramežljive prodajalke ovijajo gole  
izložbene lutke v ovojni papir.  
Črnuški klošar vsako jutro roma  
v center na frančiškansko kosilo.  
Ti pljuvaš čez ramo ob mačkah  
vseh barv in pes vztrajno odnaša copate  
v neznano. Listi so še zeleni, a rumeni

se več ne ozrejo, ko grem mimo  
ograje. Čelade z brnenjem, tresenjem,  
razbijanjem, drdranjem večajo luknjo  
v zemlji. Naslednjo jesen se bosta

10–12 m v zraku nad njo dva ljubila

v nežni svetlobi iz erotičnih filmov  
in naša hiša bo, potopljena  
v temo, ostrmela.

## Construction at the End of Summer

You can learn a lot, living near  
a construction site. First they set up  
azure-colored plastic toilets.  
Rain pouring down for three days and yellow  
helmets under jutting roofs,  
laughter from a warehouse. The leaves are still green,

but it seems like we are moving somewhere else,

bit by bit every night, we wake up in the same  
house, near the same construction, only the sky is

colder and the noise from the street is filled with  
obligations. What to do now with the hot stones  
we have been placing on the belly  
all summer? The leaves are still green,

the workers wear yellow helmets.  
Everyone has their own tricks for survival.  
Embarrassed salesgirls wrap naked  
mannequins in wrapping paper.  
Every morning Črnuče's bum makes a pilgrimage  
to the center for a Franciscan lunch.  
You spit across your shoulder at multicolored  
cats and the dog persistently carries off the slippers  
into the unknown. The leaves are still green, but the yellow ones

no longer look back when I pass by  
the fence. Helmets accompanied by buzzing, throbbing,  
pounding, rattling, deepen the hole  
in the earth. Next autumn,

10-20m in the air above, two people will make love

bathed in gentle light from erotic films  
and sink into the darkness, our house  
will stare in wonder.



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odšli smo na sveto ano, skupina ljudi, povezanih z dvema avtomobiloma, besedami, smehom in žarečo svetlobo iz revij za jesensko modo. 20 minut hoje za reklamno fotko z mobijem, kot so nas naučili jumbo plakati. vsaj miha, jana in jaz ne gledamo televizije, kar je dobro in včasih slabo: ko ne govoriš drug z drugim, niti s svetom in na zabavi lepih in mladih ljudi ne veš, za kaj gre. staramo se v tej nežni, sladkotrpki svetlobi, steklenice okrog svojih prezrelih hrušk še vedno natakamo z viljamovko, v skrbeh, da nas bodo sintetične droge razbile. oklepamo se drug drugega, ker so naše velike stvari nenadoma postale igračke in čutimo, kako se oddaljujemo. pogosto se kličemo po imenih. tridesetletniki priprtih oči in malce negotovi, da je svet pod sveto ano res naš

(fotografija s svete ane)

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we went to saint anne, a group of people, linked by two cars, words, laughter and glowing light from the magazines for autumn fashion. 20 minute walk for a commercial photo with a mobile, the way jumbo posters taught us. at least miha, jana and i don't watch tv, which is good and sometimes bad: when you are not talking to each other or the world and you don't have a clue at a party full of young and beautiful people. we are growing old in this soft, sweetly-dry light, bottles around our overripe pears we are still pouring ourselves viljamovka, worrying that synthetic drugs will divide us. clinging onto each other we feel our big things becoming children's games as we are slowly drifting apart. often we call each other by name. 30-year-olds with eyes half-open and somewhat uncertain that the world below saint anne belongs to us

(photography from saint anne)

*Translated by Bridgette Bates and the author*

## Temnozelenena pesem

to je pesem o nama,  
dolgo sem se je izogibala.

kar nama jemlje svetlobo, potiskava iz  
vidnega polja in nalagava majave stole,  
neuporabne omarice, prazne okvire slik  
v sobo za goste. nekaterih prostorov nikoli  
ne uporabljava, vsaj ne  
drug z drugim.

to je pesem o nama, zelena,  
gladka in tuja leži  
na domačem kuhinjskem  
linoleju,  
in ko se v najini dolgi tišini med zajtrkom levi  
v besede, ostane le hrapav olupek.

čeprav nisem nema, to noč sem sanjala žensko z eno  
nogo, bila je popolna, *moram do dna zapleta*,  
sanjala sem, da imava skupaj eno nogo,  
je to popolno? težko bi  
prišla z njo  
do trga, med pešci in avtomobili,  
saj več, trg je dno vsakega mesta, mala  
popolnost. še vedno se lahko plaziva.

to je pesem o nama.  
vedno sem mislila, da bo ljubezenska.  
dno mesta, dno stanovanja, najina ena noga.

## The Dark Green Poem

This is a poem about us two,  
I have long avoided.

We push away whatever makes the room  
darker, we cram wobbly chairs  
misfit cupboards, empty picture frames  
into the the spare room. These are spaces we  
never use, or at least not  
with one another.

This is a poem about us two, green  
slippery and foreign, it lies  
in the kitchen on the linoleum,  
so familiar,  
and during our long breakfast silences, when it  
changes skin to turn into words, all that's left is a dried-out shell.

Even if I'm not mute, I dreamed last night of a woman  
with only one leg, she was perfect *I have to get to the bottom of the plot*  
I dreamed that we shared one leg,  
Is that perfection? It would be difficult  
on that one leg  
To get to the main square, zizagging between pedestrians and cars,  
You know very well that the main square is at the bottom of every town –  
a tiny perfection. We could always crawl.

This is a poem about us two.  
I always thought it would be a love poem.  
At the bottom of the town, at the bottom of the apartment, our one leg.

*Translated by Laura Solomon and the author*

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Peter Rezman se je rodil leta 1956 v Celju. Je pesnik, pisatelj in dramatik. Pesmi je začel objavljati v času, ko je kot jamski električar delal v Rudniku Velenje. Od leta 1990 je poklicno deloval kot politik »zelenih«. V tem času je bil tudi član IS SO Velenje. V začetku leta 1996 se je zaradi bolezni upokojil. Živi v Šaleški dolini. Prve pesmi je objavil v antologiji *Slovenske rudarske pesmi* (1983). Sledil je prvenec *Pesmi iz premoga* (1985), istega leta je izšla tudi zbirka kratke proze *Kronologija neuspeha*. V okviru Tedna domačega filma (1988) je napisal scenarij in asistiral Tugu Štiglicu pri režiji kratkega filma *Obisk*. Vrnitev k poeziji je zaznamovala pesniška zbirka *Črno in črno, rdeče in rdeče, zeleno in zeleno* (1991). Sodeloval je tudi z AG Velenje, ki je v sezoni 1993/94 uprizorilo njegovo dramo *Ogledalce*. Njegova zadnja pesniška zbirka nosi naslov *Družmirje* (1998). Javnost je po nekajletnem premoru spet opozoril nase z bralno uprizoritvijo drame *Hiša* (2006) v Gledališču Glej. Stalnica – vračanje k rudarski tematiki – se zrcali tudi v zbirki sedmih novel *Skok iz kože* (2008), nagrajeni z Dnevnikovo fabulo 2009. Sodeluje v projektu PreGlej.

Peter Rezman was born in 1956 in Celje. He is a poet, writer and dramatist. His poems were first published while he was working as a mining electrician for the Velenje Mine. After 1990 he was professionally active as a politician for the "Greens". During that time Rezman was also member of the Executive Council of the Municipal Assembly of Velenje. He retired due to illness at the beginning of 1996 and now lives in Šaleška dolina. His first poems were published in the anthology *Slovenske rudarske pesmi* (Slovene Mining Poems, 1983). *Pesmi iz premoga* (Songs From Coal, 1985), his first book of poems followed, moreover, his short story collection *Kronologija neuspeha* (The Chronology of Failure) was published in the same year. For the film festival the Week of the Home Film he wrote a script and assisted Tugo Štiglic directing the short film entitled *The Visit*. He returned to poetry with the poetry collection *Črno in črno, rdeče in rdeče, zeleno in zeleno* (Black and Black, Red and Red, Green and Green, 1991). Rezman's cooperation with the Amateur Theatre of Velenje resulted in the staging of his drama *Ogledalce* (Pocket Mirror) in the 1993/1994 season. His last poetry collection is entitled *Družmirje* (1998). After a few years' break from the public arena the Glej Theatre hosted the reading of his drama *Hiša* (House, 2006). The continuity in his work – miners' issues – is also mirrored in the seven novellas of the *Skok iz kože* (Leaping from Skin, 2008) collection, awarded by the *Dnevnik* daily with the Fabula Prize 2009. Rezman takes part in the PreGlej project.

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# Peter Rezman



Foto © Ivo Hans Avberšek

# Skok iz kože

*(Odlomki iz zgodbe Skok čez kožo)*

Vedno je bilo nekaj tistih, predvsem iz bližnjih vasi, ki jim knapovski praznik ni pomenil drugega kot samo prosti dan in zastonj kračo ter pol litra vina. Ti so, skoraj kot tatovi, zjutraj, ali vsaj zgodaj dopoldne, prišli do obrata družbene prehrane, kjer so na zadnji strani, skriti med parkirane avtomobile, zamrežene skladiščne prostore trgovin in velikih zabožnikov za smeti, ženske v belih rutah skozi okenca že delile bele polivinilaste vrečke in v vsaki je bila zavezana dimljena kuhana krača in zraven je ležala pollitrška steklenica, napolnjena nalašč za to priložnost. Treba je bilo priti zgodaj in hitro zapustiti mesto, da se ne bi po nepotrebnem srečevali z mestnimi kamerati, ki so široko koračili, zjutraj še z razpetimi črnimi suknjiči uniform in belimi rokavicami v žepih, da se ne bi prehitro zamazale. Njim se je bilo treba izogniti, njim in njihovim vprašanjem, zakaj da ne gredo na parado.

Za tem zgodnjim valom ljudi, ki so prišli po svoje praznične zavitke, se je mesto zopet za hip umirilo, ženske za okencem so zaprle lopute in z belimi prtiči pregrnile zaboje z belimi vrečkami. Potem so jih močni mladci naložili in jih odpeljali h priložnostnim stojnicam ob jasi, ki se je razprostirala blizu jezera, na drugi strani kotalkališča, mestnega parka, pod atletskim štadionom. Tam se bo razdeljevanje prazničnih malic nadaljevalo vsem na očeh in se bodo skoraj vse krače hitro razrezale kar tam, pojedle in zalile z vinom. Sonce bo grelo meso in vino in grelo bo glave in hrbte pod črnimi suknjiči in potočki znoja se bodo vlekli izpod črnih čepic, ob očeh, mimo ušes, po sveže obritih licih in spirali kolonjsko vodo, ki je zgodaj zjutraj tako zapekla na sveže postrganih licih.

Za zgodnjim valom ljudi, ki so odnesli bele vrečke s kračami in vinom, so se ob visoki kamniti kulisi kulturnega doma začeli najprej zbirati godbeniki v črnih uniformah, z bleščečimi instrumenti in kapelnikom, ki je z rokami na hrbtu stal na robu stopnišča. Na drugi strani prostranega praznega trga se je dvigala druga kockasta hiša, bivša uprava rudnika in sedanji sedež občine ter vseh drugih političnih organov z zvezo komunistov na čelu, oblečena v zamolklo zelene kamnite plošče krhkega tufa. Kapelniku so oči žarele. Sreča in ponos ter pričakovanje skorajšnjega korakanja pred muzikanti so ga skoraj dvignili od tal. Šli bodo po ulicah mesta, ki je za vsakim vogalom izdajalo svoje knapovske korenine in v katerem ni bilo nič tako pomembnega, kot dejstvo, da je vsak temelj, vsak robnik, vsak blok, vsak okrasni grm, vsaka ped mesta natopljena z znojem udarniškega dela knapov, ki so skozi desetletje vsak dan po šihlu hiteli in z golimi rokami gradili čudež, v katerega se je včasih pripeljal tudi tovariš Tito.

## Leaping From Skin

*(Excerpts from the story Jumping the skin)*

There were always some people, especially those coming from the nearby villages, to whom the miner's feast meant nothing but a day off and a free ham with a half litre of wine. They came, almost like thieves, in the morning or early in the forenoon at the latest, reached the social food production plant where, hidden among parked cars, in the barred backstreet warehouse premises of stores and behind large garbage containers, women wearing white kerchiefs were already distributing white polyvinyl bags; in each was bound a smoked ham, beside which lay a half litre bottle, filled deliberately for this occasion. It was necessary to come early and to leave quickly, so they would not unnecessarily meet the town comrades, who strode widely, in the morning, in the still unbuttoned black jackets of uniforms with white gloves in their pockets, so as not to soil them too soon. They had to be avoided, together with their questions, as to why they were not going to the parade.

After this first wave of people who came to collect their holiday package, the town was appeased for a moment again, the women behind the counter closed the flaps and covered the cases with white bags and white napkins. Then strong youngsters loaded them and carted them off to occasional stalls by the clearing which spread out near the lake, on the other side of the roller-skating rink, the town park, under the sports stadium. There the distribution of holiday packages will continue in front of everyone's eyes and almost all the joints will quickly be carved right on the spot, consumed and washed down with wine. The sun will heat the meat and wine and it will heat the heads and backs under black jackets and streams of sweat will roll under black caps, along the eyes, past the ears, on fresh-shaven cheeks and wash away the Cologne that early in the morning so stung the freshly scraped cheeks.

After the early wave of people who carried away the white bags with ham and wine, beside the tall stone scenery of the Cultural Hall first began to gather musicians in black uniforms with glaring instruments and the bandmaster who stood, arms behind his back, at the end of the staircase. On the other side of the vast empty square rose a second blocky house, the former administrative office of the mine and the present headquarters of the municipality and all other political organs, with the League of Communists at the head, covered in dull green slabs made out of brittle tuff. The bandmaster's eyes beamed with joy. Happiness and pride as well as anticipation of the imminent marching ahead of the bandsmen almost lifted him off the ground. They will pace the streets of a town whose every corner bespoke its miners' roots and where nothing was more important than the fact that every foundation, every kerbstone, every block, every decorative shrub, every inch of the town, was drenched in the shock-working sweat of the miners. Throughout the last decade the miners hurried each



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*Ta moj kip v parku zgleda od daleč ko en človek na dveh tankih ficlah. Sem videl tudi v resnici takšne tanke knapovske noge, spodaj ušpičene do kosti, nad kolenom široke bedre in nabito, mišičasto telo. Ja. Se spominjam enega takšnega atletskega knapa. Je iz zaleta naredil špago pod tuši, da je voda kar špricala od njegovih jajc. Ta je bil od daleč podoben mojemu kipu. V tem zafukanem kraju je itak vse povezano s knapi in šihtom. Tudi spomeniki! Pa še kurca je imel spredaj, ta moj šestmetrski rogovilež, če si ga od daleč pogledal. Takega, v levo zavihanega, s čopom kocin na vrhu. Dobro! Saj ne rečem! Moraš imeti tudi malo fantazije, da v tistem betonu vidiš knapa s štrlečim kurcem. Ali pa tud ne, ker si tistega tiča nisem izmislil jaz. Sem slišal od drugih, da ima tisti modernistični spomenik v sončnem parku na levo zavihanega kurca. Pošteno povedano, sem prvič šel gledat tisto modernistično pizdarijo ravno zaradi te čenče.*

*Od blizu pa ne. Od blizu je bilo čisto drugače. Vse je bilo razbrzdano pa pošrekano, da si je kipar ziher vse kremple polomu, preden je končal to rogovilo. In tisti kurac sploh ni bil kurac, ampak ena klečeča baba, ki so ji zadaj, na meča, kot en cigu, naložili sedem tankih deščic. Zakaj, ne vem. Kleči tam, poleg pa stoji en obris, ziher knapa, s tako ošiljeno glavo. Ja. Ziher sta par. On pokončen in oglato obtesan, gleda nekam stran, ona pa kleči za njim in mu tišči joške, ki v resnici niso joški, ampak en tak izrezljan krog v betonu. Men se zdi tako, kot baba, ki se nastavlja in fehta, da jo eden poboža po joških. Sam sem jo pijan en parkrat hotel pobožat, pa bi si moral nekaj podstaviti, da bi dosegel tisti krog, ko je takšen kot en zizek. Če nisem bil preveč zadrotan, sem lahko skočil le do nog, ki so štrlele iz kipa in so bile od daleč videti kot kurac. Če nisem bil preveč zadrotan, sem lahko skočil in se z rokami obesil za tiste noge. So me ja držale brez problemov. Bi se lahko tud obesil za tistega kurca, al pa noge, kakor človek pogleda, pa se kip ne bi odlomil.*

*Ja. Jaz sem pogruntal tisti prizor na kipu. Od daleč že lahko, da se je komu zdelo kot kašen nagec s štrlečim kurcem pod tušem. Od blizu pa sta bila knap, ki stoji, gleda stran, in njegova baba, ki kleči pred njim.*

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Kapelniku, z rokami na hrbtu, je v svečane misli včasih res vdiral slaba vest, da s svojim početjem ne seže niti do kolen zgaranim in zašvicanim knapom, ki iz dneva v dan vrtajo in v nenehni nevarnosti za svoja življenja požrtvovalno bijejo boj s kruto naravo, ki se upira, toda moč človeških rok je neustavljiva in premog se nalaga na dolgi hrbet deponije pred elektrarno, v kateri zgori za splošno blaginjo, ki jo omogoča zveza komunistov na čelu s tovarišem Titom. Toda slaba vest hitro mine. Mož se zaveda tudi pomembnosti svojega dela. Godba je dvigala moralo vsem. Tistim, ki delajo v jami, kot onim, ki delajo zunaj. Godba mora biti. In to ne kakršna koli godba. To je rudarska godba, ki bo danes potegnila črno parado skozi belo mesto, druge dni v letu pa jo bodo največkrat slišali na

and every day after shift and with their bare hands to build the miracle through which, from time to time, even comrade Tito drove.

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*This statue of mine in the park looks from a distance like a man standing on two thin sticks. I saw such a thing in reality, too, such thin miner's legs, below pointed to the bone, above the knee, wide thighs and a beefy muscular body. Yeah. I recall one such athletic miner chap. He made such splits from a running jump under the showers that the water sprayed right off his bollocks. This one, from a distance looked like this statue o' mine. In this fucked up place in one way or other everything is linked with miners and the shaft. Monuments too! And he 'ad a prick too, in the front, that twenty-foot blusterer, if you looked at it from afar. Suchlike, turned up left with a tuft of hair on top. Well! I don't say! You must have a bit of imagination to see a miner with a prominent prick in that concrete. Or not, 'cause I didn't invent that prick. Heard it from the others that that modernist monument in the sunny park had a left turned prick. It should in fairness be said that I first went to see that fuck of a modern art just 'cause of that babble.*

*Not from the front, though. From the front it was completely different. The whole thing was furrowed and scribbled, so I guess the sculptor must've surely broken his clutches before he finished that forked twig. And that prick was not at all a prick, but a kneeling crone to whom they added on seven thin tiles back on the calves, that look like a brick. Why, I couldn't tell. It's kneeling there and beside stands an outline, surely of some miner, with such a pointed head. Yeah. Sure they're a pair. He erect and angularly hewed, is looking somewhere aside, and she kneeling behind him and pressing her tits into him, which are not tits for real, but a sort of carved circle in the concrete. To me, she seems that, a hag offering herself openly to him and begging someone to caress her tits. I wanted to caress 'er myself, several times when drunk, but I'd a had to put something down to reach that circle, the one that's like a tit. If I wasn't too hammered I could jump to the legs only, which jutted out of the statue and looked from afar like a prick. If I wasn't too fuckin hammered I was able to jump and hang with my hands on those legs. They gave me no problem, they did. Could too hang meself on that prick or them legs, how man sees them, but the statue wouldn't knock off.*

*Yeah. That scene o' the statue was my thing. From a distance it sure can look to some like a nudist with a protuberant prick under the shower. But from up close it's one o' them miners, who stands and looks aside and 'is hag kneeling in front of him.*

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The bandmaster, with his arms at the back, had his festive thoughts invaded by a guilty conscience that he wasn't on a par with the overwrought and sweaty miners, who day by day drill and in constant danger

pokopališču, kjer brez izjeme pospremi do groba vsakogar, ki je žulil črni kruh v jami. Hajere in lauferje. Tiste, ki so umrli naravne smrti, ali one, ki jih je pobilo v jami. Vsem je na zadnji poti igrala ta ista godba, ki jih bo danes vodila po ravnih in gladkih ulicah, skozi križišča, mimo blokov in trgovin, mimo zelenic in svetlih izložb, mimo rudarskega šolskega centra in tržnice, na kotalkališče, kjer se bo črna kolona razvrstila za štirimi petdesetlitrskimi lesenimi sodčki piva in godba bo igrala in dekleta v belih bluzah in z rdečimi nageljni bodo tam in vrčki piva bodo tam in vse bo črno in zlati gumbi se bodo bleščali in na svečani tribuni bodo sedeli pomembni možje in eden od njih bo govoril v mikrofون in potem bodo novinci skočili čez usnjene predpasnike, ki jim pravijo koža.

Godbeniki so se postavljali v red, ne da bi jih kapelnik sploh pogledal, in čez trg se je zdaj s te strani, zdaj z one strani počasi utrnil uniformiran penzionist, in tam ob godbi so počasi rasle gruče izmozganih uniformirancev. Čez čas so se začele z vseh strani kopičiti tudi gruče mladcev, mnogih prvič v knapovski uniformi, večinoma že podprtih vsaj s kakšnim požirkom žganice. Bili so glasni in objestni in takrat se je kapelnik počasi obrnil proti svojim godbenikom in videl, da so fantje brez vsakršnega ukaza že sestavili pravilno formacijo za začetek parade. Za njimi so se še v neurejenih kolonah pozdravljali uniformirani upokojenci, za njimi pa se je iz nereda v vrste počasi postavljala največja skupina tistih, ki še hodijo na šiht, pomešana z novinci, ki bodo danes skočili v rudarski stan.

Skoraj sočasno, ko se je kapelnik obrnil h godbenikom in z zadovoljstvom ugotovil, da so ti kar sami uredili svoje vrste, so se na drugi strani trga odprla vhodna vrata občinske hiše in iz nje sta se naravnost čez trg proti visoki kamniti kulisi, pod katero se je zbirala parada, namerila vodja ceremoniala in še en človek, ki ga niso poznali, a je bil vedno zraven. Ta dva bosta dala pravi ukaz za ureditev vrst. Potem se bo ešalon v taktih godbe premaknil in črni možje bodo svečano in strumno prehodili skoraj vse najvažnejše ulice v centru svojega mesta vse do kotalkališča, kjer se bo zgodil najpomembnejši dogodek tega dne. Dogodek, katerega korenine so bile starejše kot zveza komunistov in bo živel tako dolgo, kot bo živel rudnik. In tako dolgo bo živelo mesto, ki so si ga za svoj počitek zgradili knapi sami, s svojimi žulji, z udarniškim delom, na katero so bili ponosni vsi! Zdaj resda z zvezo komunistov na čelu in tovarišem Titom, ki jih s strani ni hotel pogledati in je v vsej svoji veličini kar gledal in gledal v tla in razmišljal, ali naj sestopi z velike kamnite kocke ali naj ostane zamrznjen v debeli bronasti plašč.

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*Ja. In tako. Zdaj sem tukaj pri tej klečeči babi, ki ji štrlijo noge s te modernistične rogovile. Celo mesto praznuje in knapi, ki so zjutraj v paradi prikorakali na kotalkališče, se zdaj napajajo spodaj, na jezeru. In se hvalijo, kako so z golimi rokami sestavili ta kurčev čudež komunizma na mehkem močvirju vijugaste vode, zregulirali strugo, posekali drevje, zasuli tunfe, podrli žage in mline, spumpali močvirje, zasuli njive,*

for their lives unselfishly battle with a cruel nature that offers resistance, yet the might of man's hands is unstoppable, and coal is laid on the long back of the dumping ground in front of the power station in which it burns for the communal benefit, all made possible by the League of Communists with comrade Tito at its head. But the guilty conscience passes quickly. This man is also aware of the importance of his own work. The band was raising morale for all. For those who work in the pit as well as for those who work in the open. There has to be a band. And not just any band. This is the miner's band that is going to pull the black parade through the white town, on other days in the year they will mostly hear it at the graveyard, where without exception it follows to the grave every person who scraped his brown bread in the pit. Gaffers and nippers. Those who died a natural death and those who were killed in the pit. To all of them on their last journey played the same band which will lead them today through the straight and even streets, through the crossroads, past the blocks of flats and the shops, past the green plots and the bright shop-windows, past the mining school centre and the market building, to the roller-skating rink where the black column will sort itself behind four fifty-litre wooden kegs of beer and the band will play and the girls in white blouses with red carnations will be there, and mugs of beer will be there and everything will be black and golden buttons will glitter and important men will sit on the solemn stand and one of them will speak into the microphone and then the novices will skip over the leather aprons they call the skin.

The bandsmen were now ranging themselves in a row, without the bandmaster even glancing at them and a uniformed pensioner slowly emerged now from this side, now from that and there by the band slowly grew crowds of jaded uniformed men. In the course of time from all sides there also began to gather throngs of youngsters, many of them standing for the first time in a miner's uniform and mostly assisted by at least a swig of schnapps. They were loud and high-spirited and then the bandmaster slowly turned to his bandsmen and saw that the boys without the need for any command had already assembled the proper formation for the start of the parade. Behind them and in yet disarranged columns were saluting uniformed pensioners, and behind them from disorder the largest group of those who still go to their shift, mixed with the novices, who would today leap into the mining class was slowly taking up their position.

Almost at the same time when the conductor turned to the musicians and with pleasure ascertained that they had taken their formations, the door of the town hall on the other side opened and out of it aimed straight across the square, towards the tall stony scenery, under which was gathered the parade, the leader of the ceremony and another man, whom they didn't know, yet who was always present. These two will issue the right order for the formations. Then the ranks will move keeping time and the black-clad men will solemnly and sturdily traverse almost all the most important streets in the centre of their town, right to the roller-skating rink, where the major and most important event of that day will take place.

*odfurali rodovitno prst in pregnali ribe, žabe, fazane in zajce na bližnje ugrezanine. Kurci komunistični! So nafukali knape butaste, da bojo spremenili svet. Kaj pa je to, če zreguliraš reko, zabetoniraš in poasfaltiraš njive in spodkoplješ celo vas, cerkev, kino pa britof? Zato da vsak dan frišn koln nasuješ v elektrarniško peč. Kaj je to? A to je kakšen napredek, pizda? To ni nič. To nima nobenega smisla!*

The event that has roots older than the league of communists and that will live as long as the mine will live. And so long the town will live. And so long the town will live, which the miners built with their own hands, by their own sweat for their own rest, on the shock work of which all were proud! It's true that now with the league of communists at the head and comrade Tito, who did not want to look at them even sideways and in all his greatness kept on looking and looked into the ground and was thinking whether to descend from the great stone-cube or to stay frozen in his thick bronze cloak.

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*Yeah. And so. Here I am now by this kneeling crone, whose legs jut out of this modernist forked twig. The whole town is celebratin' and miners who in the morning in the parade marched to the roller-skating rink are drinking down there, on the lake. And blowin' their own trumpets how they, with their bare hands put together this fucking wonder of communism, on the soft marshes of the winding water, improved the course of the river, cut down trees, filled up the pools, pulled down the lumber plants and mills, pumped out the marsh, covered in the fields, shifted the fat soil and chased away the fish, the frogs, the pheasants and the hares to the nearby sink holes. Communist fucks! They fucked over the stupid miners telling them that they're going to change the world. What's the big deal with fixing the river, with laying concrete and paving the fields and sapping the entire village, the church, the cinema and the bone yard? To put fresh coal into the furnace of the power station. Nothin' to it. Is it some fuckin' progress, or what the fuck? It's seven shades of shite, that's what it is. It makes no bloody sense!*

*Translated by Tomislav Kiš*

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Maria Şleahiţchi se je rodila leta 1960 v kraju Ştefăneşti v Moldaviji. Diplomirala je iz romunskega jezika in književnosti na Fakulteti za filologijo, tam je tudi doktorirala in kasneje postala predavateljica. Od leta 2000 je dekanja na Fakulteti za filologijo na državni univerzi Alecu Russo v Baltiju. Piše prozo, poezijo in eseje. Napisala je pesniško zbirko *O săptămînă de poeme nescrise* (Teden nenapisanih pesmi, 1998), dramski esej skupaj z N. Leahujem *Cvartet pentru o voce şi toate cuvintele* (Kvartet za glas in vse besede, 2001), literarnokritičski deli *Jocurile alterităţii* (Igre drugosti, 2002) in *Cerc deschis. Literatura română din Basarabia în postcomunism* (Odpri krog: Romunska Besarabska književnost v postkomunizmu, 2007). Je soavtorica dela *Istoria critică a literaturii române din Basarabia: pe genuri* (Kritična zgodovina romunske besarabske književnosti: po žanrih, 2004) in urednica antologije *Literatura din Basarabia în secolul XX. Literatură pentru copii* (Besarabska književnost v XX. stoletju: Otroška literatura, 2004). Maria Şleahiţchi je članica moldavskega in romunskega društva pisateljev in centra PEN v Kişinjovu. Prejela pa je tudi številne literarne nagrade. Njena poezija je bila objavljena v različnih romunskih in angleških antologijah. Njene pesmi so bile prevedene v angleščino, francoščino, madžarščino in ruščino.

Maria Şleahiţchi was born in 1960 in Ştefăneşti, Moldova. She graduated in Romanian language and literature at the Faculty of Philology, before acquiring her PhD and being appointed lecturer there. Since 2000 Şleahiţchi has been the Dean of the Faculty of Philology at the Balti State University Alecu Russo. Maria Şleahiţchi writes prose, poetry and essays. She has written the poetry collection *O săptămînă de poeme nescrise* (A Week of Unwritten Poems, 1998), the dramatic essay together with N. Leahu *Cvartet pentru o voce şi toate cuvintele* (A Quartet for a Voice and All the Words, 2001), the works on literary criticism *Jocurile alterităţii* (The Plays of the Alterity, 2002) and *Cerc deschis. Literatura română din Basarabia în postcomunism* (The Open Circle. Romanian Literature of Bessarabia in Post Communism, 2007). She is the co-author of the work *Istoria critică a literaturii române din Basarabia: pe genuri* (A Critical History of Romanian Literature of Bessarabia: by Genres, 2004) and the anthologist of *Literatura din Basarabia în secolul XX. Literatură pentru copii* (The Literature of Bessarabia in the XX Century. Literature for Children, 2004). Maria Şleahiţchi is a member of the Writers' Union of Moldova, Romania and the PEN Centre in Chisinau. She has received various literary awards. Her poetry has appeared in different Romanian as well as English anthologies. Her poems have been translated into English, French, Hungarian, and Russian.

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# Maria Şleahitiçi





## apokrifi tavajoče dojke

v tistih dnevih in nočeh in dnevih in nočeh  
se ljubijo  
z vsemi mojimi junaki

s tistim v senci in tistim na svetlobi  
s tistim iz teksta podteksta in arhiteksta

v njih vzbujam noro slo  
po lahkomiselnosti in perverznih prizorih

praznim čas in ukinjam prostore  
s tipoloških arheologij slačim  
čistost spodobnosti  
tipe arhetipe in arheje  
zadete pijance  
in jih zapeljem  
v najbolj obscene orgije

.....  
tu so tripičja s pomenom 0  
tu znova pre-oblačim svoj jaz in se znova dajem sebi  
da bi lahko mirno rekla

.....  
izgubljeno onkraj mojega pridnega jaza  
zbira čas in prostor  
na točki moje absolutne resničnosti

## apocrifele sinelui rătăcitor

în acele zile și nopți și zile și nopți  
fac dragoste  
cu toate personajele mele

cu cel din umbră și cel din lumină  
cu cel din text subtext și arhitext

le induc o dorință nebună  
de frivolitate și scene perverse

golesc timp și anulez spații  
dezbrac de pudorile decenței  
arheologii tipologice  
tipi arhetipi și archei  
bețivi narcotizați  
dedându-i  
celor mai obscene orgii

.....  
aici e locul suspensiilor cu semnificația 0  
aici îmi re-trag sinele pe mine mie re-dându-mă  
ca să pot spune liniștit

.....  
rătăcitor dincolo de eul meu cel cuminte  
adună la un loc tip și spațiu  
în punctul realității mele absolute

## Strojena belina

dobro strojena koža  
vpeta v terilnico  
ki jo ded hrani v lopi  
se skrbno  
    očisti  
encimov mladosti

drgnejo jo  
    in drgnejo  
z apnencem  
ki ga strojarji tako cenijo

odstranijo vse živce  
tanke žile  
ki jih usmerjajo arome in simfonije

tanjša se  
    vse dokler ne postane  
znova pergament  
ki je dober le za ljubezenske štirivrstičnice  
papir iz galaksij in prihodnje svetove

## alb tăbăcit

pielea dubită bine  
prinsă-n melița  
păstrată de bunicu-n șopron  
se curăță  
    cu grijă  
de enzimele tinereții

se roade  
    se roade  
cu o piatră de var  
din cele apreciate de dubălari

se înlătură toate nervurile  
vase mai fine  
navigate de-arome și simfonii

se subție  
    pînă devine  
din nou pergament  
numai bun pentru catrene erotice  
hărți de galaxii și lumi viitoare

## 12 /dvanajst/

0.

na veliko soboto

1.

od znotraj pomijem hladilnik  
in ga od zunaj pobrišem

2.

ob straneh polita marmelada  
levo-desno desno-levo

3.

posušen peteršilj koprca in vse ostalo

4.

jagnje v slanici z dišavnicami lovorjev list bazilika majaron  
cimet rdeči poper črni in beli poper cel in strt česen  
sol po okusu

5.

kar precej čebulnih olupkov kozica  
naravne barve za 15–20 jajc za vbogajme

6.

skoraj čisto povrel boršč z zeljem  
na plinskem štedilniku pogansko kosilo

7.

težko

težko

zelo težko

odstraniš višnjevo marmelado

jo očistiš

8.

kar dobro gre stran

dobro / o bog! kako ga je prodal juda

kako je iz njega naredil velikonočno jagnje

9.

in ubogi juda o bog

zakaj

si mu dovolil prodajati

zakaj ga ne bi prodal peter janez matej zakaj prav juda

zakaj si si izbral prav njega

kaj ti je storil

o bog ni pravično

da mora biti najbolj ljubljene tudi izdajalec

kako obrnjeno logiko imaš

bog

zakaj si judo prepustil na milost in nemilost ljudem

in kaj če juda ne bi izpolnil tvojega načrta

kaj če ne bi hotel kupčevati kdo bi ga zatožil

## 12 /doisprezece/

0.

în simbăta paștelui

1.

spăl frigiderul pe dinăuntru  
pe dinafară-l șterg

2.

dulceață prelinsă pe lateral  
stînga-dreapta dreapta-stînga

3.

pătrunjel uscat mărar și de toate

4.

miel pus la saramură cu mirodenii frunză de dafin busuioc maghiran  
scorțișoară piper roșu pier negru și alb usturoi întreg și freat  
sare după gust

5.

coji de ceapă destul de multe un ceaunaș  
de culoare naturală pentru pomana de 15-20 de ouă

6.

scăzut de tot un borș cu varză  
pe aragaz păgînă mîncare de prînz

7.

greu

greu

de tot dificil

se ia dulceața de vișine

se curăță

8.

se curăță bine

bine / *doamne! cum l-a mai vîndut iuda*  
*cum l-a făcut să fie miel pascal*

9.

*și iuda sărmanul de ce*  
*doamne*

*l-ai lăsat să vîndă*

*de ce să nu-l vîndă petre ioan sau matei de ce tocmai iuda*  
*de ce l-ai ales anume pe el*

*cu ce ți-a greșit*

*doamne e nedrept doamne*

*ca cel mai iubit să fie neapărat și cel trădător*  
*ce logică sucită ai*

*doamne*

*de ce l-ai lăsat pe iuda de izbeliștea oamenilor*  
*și dacă iuda nu-ți îndeplinea planul*  
*dacă n-ar fi vrut să vînză cine altul l-ar fi pîrît*

*ni mogoče da ne bi bilo drugih možnosti*

*tudi v nas boš*

*o bog*

*zasadil po eno*

10.

*bog odpusti mu*

*ponižnost*

*saj se je zgodila samo tvoja volja*

11.

*odpusti mu kesanje in strah*

*in izbiro debelo vrv in močno drevo*

12.

*usmili se bog saj ga ne potrebuješ več*

*snemi jarem s posušenega telesa /*

*posušenega telesa*

*Prevedel Aleš Mustar*

*că nu se poate să nu fi avut tu și alte variante  
vei fi semănat*

*doamne*

*și-n fiecare din noi câte una*

10.

*iartă-i doamne*

*supușenia*

*ți-a făcut doar hatîrul*

11.

*iartă-i regretul și teama*

*și-alegerea frînghie trainică copac viguros*

12.

*îndură-te doamne că doar nu mai ai nevoie de el  
scoate-i din ștreang trupul uscat /*

*trupul uscat*



## the apocryphals of the wandering self

those days and nights and days and nights  
I make love  
to all my characters

to the one in the shade and to the one in the light  
to the one from the text subtext and architext

I induce them a wild desire  
for frivolousness and perverse scenes

I empty time and I annul spaces  
I take the senses of decency  
off typological archaeologies  
types archetypes and arches  
stoned drunkards  
delivering them  
to the most obscene orgies

.....  
here is where the points have the significance 0  
here is where I re-call my self giving myself to me  
for I can say quietly

.....  
wandering beyond my quiet I  
gather time and space  
in the point of my absolute reality

## curried white

well curried leather  
pinned in the swingle  
kept by grandfather in the shed  
is cleaned  
    with care of  
the enzymes of youth

it is rubbed  
    and rubbed  
with one of those limestones  
curry men value

removed are all the nervures  
thinner vessels  
navigated by aromas and symphonies

it gets thin  
    until it becomes  
again a parchment  
ready for erotic quatrains  
maps of galaxies and future worlds

## 12/*twelve*/

0.

on easter saturday

1.

I clean the refrigerator on the inside

I wipe it on the outside

2.

trickled jam on the side

left-right right-left

3.

dry parsley dill and all

4.

lamb in salt water with spices laurel leaf basil marjoram

cinnamon red pepper black and white pepper whole and rubbed garlic

salt

5.

onion peels quite many a small kettle

for natural colour for 15-20 eggs for alms

6.

a beetroot potage with cabbage

on the range pagan midday food

7.

hard

very hard

with difficulty

the jam goes away

cleans out

8.

it cleans out pretty well

well / *god! the way judas sold him out*

*the way you made him be an easter lamb*

9.

*and judas the poor why*

*god*

*have you let him betray*

*why not peter john or matthew why judas*

*why have you chosen him*

*what had he done*

*god it is unfair god*

*for the beloved to be unprotected and the one to betray*

*what a twisted logic you have*

*god*

*why have you left judas to the mercy of people*

*and what if judas had not fulfilled your plan*

*what if he didn't want to sell him out who would have done it*

*for it cannot be that you did not have some other variants  
you must have seeded one  
in each of us too*

*god*

10.

*forgive him god his  
obedience*

*he did your favour didn't he*

11.

*forgive his regret and fear  
and choice strong rope vigorous tree*

12.

*have mercy god for you don't need him anymore  
get off the noose his dry body /  
dry body*

*Translated by Mihaela Şleahţiţchi*

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Ewa Sonnenberg se je rodila leta 1967 v Ząbkowicach Śląskich na Poljskem. Je pesnica in pianistka, ki je diplomirala na glasbeni akademiji v Wrocławu, nato pa uspešno zaključila še študija kreativnega pisanja in filozofije na Jagelonski univerzi. Sonnenbergova vodi delavnice poezije na Jagelonski univerzi v Krakovu in Wrocławu, hkrati pa je urednica krakovske literarne revije *Studium* in wrocławske literarne revije *Rita Baum*. Poleg devetih pesniških zbirk: *Hazard* (1995), *Kraina tysiąca notesów* (Dežela tisočih beležnic, 1997), *Planeta* (Planet, 1997), *Smycz* (Povodec, 2000), *Płonący Tramwaj* (Goreči tramvaj, 2001), *Lekcja Zachwytu* (Učna ura navdušenja, 2005), *Pisane na piasku / Written on Sand* (Zapisano na pesku, 2007), je objavila tudi knjigi *Paź królowej. Bajka dla zakochanych* (Kraljičin paž: pravljica za zaljubljene, 2006) in *Encyklopedia Szaleńca* (Norčeva enciklopedija, 2006). Njena poezija je prevedena v več tujih jezikov in objavljena v številnih poljskih in tujih antologijah. Sonnenbergova je prejela naslednje nagrade in štipendije: nagrado Klemensa Janickega za mlade (1994), nagrado Georga Trakla (1996), štipendijo za neodvisno kulturo v Parizu (1998), štipendijo ministra za kulturo in narodno dediščino (2000, 2008), nagrado za poezijo na devetem Mednarodnem festivalu poezije v Ilindenu pri Skopju (2008), štipendijo Baltskega centra za pisatelje in prevajalce na Gotlandu (2008).

Ewa Sonnenberg was born in 1967 in Ząbkowice Śląskie, Poland. She is a poet and a pianist who graduated at the Musical Academy in Wrocław before completing her graduate studies in creative writing and philosophy at the Jagiellonian University. Sonnenberg runs poetry workshops at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and Wrocław as well as being the editor of the Krakow *Studium* and the Wrocław *Rita Baum* literary journals. Apart from publishing nine books of poetry: *Hazard* (Gambling, 1995), *Kraina tysiąca notesów* (The Land of a Thousand Diaries, 1997), *Planeta* (The Planet, 1997), *Smycz* (The Leash, 2000), *Płonący Tramwaj* (A Tram on Fire, 2001), *Lekcja Zachwytu* (A Lesson of Delight, 2005), *Pisane na piasku / Written on Sand* (2007), she has also published the following works *Paź królowej. Bajka dla zakochanych* (The Queen's Page. A Fairytale for Lovers, 2006) and *Encyklopedia Szaleńca* (A Madman's Encyclopedia, 2006). Her poetry has been translated into numerous foreign languages as well as published in many Polish and foreign anthologies. Sonnenberg has received the following awards and grants: Klemens Janicki Award for the Young (1994), Georg Trakl Award (1996), the Independent Culture Grant in Paris (1998), the Grant of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (2000, 2008), the Poetry Award of the 9th International Poetry Festival in Ilinden/Skopje (2008), the Grant of The Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators in Gotland (2008).

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# Ewa Sonnenberg



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## Fin de siècle

Naš *fin de siècle* se je začel danes  
ravnokar natančno ob petih popoldne  
v Café de France na glavni ulici  
toda ali ima to kakšen pomen  
uspešnost mišičastih homoseksualcev  
in melanholičnih brezspolnih žensk  
v jaknah od nesojenih  
pudrajo napako narave stranski produkt  
hormonov in umetnih alienacij  
farmakološka kraljestva epruvet

Melanholične poudarjajo intelektualno  
nezmernost menijo  
(največkrat s prekrizanimi nogami)  
da pesniki ugašajo v podobah kričavih neonov  
*Fin de siècle* že sto let blebetanje fraz o umetnosti  
V telovnikih kolegov Victorja Hugoja ponavljamo  
- Moj bog! -  
tam se nekdo vnema za Leonarda!  
Leonardo perverzni kontekst oboževanja  
vstavlja v zlate okvirčke kralja in kraljico  
preoblači v pisane cunjice  
za tolažbo pripne uhan  
pomežikuje proti moškim  
- Poglej kakšna Tiranija! -  
pogled mu je obvisel na višini razporka  
- Hej ti! Z rožasto rutko okoli vratu  
katera od nas bo Kraljica noči? -  
Pri okrogli mizici priklicevanje poezije  
kakor klicanje duhov  
prostori v katerih vlada večna noč  
duh vrtnic parfumov in kadil  
obredi svobodnih ljubezni  
klavrna nagota skupnega *dance macabre*  
kostumologija od Pierra Cardina  
Ah! fantje pijejo malinovec  
in se bojijo naslednje ženske

*Fantje na zlatih motorjih  
imajo rajši Rock and Roll*

## Fin de siècle

Nasz *fin de siècle* zaczął się dzisiaj  
przed chwilą dokładnie o piątej popołudniu  
w Café de France przy głównej ulicy  
ale czy ma to jakieś znaczenie  
skuteczność muskularnych homoseksualistów  
i melancholijnych bezpłciowych kobiet  
w marynarkach po niedoszłych  
przypudrowują błąd natury produkt uboczny  
hormonów i sztucznych alienacji  
farmakologiczne królestwa probówek

Melancholijne akcentują przesadność  
intelektualną zakładają że  
(a najczęściej nogę na nogę)  
poeci gasną w rycinach krzykliwych neonów  
*Fin de siècle* od stu lat paplanie frazesów o sztuce  
W kamizelkach kumpli Victora Hugo powtarzamy  
- Mój boże! -  
ktoś tam się egzaltuje Leonardo!  
Leonardo perwersyjny kontekst uwielbienia  
oprawia w złote ramki króla i królową  
przebiera w kolorowe fatałaszk  
wkłada kolczyk na otarcie łez  
puszcza oczka w stronę mężczyzn  
- Patrz jaka Tyrania! -  
wzrok zawiesił na wysokości rozporka  
- Ej ty! W kwiecistej apasce na szyi  
która z nas zostanie Królową Nocy? -  
Przy okrągłym stoliku wywoływanie poezji  
jak wywoływanie duchów  
pomieszczenia w których panuje wieczna noc  
zapach róż perfum i kadzideł  
rytuały wolnych miłości  
żałosna nagość wspólnego *dance macabre*  
kostiumologia od Pierre'a Cardina  
Ach! chłopcy piją sok malinowy  
i boją się kolejnej kobiety

*Chłopcy na złotych motorach*  
*Wolą Rock and Rolla*



Na smrt izmučeni nimamo več moči  
popiti čaja v skodelicah iz kitajskega porcelana  
dočakali smo zavezo z Zenom  
taom ki vodi neznano kam  
občutiti starca da je bilo nekoč drugače  
občutiti starca da kmalu  
šest let pred koncem dobe  
šest let pred koncem stoletja  
sam zase nisem nihče  
drugi me imenujejo junak  
ravno hodim z njimi po ulicah  
pijan od lepote in kitic iz lastnega sveta  
nemočni tvorimo naslednjo generacijo  
kjer globina kardinalskih barv tekmuje  
s kričече rdečo kokakole  
vonj džinsa oplaja ume s hodničnim nebom  
Levi Strauss salutira kipu svobode:  
**STOLETJE JE DRAMA RAZBITEGA BABIČINEGA PORCELANA**  
**STOLETJE JE NASLOV PRETIRANO POBARVANEGA STRIPA**  
**STOLETJE JE PETI AS V STVARNIKOVEM ROKAVU**

Śmiertelnie zmęczeni nie mamy już siły  
wypić herbaty w filiżankach z chińskiej porcelany  
doczekaliśmy przymierza z Zen  
tao co nie wiadomo dokąd prowadzi  
zaznać starca że kiedyś było inaczej  
zaznać starca że wkrótce  
na sześć lat przed końcem epoki  
na sześć lat przed końcem wieku  
sam dla siebie jestem nikiem  
inni nazywają mnie bohaterem  
właśnie z nimi chodzę po ulicach  
pijany urodą i strofami z własnego świata  
bezzadni tworzymy kolejne pokolenie  
gdzie głębia kardynalskich kolorów rywalizuje  
z krzykliwą czerwienią coca-coli  
zapach jeansu zapładnia umysły parcianym niebem  
Levi Strauss salutuje statui wolności:  
**WIEK JEST DRAMATEM ROZBITEJ PORCELANY PRABABKI**  
**WIEK JEST NAZWĄ PRZESADNIE POKOLOROWANEGO KOMIKSU**  
**WIEK JEST PIĄTYM ASEM W RĘKAWIE STWÓRCY**

## Erotična

Najlepši hladilnik v katerega mečem  
gozdne in vrtno jagode fižol in grah si  
Najslabše ukrojena na razprodaji  
kupljena jakna na zemljevidu tega sveta si  
Najmodernejši laserski tiskalnik *hewlett-packard*  
ki tiska škandalozne odlomke iz življenja nesojenih mistikov si  
Najtoplejši radiator v vseh nadstropjih sveta si  
Najdražja steklenička parfuma na Champs-Élysées si  
Popolna tehnična oprema *technics* za predvajanje  
Schubertove *Nedokončane* ali Beethovnovih *Udarcev usode* si  
Najdaljša mavrica na pariškem nebu si  
Nepresegljiv *concorde* z nezemskim pospeškom si  
Najtrša pečka v sočnem mesu burgundskega grozdja si  
Demografski višek v vesoljnem merilu si  
Najlepša kljuka v tem mestu si  
Vsi kralji in kraljice naenkrat si  
Neodigrana partija šaha na svetovnem prvenstvu si  
Razglašen klavir v psihiatrovem kabinetu si  
Fantastična izložba v središču Londona in pozornosti si  
Najelegantnejši vhod v hotel v vsej verigi Hilton si  
Najbolj gladka stran Vogue si  
Najdragocenejše viličice na slavnostnem kosilu si  
Najzanimivejše kazalo ki ga posojajo za par minut si  
Najučinkovitejše cepivo proti steklini in gripi si  
Tako resen kot Tower v Londonu si  
Tako sladka kot sladkor v kockah si  
Tako velik kot najvišji nebotičnik v New Yorku si

Pariz, 1999

## Erotyk

Jesteś najpiękniejszą lodówką do której wrzucam  
poziomki truskawki fasolkę i groszek  
Jesteś najgorzej skrojoną marynarką  
na mapie tego kraju kupowaną na soldach  
Jesteś najnowocześniejszą drukarką laserową *hawlett-packard*  
drukującą skandalizujące fragmenty z życia niedoszłych mistyków  
Jesteś najcieplejszym kaloryferem na wszystkich piętrach świata  
Jesteś najdroższą buteleczką perfum na Champs-Élysées  
Jesteś perfekcyjnym sprzętem *technics* do odtwarzania  
*Niedokończonej* Schuberta lub *Przeznaczenia* Beethovena  
Jesteś najdłuższą tęczą paryskiego nieba  
Jesteś odlotowym concordem z nieziemskim przyśpieszeniem  
Jesteś najtwardszą pestką w soczystym mięszu burgunda  
Jesteś wyżem demograficznym na skalę kosmiczną  
Jesteś najładniejszą klamką w tym mieście  
Jesteś wszystkim królami i królowymi naraz  
Jesteś nie rozegraną partia szachów podczas mistrzostw świata  
Jesteś rozstrojonym fortepianem w salonie psychiatry  
Jesteś wystrzałową witryną w centrum Londynu i uwagi  
Jesteś najelegantszym wejściem do hotelu w całej sieci Hilton  
Jesteś najbardziej śliską stroną *Vogue'a*  
Jesteś najcenniejszym widelczykiem na proszonym obiedzie  
Jesteś najciekawszym spisem treści wypożyczanym na kilka minut  
Jesteś najskuteczniejszą szczepionką przeciw wścieklicznie i grypie  
Jesteś tak poważny jak Tower w Londynie  
Jesteś tak słodka jak cukier w kostkach  
Jesteś tak wielki jak najwyższy drapacz chmur w Nowym Yorku

Paryż, 1999

## Negotovost

Potegnil se bom zate pri nekom ki ga ne poznaš  
posoja mi potko na travnike otroštva  
in ključek oster kot igla za prebadanje sanj  
samo nikdar se ne zaceli ne naredi tega  
pusti živo svetlino na drugo stran pesmi  
tako lepo joče nebo pojoč na kolenih

Šel bom za tvojim otroškim porazom v papirnati  
kroni postavil se bom iz oči v oči z resničnostjo  
zakleto v zlobni krohot samo pomiri vojne  
v katere ni zapleten nihče razen tebe  
pomiri zmage ki jih nihče ne razume  
s krikom ne prevpiješ molka

Moja smešna pesmica ogrel te bom z dlanmi  
ko bom prosil življenje oproščenja da sva ga opevala namesto da bi ga živela  
tvoji naivni in nežni poskusi ogledovanja golih besed  
so razveseljevali mojo nečimrnost in oživljali mrtve predmete  
ko sem videl kako si ranjuješ podplate na trdih tleh  
sem te ljubil bolj kot kdor koli izmed ljudi

Vroclav, 30. 1. 2001  
(naletava rahel sneg)

## Niepewność

Wstawię się za tobą u kogoś kogo nie znasz  
pożycza mi ścieżkę na łąki dzieciństwa  
i kluczyc ostry jak igła do przekłuwania snów  
tylko nie zablizniaj się nigdy tego nie rób  
zostaw żywy prześwit na drugą stronę wiersza  
tak pięknie płacze niebo śpiewając na kolanach

Pójdę za twoją dziecinną przegraną w papierowej  
koronie stanę twarzą w twarz z rzeczywistością  
zakłętą w złośliwy rechoć tylko uspokój wojny  
w których nikt oprócz ciebie nie bierze udziału  
uspokój zwycięstwa których nikt nie rozumie  
krzykiem nie zagłuszysz milczenia

Mój śmieszny wierszyku ogrzeję cię rękami  
przepraszając życie że pialiśmy je zamiast w nim uczestniczyć  
twoje naiwne i czule próby podglądania nagich słów  
bawiły moją próżność i ożywiały martwe przedmioty  
widząc jak ranisz stopy na twardym gruncie  
kochałem cię bardziej niż ktokolwiek z ludzi

Wrocław, 30. 01. 2001  
(prószy delikatny śnieg)

## Notranji manifest I

Jaz je nekdo slabši povečan na mero človeka  
kakor koli kjer koli zmašen naključni proizvod tuje kaprice  
nikomur nisem nič dolžna sama si izbiram mater očeta  
sta prijatelja ljubimca hranita me z lastnim mlekom potem  
nič ne dolgujem lepoti dobroti razumu  
na loteriji usode sem zadela bogastvo za sovražnike mi plačajo z nesmrtnostjo

ni mi treba piti alkohola da bi govorila resnico v barvi črev  
ne prikleknem po vsaki besedi pesmi: kislja paša  
za ljudstvo krmljeno s televizijo in veselicami  
jadro mojega jezika pluje na odprto morje ne potrebujem  
opravičil od hišnih prijateljev zdravnikov duše sama bom napisala:  
lahko bi pridno v kotu igrala Chopina daleč stran od vonja  
po surovem mesu ga nikoli ne jedla ne imenovala: »meja vseh mej«

Dobro je biti na robu  
vse se sme

*Prevedla Jana Unuk*

## Manifest wewnętrzny I

Ja to ktoś gorszy wyolbrzymiony do rozmiarów człowieka  
zrobiony byle jak byle gdzie przypadkowy produkt czyjegoś kaprysu  
nikomu nic nie jestem winna sama wybieram matkę ojca  
są przyjaciółmi kochankami karmią własnym mlekiem potem  
nie mam długów wobec piękna dobra rozumu  
na loterii losu wygrałam fortunę za wrogów płacą mi nieśmiertelnością

nie muszę pić alkoholu żeby mówić prawdę w kolorze trzewi  
nie dygam po każdym słowie wiersze: kwaśna pasza  
dla ludu hodowanego na telewizji i festynach  
mój żagiel języka wypływa na pełne morze nie potrzebuję  
usprawiedliwień od przyjaciół domu lekarzy ducha sama napiszę:  
mogłam grać grzecznie w kącie Chopina daleko od zapachu  
surowego mięsa nigdy go nie jeść nie nazywać: „granica granic”

Dobrze jest być na krawędzi  
można wszystko



## Fin de siècle

Our *fin de siècle* started today  
just a minute ago exactly at five o'clock pm  
in *Café de France* on main street  
but what does it matter  
efficiency of muscular homosexuals  
and sexless melancholic women  
in jackets from their ex-husbands-to-be  
with make-up they cover nature's mistakes side effects  
of hormones and artificial alienations  
pharmaceutical kingdoms of test tubes

With some melancholy they stress intellectual  
pomposity they assume that  
(but mostly they assume the position)  
poets fade in prints of screaming neon lights  
*Fin de siècle* hundred-year-old clichés on art  
wearing vests of Victor Hugo's pals  
we sigh again "Oh my God!"  
somebody there exalts "Leonardo!"  
Leonardo a perverse context of admiration  
fits the king and queen into a golden frame  
changes into colorful frills  
puts on an earring to cheer himself up  
he winks at men  
"Look what Tyranny!"  
he scopes out his fly  
"Hey you in a flowery scarf!  
Which of us will become the Queen of the Night?"  
At round table a conjuring of poetry  
like a conjuring of ghosts  
rooms where eternal night dwells  
scent of roses perfume and incense  
free love ritual  
pathetic nudity of a common *danse macabre*  
costume studies after Pierre Cardin  
Oh! the boys drink raspberry juice  
and are afraid of the next woman

*When the gold wheels roll*  
*Boys love rock-and-roll*

We are too exhausted to drink  
tea in china cups anymore  
We've lived to witness the pact with Zen  
tao which leads us god-knows-where  
to experience an old man that it was different once  
to experience an old man that soon  
six years before the end of the epoch  
six years before the end of the century  
for me myself I am nobody  
others call me a hero  
it is with them I walk down the streets  
drunk with beauty and verses from my own world  
helplessly we create another generation  
where deep cardinal purple competes  
with the screaming red of coca-cola signs  
the scent of jeans fertilizes minds with scurvy heaven  
Levi Strauss salutes the statue of liberty  
CENTURY IS A DRAMA OF A GREAT GRANDMOTHER'S BROKEN CHINA  
CENTURY IS A NAME OF AN OVER-COLORED COMIC BOOK  
CENTURY IS THE FIFTH ACE UP THE CREATOR'S SLEEVE

## Erotica

You are the most beautiful refrigerator where I keep  
strawberries blueberries beans carrots and peas  
You are the worst-made sale jacket  
within this country's borders  
You are the most modern HP laser model  
printing scandalous excerpts from the lives of failed mystics  
You are the warmest radiator on all the floors of the world  
You are the most expensive perfume on the Champs-Élysées  
You are the perfect Technics playing  
Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" or Beethoven's "Fate"  
You are the longest rainbow of the Parisian sky  
You are a mind-blowing Concorde with an unearthly acceleration  
You are the hardest pip in a Burgundy's juicy pulp  
You are a cosmic-scale demographic boom  
You are the prettiest doorknob in this city  
You are all the kings and queens at once  
You are a chess game never played at World Championship  
You are an out-of-tune piano in a psychiatrist's salon  
You are a fabulous display at the center of London and of attention  
You are the most elegant entrance in the whole Hilton chain  
You are the smoothest page of *Vogue* magazine  
You are the most precious fork at a business dinner  
You are the most interesting table of contents, loaned for a few minutes only  
You are the most effective vaccine against flu and rabies  
You are as serious as the Tower of London  
You are as sweet as cubed sugar  
You are as grand as New York's tallest building

Paris, 1999

## Uncertainty

I'll plead for you with someone you don't know  
he lends me a path towards childhood meadows  
and a key sharp as needle used for piercing dreams  
just don't heal over I beg you never to do that  
leave a raw opening to poem's other side  
the sky cries so sweetly singing on its knees

I'll follow your childish loss in a paper  
crown I'll face reality bewitched  
into a cackle have mercy just stop the wars  
fought by no one but you  
and stop the victories always misunderstood  
your screams won't cover silence

My funny little poem I'll warm you in my hands  
we'll tell life we're sorry for writing and not living  
your naïve and tender efforts to spy on naked words  
flattered my ego and animated objects  
watching you hurt your feet against the hard ground  
I loved you more than any human being

Wrocław, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2001  
(snowing lightly)

## Internal Manifesto I

My self is someone else blown-up to life size  
made wherever and in whatever way a fluke of someone's whim  
I owe nothing to anybody I choose my own mother and father  
they are my friends and lovers they feed me with their own milk and sweat  
I owe no debt to beauty kindness reason  
I've won fortune's lottery they pay me eternity for my enemies

I don't have to drink to speak the gut-colored truth  
I don't curtsy after each word my verses: sour fodder  
for the folk raised on TV and fun fairs  
my tongue sails the open sea I don't need  
excuses from friends family soul doctors I will write by myself:  
I could have played Chopin politely in the corner away from the scent  
of raw meat never eating it never calling it "the border of borders"

It's good to be on the edge  
one can do everything

*Translated by Katarzyna Jakubiak*



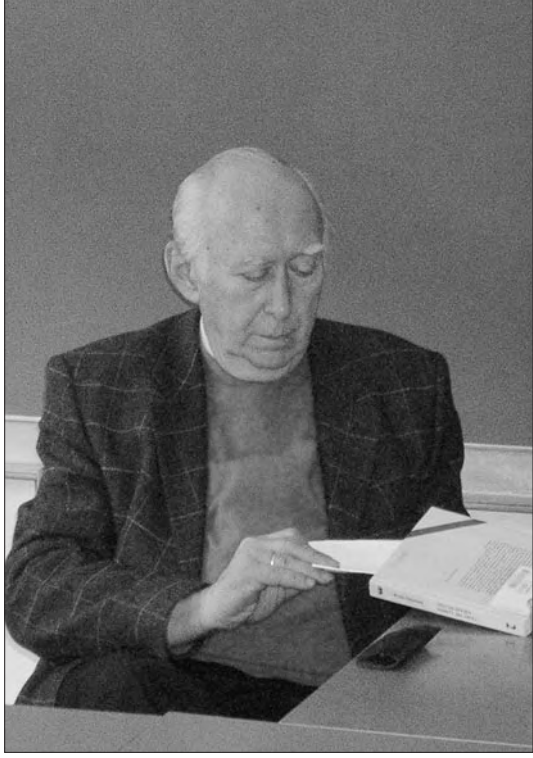
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Vlada Urošević, rojen leta 1934 v Skopju, je pesnik, pisatelj, kritik, esejist, prevajalec, urednik številnih antologij in profesor primerjalne književnosti na univerzi v Skopju. Nekaj časa je delal kot kulturni urednik na televiziji in urejal revijo *Razgledi*. Med drugim je objavil deset pesniških zbirk, pet zbirk kratke proze ter pet romanov. Piše tudi eseje in kritike o literaturi in slikarstvu. Svoj literarni diskurz tke iz sanj, domišljije in fantastičnih zgodb zahodnoevropske literarne tradicije, vedno znova pa ga navdihuje magija domačega Skopja. Za svoje delo je prejel številne nagrade, njegove pesmi in zgodbe so uvrščene v vse pomembnejše antologije sodobne makedonske literature in prevedene v tuje jezike. Urošević je član Makedonske akademije znanosti in umetnosti in Evropske pesniške akademije v Luksemburgu ter dopisni član Académie Mallarmé v Parizu. Francoska vlada ga je imenovala za viteza reda umetnosti in literature. V slovenskem prevodu Vena Tauferja je leta 1975 pri založbi DZS izšla njegova pesniška zbirka *Еден друг град* (*Neko drugo mesto*, 1959), letos pa v zbirki Sto slovanskih romanov pri Društvu slovenskih pisateljev v prevodu Namite Subiotto izide roman *Дива лига* (*Divja liga*, 2000).

Vlada Urošević, born in 1934 in Skopje, is a poet, writer, critic, essayist, translator, editor of numerous anthologies and professor of comparative literature at the University of Skopje. For some time he was cultural editor of a television programme and also edited the *Razgledi* magazine. Among his works there are ten poetry collections, five short prose collections and five novels. He also writes essays as well as reviews on literature and painting. The literary discourse in his works is spun from dreams, imagination and fantasy stories in the Western European literary tradition and continually inspired by the magic of his home city Skopje. His works have received numerous awards, his poems and stories have been included in all the eminent anthologies of contemporary Macedonian literature and translated into foreign languages. Urošević is a member of the Macedonian Academy of Science and Art and the European Academy of Poetry in Luxembourg as well as a correspondent member of Académie Mallarmé in Paris. The French government has knighted him as Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. The Slovene translation of *Еден друг град* (*Some Other City*, 1959) by Veno Taufer was published in 1975 by the DZS publishing house. This year the Slovene Writers' Association will publish the novel *Дива лига* (*The Wild League*, 2000), translated into Slovene by Namita Subiotto, as part of the Hundred Slavic Novels series.

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# Vlada Urošević





## Noč polne lune nad Skopjem

*(Odlomek)*

Knjige s povsem belimi stranmi  
ležijo po parkih. Povsod speče lepoticice,  
ovite v svilo kot bube sviloprejk.  
To je nesramno. To je nedopustno. Treba  
je obvestiti župana in celoten  
mestni svet. Kdo je dovolil rušenje  
antičnih obzidij in slovečih zdravilišč?  
Spomeniki so prekriti z vrečami za moko.  
Govorniki, oblečeni v belo,  
mirujejo v slovesnih pozah. Neotesanost  
postaja nova oblika lepega vedenja.  
Pridružite se nam pri zbiranju  
smešnih belih gob, ki se razbežijo,  
če jih ne nabirate molče. Na strehi  
Grand hotela se nahaja helikopter,  
ves iz stekla. To je nevarno.  
To je nerazumno. Nihče  
se ne sme podati v takšno avanturo.  
Ključ ima le neko dekle s sladkim nasmehom,  
ki je golo zaklenjeno v staro omaro.  
Kje skriva ključ? Njenemu glavniku  
rastejo mlečni zobci. V praznem taksiju  
je pozabljena violina, polna  
zrelih sliv. Pošteni najditelj  
se ni prijavil. Oglašujte neveljavnost  
svojih staršev v časopisih, ki jih bodo brali  
vaši vnuki. Vse se spreminja,  
samo gramofoni s trobljo ostajajo vedno moderni.  
S tisto roko je treba na vrata potrkat trikrat,  
pa še trikrat, geslo, ki omogoča vstop  
v somračne dvorane, sredi vitrin, v katerih so ostale  
le majhne etikete z napisi v latinščini.  
V nekem kotu leži napol strgana  
karta nočnega neba. Aldebaran, zvezda  
tretje stopnje virtualne velikosti,  
stoji nad Vodnim. Sarkofagi pred Postajo:  
Peta rimska legija je odpotovala  
in pozabila prtljago. Požar v tovarni Treska  
je izzval Piccolomini. Včasih so baje obstajale  
somračne zabave. (O somračnih zabavah  
bi vam znala marsikaj povedati vaša babica!)  
Evlja Čalebija pa zdaj prodaja čičerko.  
Knjižnica je stalno odprta

# Ноќ на полна месечина над Скопје

(одломка)

Книги со наполно бели страници  
лежат по парковите. Секаде заспани убавици  
обвиткај со свила како кокони на свилени бубачки.  
Тоа е бесрамно. Тоа е недопустливо. Треба  
да се извести градоначалникот и целиот  
градски совет. Кој го дозволил рушењето  
на античките тврдини и на свечените лекувалишта?  
Врз спомениците се навлечени вреќи од брашно.  
Говорници облечени во бело  
застанати во свечени пози. Несмасноста  
станува нов облик на убавото однесување.  
Придружете ни се во собирањето  
на смешни бели печурки што се растураат  
ако не ги берете молчејќи. На покривот  
од Гранд хотел има еден хеликоптер  
што е целиот од стакло. Тоа е опасно.  
Тоа е неразумно. Никој  
не смее да влезе во таква авантура.  
Клучот го има само една благо насмевната девојка  
што е заклучена гола во еден стар орман.  
Каде го крие клучот? На нејзиниот чешел  
му растат млечни зашци. Во празното такси  
заборавена е една виолина полна  
со зрели сливи. Чесниот наоѓач  
не се пријавил. Огласувајте ги за неважечки  
своите родители во весниците што ќе ги читаат  
вашите внуци. Сè се менува  
само грамофони со труба остануваат секогаш модерни.  
Со онаа рака на портата треба да се чука трипати,  
па пак трипати, лозунг што го овозможува влезот  
во самрачните сали, среде витрини во кои останале  
само мали етикетички со натписи на латински.  
Во еден агол лежи наполу скината  
карта на ноќното небо. Алдебаран, ѕвезда  
од трет степен привидна големина,  
стои над Водно. Саркофази пред Станицата:  
Петтата римска легија отпатувала  
заборавајќи го багажот. Пожарот во фабриката „Треска“  
предизвикан е од Пиколомини. Некогаш имало  
и самрачни забави. (За самрачните забави  
може најдобро да ви раскаже баба ви!)  
Но Евлија Челебија сега продава леблебија.  
Библиотеката е постојано отворена

za pozne obiskovalce. Iz enciklopedij je izrezanih  
nekaj sumljivih ilustracij, predvsem  
posnetkov Lune. Gre za  
neko skrivno sekto. Starec s Planine,  
to je to. Zavijte spet levo: ptica dodo  
je odletela tja. V neki brivnici  
je akvarij, v akvariju  
leži pozabljena žaba-princesa.  
Zbirka metuljev z Madagaskarja  
je najdena v neki prodajalni bureka in belega peciva.  
Razvada uživanja v bureku je neozdravljiva.  
Instrumenti z neznanim namenom, napisi  
z nerazvozljivo pisavo, ženske z nejasnimi namerami.  
Kaj pa ptica dodo? Tisti, ki sledijo ptici dodo,  
se bodo zagotovo spotaknili med hojo.  
Daut-pašin amam podaja k nebu svojih dvanajst dojk  
kot kakšna Artemida iz Efeza,  
ki je legla k počitku. Duh starega slikarja  
še vedno tava v labirintu  
in išče izgubljeni baletni copatek.  
Mesto ima svoje sporočilo, arhitekti in urbanisti  
pa ne razumejo ničesar: razmetavajo stavek,  
pripravljen za tisk. Vogali, na katerih stojijo prodajalci semen,  
so ta prave pomembne točke. Kino Kultura  
je ekspresionističen kino. Masoni, Judje,  
derviške sekte, alkimisti: vsi se borijo  
za prostor levo od Kamenega mostu, če gledate  
z desnega brega. Ne damo  
divjih kostanjev! Kočije so najbolj  
spominjale na netopirje, samo leteti  
niso mogle. Če ležeš na sredo trga Ploščad, boš na najboljši način  
občutil okroglost Zemlje.  
V luninem arhivu mesta  
so načrti in sheme, popolnoma kabalistične.  
Kardo in dekumanus: na zemljevid mesta  
je z iglo pritrjen metulj,  
ki spreminja strani neba.  
Ne poznamo kode ptice dodo.  
Mlečno prozorne dijakinje medicinske šole,  
gimnazijke, jedre kot pravkar  
utrgane breskve. Tu nas opazujejo.  
Hodite previdno, kot da ničesar  
ne opazite. Tista starka  
ima dežnik, narejen iz žabjih kožic. Popolnoma  
nematerialen sneg. Iz Opere skozi okna garderobe  
bežijo ljubimci primadone.  
Velike kulise, oblepljene s perjem,

за доцните посетители. Од енциклопедиите се исечени  
некои сомнителни илустрации, пред сè  
снимките на Месечината. Во прашање е  
некоја тајна секта. Старецот од Планината,  
тоа е тоа. Скршнете пак лево: птицата додо  
заминала натаму. Во една берберница  
има акавриум, во аквариумот  
лежи заборавена жаба-принцеза.  
Колекција на пеперуги од Мадагаскар  
најдена е во една продавница за бурек и бели печива.  
Слабоста на уживањето во бурекот е неизлечива.  
Инструменти со непозната намена, натписи  
со неогатливо писмо, жени со непрозирни намери.  
А птицата додо? Оние што одат по птицата додо  
несомнено некаде ќе се препнат во одот.  
Даут-пашин амам ги подава кон небото своите дванаесет дојки  
како некаква Артемида од Ефес  
што легнала да се одмори. Духот на стариот сликар  
сè уште лута низ лавиринтот  
барајќи една изгубена балетска патика.  
Градот има своја порака а архитектите и урбанистите  
ништо не разбираат: го растураат слогот  
готов за печатење. Аглите на кои стојат продавачите на семки  
се вистинските значајни точки. Киното „Култура“  
е едно експресионистичко кино. Масони, Евреи,  
дервишки секти, алхемичари: сите се борат  
за местото лево од Камениот мост, ако гледате  
од десниот брег. Не ги даваме  
дивите костени! Пајтоните најмногу  
прилегаа на лилјаци, само не можеа  
да летаат. Да се легне среде Плоштадот е најдобар начин  
да се почувствува тркалезноста на Земјата.  
Во месечевиот архив на градот  
има нацрти и шеми на полно кабалистички.  
Кардо и декуманус: врз планот на градот  
зацврстена е со игла една пеперуга  
која ги менува страните на светот.  
Не го знаеме кодот на птицата додо.  
Млечно-прозирни ученички од медицинското училиште,  
гимназистки намовнати како штотуку  
скинати праски. Тука нè набљудуваат.  
Одете претпазливо како ништо  
да не забележувате. Таа старица  
има чадор направен од жабји кожички. Наполно  
нематеријален снег. Од Операта, низ прозорците на шминкерните  
бегаат љубовниците на примадоната.  
Големи кулиси облепени со пердуви

zataknjene v malih ulicah. Prepovedano  
izogibanje: treba je skozi  
žalostna ogledala, skozi vlažna ogledala, skozi  
lažna ogledala. V antikvariatih  
imajo čisto nove knjige: nekdo hodi pred časom  
in jih ima za zastarele. Tisti prstan,  
ki ga ima na sebi ženska roka ..., ne,  
tega vam ne smem povedati. No, prav:  
z njim je posvečena poslednja ptica dodo,  
videna v Makedoniji. Nadrealizem ni mrtev!  
To piše na nekem sveže prebeljenem zidu  
s črnimi črkami. Konji, okrašeni z zrni fajanse  
in ploščicami iz mačjega zlata, vlečejo  
kočije iz prozornega papirja po ulicah,  
polnih ribjih glav in majhnih beneških gondol  
iz plastike. Nekdo spi notri. Tistega,  
ki tolmači bajke, bodo jutri ubile  
otroške tolpe. Soseška opravljivka  
leti nad spečimi hišami kot prepariran čuk.  
V foto prodajalnah so razstavljeni posnetki nekdanjih zaročencev,  
zaobljubljenih večni zvestobi. Večnost  
je bankrotirala: malim varčevalcem ne bo nikoli  
povrnjena škoda. Toda roka tvoja in roka moja  
še vedno v ljubezni čvrsto se držita.  
Brusilci nožev niso imeli vstopa v javna kopališča.  
Po drugi strani pa so izvajalci sejemskih veččin  
predstavljali dostojanstven poklic.  
Razumete? Moram vam povedati,  
da v mestu obstaja zarota kartografov in filatelistov.  
Ti pravijo, da je ptica dodo pobegnila z ladje.  
Ampak s katere ladje? Ne, ne, nič nisem rekel.  
Kakorkoli že, vse vodi k temu, da nas prisili misliti,  
da obstaja neka poštna znamka,  
ki je namenjena  
samo za skrivna pisma.  
Pa vendar, pišite mi na naslov: Skopje,  
mesto, v katerem ima Luna  
za svojo dolžnost,  
da premeša karte  
mogočega in nemogočega.

*Prevedla Namita Subiotto*

заглавени по малите улички. Забрането  
заобиколување: морате да минете  
низ тажни огледала, низ влажини огледала, низ лажни  
огледала. Во антикварниците  
има наполно нови книги: некој оди пред времето  
и веќе ги смета за застарени. Тој прстен  
што го има на себе женската рака... не,  
тоа не смеам да ви го речам. Добро, во ред:  
со него е прстенувана последната птица додо  
видена во Македонија. Надреализмот не е мртов!  
Тоа пишува на еден штотуку варосан сид  
со црни букви. Украсени со зрна од фајанс  
и со плочки од мачешко злато коњите ги влечат  
кочиите од просирна хартија низ улици  
полни рибји глави и мали венецијански гондоли  
од пластика. Некој спие внатре. Оној  
што ги толкува бајките ќе биде утре убиен  
од детските банди. Маалската озборувачка  
лета над заспаните куќи како препариран був.  
Во фотографските дуќани стојат снимки на некогашните свршеници  
заколнати на вечна верност. Вечноста  
банкротирала: ситните штедачи нема никогаш  
да бидат обесштетени. Но раката твоја и раката моја  
сè уште цврсто во љубовта стојат.  
Острачите на ножеви немале пристап во јавните бањи.  
Наспроти на тоа, изведувачите на панаѓурските вештини  
претставувале еден достоинствен еснаф.  
Сфаќате? Морам да ви речам  
дека во градот постои заговор на картографи и филателисти.  
Тие велат дека птицата додо избегала од бродот.  
Но од кој брод? Не, не, не сум кажал ништо.  
Во секој случај, сè оди кон тоа да нè натера да мислиме  
дека постои една поштенска марка  
што е наменета  
само за тајни писма.  
Сепак, пишувајте ми на адреса: Скопје,  
град во кој Месечината  
смета за своја должност  
да ги измеша картите  
на можното и на невозможното.

## Full Moon Night Above Skopje

*(Excerpt)*

Books with perfectly white pages  
lie around in parks. Everywhere sleeping beauties,  
wrapped in silk like silkworm cocoons.  
This is rude. This is inadmissible. One should  
notify the mayor and the entire  
city council. Who authorised the demolition  
of antique city walls and renowned spas?  
Monuments are covered with flour sacks.  
Speakers dressed in white  
keep still in solemn poses. Coarseness  
is growing into a new form of good manners.  
Join us in gathering  
hilarious white mushrooms, which tend to scatter  
if not picked in silence. On the rooftop  
of Grand Hotel, there is a helicopter  
made solely of glass. This is risky.  
This is imprudent. Nobody  
should embark on an adventure like this.  
The only key is in the possession of a sweet-smiling girl  
who is locked naked in an old wardrobe.  
Where does she hide the key? Her comb  
is growing baby teeth. In an empty taxicab  
there is a forgotten violin full  
of ripe plums. The honest finder  
has not come forward. Advertise the nullity  
of your parents in the newspapers which will be read  
by your grandchildren. Everything changes,  
only horn gramophones are always in fashion.  
That hand should be used to knock on the door three times,  
and three times more, a password that grants access  
into sombre halls in the midst of glass cabinets, in which  
only small labels with inscriptions in Latin remain.  
In a corner there is a half torn  
map of the night sky. Aldebaran, a star  
level three virtual size,  
is perched above the Vodno mountain. The sarcophagi in front of the Station:  
Fifth Roman Legion departed  
and left their luggage behind. The fire in the "Treska" factory  
was set by Piccolomini. They say there used to be  
sombre parties. (On sombre parties  
your grandmother could tell you a thing or two!)  
Yet Evliya Çelebi sells chickpeas now.  
The library is open around the clock

for late-night visitors. Out of encyclopaedias  
a few suspicious illustrations have been cut, most notably  
the images of the Moon. It has to do  
with a secret order. The Old Man from the Mountain,  
this is what it is. Take another left turn: the dodo bird  
flew over there. In a barbershop  
there is an aquarium, in the aquarium  
lies the forgotten Frog Princess.  
A Madagascar butterfly collection  
has been found in a *burek* and pastry shop.  
*Burek* indulgence is untreatable.  
Instruments of unknown purpose, inscriptions  
of undecipherable letters, women of unclear intentions.  
What about the dodo bird? Those who follow the dodo  
are bound to stumble in their walk.  
Daut pašin amam offers its twelve breasts to the sky  
like an Artemis from Ephesus  
who lay down to rest. The spirit of the old painter  
still wanders the labyrinth,  
looking for a lost ballet slipper.  
The city has its message, yet architects and urbanists  
understand nothing: they disturb the type  
set to print. The corners where seed sellers stand  
are the ones that are truly important. "Kultura" cinema  
is an expressionist cinema. The Masons, the Jews,  
the Dervish sects, the alchemists: they all fight for  
the space on the left from the Stone Bridge, seen  
from the right bank. Horse chestnut trees  
are here to stay! Most of all, the carriages  
were evocative of bats, they just  
couldn't fly. Lying down in the middle of the "Plošćad" square is the best  
way to feel the roundness of the Earth.  
In the Moon's archives of the city  
there are blueprints and outlines, utterly cabalistic.  
The cardo and the decumanus: onto the city map  
a butterfly has been pinned,  
one that changes the points of the compass.  
The dodo bird code is unfamiliar to us.  
Milky-translucent medical school students,  
high school girls, luscious like peaches  
that have just been plucked. We are being watched here.  
Step cautiously as if you notice  
nothing. The old lady over there  
has an umbrella made of frog skins. Utterly  
immaterial snow. Out of the Opera changing rooms' windows,  
lovers of the prima donna are fleeing.  
Large scenery glued over with feathers



got stuck in back allies. It is forbidden  
to avoid: one must pass through  
sad mirrors, through moist mirrors, through  
fake mirrors. In second-hand bookshops  
brand new books are sold: somebody is ahead of time  
and finds them obsolete. The ring  
on the female hand over there... no,  
I'm not entitled to tell you. Well, alright then:  
it was used to consecrate the last dodo bird  
ever seen in Macedonia. Surrealism is not dead!  
This is written on a freshly painted wall  
in black letters. Ornamented with faience beads  
and fool's gold slates, horses draw carriages  
made of translucent paper along the streets  
filled with fish heads and small Venetian gondolas  
out of plastic. Someone is asleep in there. The one  
who interprets the myths will tomorrow be killed  
by kids' gangs. The gossipier next door  
flies above sleeping houses like a stuffed little owl.  
In their shops, photographers display pictures of onetime fiancées  
who pledged eternal loyalty. Eternity  
filed for bankruptcy: small savers will never be  
reimbursed. Yet the hand of yours and the hand of mine  
are still tightly held in love.  
Knife grinders were prohibited from entering a public bathhouse.  
On the other hand, fairground routines  
were performed by honourable professionals.  
Do you see what I mean? I must tell you  
about the conspiracy of cartographers and philatelists in this city.  
According to them the dodo bird escaped from the ship.  
But what ship was that? No, no, I haven't said a word.  
Be that as it may, it all boils down to making us believe  
that there is postage stamp  
designed  
only for mysterious letters.  
Still, you may write to me at the address: Skopje,  
the city in which the Moon  
finds it its duty  
to shuffle the cards  
of the possible and the impossible.

*Translated by Manja Maksimovič*



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Oksana Zabuzhko se je rodila leta 1960 v Lutsku v Ukrajini. Spada med najpomembnejše ukrajinske pisatelje, je tudi pesnica, esejistka, kolumnistka, bloggerka in svetovalka pri založbi. Diplomirala je iz filozofije na Ševčenkovi univerzi v Kijevu, doktorirala iz filozofije umetnosti in delala kot raziskovalka na Inštitutu za filozofijo Ukrajinske akademije znanosti. V zgodnjih devetdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja je predavala v ZDA kot Fulbrightova štipendistka in rezidenčna pisateljica na univerzah Penn State, Harvard in na univerzi v Pittsburghu. Njena dela so bila prevedena v številne tuje jezike. Med najpomembnejša leposlovna dela sodijo pesniška zbirka *Друга спроба* (Drugi poskus, 2005) ter prozni deli *Польові дослідження з українського сексу* (Terenska raziskava ukrajinskega seksa, 1996) in *Сестро, сестро* (Sestra, sestra, 2003). Po objavi romana Terenska raziskava ukrajinskega seksa, ki so ga leta 2006 razglasili za »najvplivnejšo knjigo v petnajstih letih ukrajinske neodvisnosti«, je prestopila med svobodne pisatelje. Je podpredsednica ukrajinskega PEN-a, prejela pa je tudi naslednje nagrade in štipendije: nagrado za poezijo fundacije Global Commitment (1997), MacArthurjevo štipendijo (2002), štipendijo Milene Jesenske (2004), ukrajinsko nacionalno nagrado reda princeze Olge in mnoge druge. Njena spletna stran: <http://www.zabuzhko.com>

Oksana Zabuzhko was born in 1960 in the Ukrainian city of Lutsk. She is one of the major Ukrainian contemporary writers, apart from being a poet, an essayist, a columnist, a blogger and a publishing house consultant. She graduated in philosophy at the Kiev Shevchenko University, obtained her PhD in the philosophy of arts, and has worked as a research associate for the Institute of Philosophy of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. In the early 1990s she lectured in the USA as a Fulbright Fellow and a Writer-in-Residence at Penn State University, Harvard University, and University of Pittsburgh. Her works have been translated into a number of foreign languages. Among her major works of fiction are the poetry collection *Друга спроба* (Second Attempt, 2005) and the prose works *Польові дослідження з українського сексу* (Field Work In Ukrainian Sex, 1996) and *Сестро, сестро* (Sister, Sister, 2003). After the publication of her novel *Field Work in Ukrainian Sex*, which in 2006 was pronounced "the most influential book in the 15 years of Ukraine's independence", she has been living as a free-lance author. She is Vice-President of the Ukrainian PEN. Among her numerous recognitions are Global Commitment Foundation Poetry Prize (1997), MacArthur Grant (2002), Milena Jesenska Fellowship (2004), the Ukrainian National Award the Order of Princess Olga (2009), and many others. Her website can be found at: <http://www.zabuzhko.com>

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# Oksana Zabuzhko



Foto © Volodymyr Napadovsky

## Opredelitev poezije

Vem, da je umirati težko -  
Kakor vsi, ki ljubijo ostro glasbo svojega telesa,  
In vedo, kako z lahkoto prisiliti telo skozi odprtino strahu  
Kot skozi šivankino uho,  
Ti, ki so preplesali ves vek - tako se vsako premikanje  
Pleč in lopatic in stegen svetlika  
Z daljno skrivnostjo smisla, kot beseda v sanskrtu,  
Pod kožo se igra ime,  
Kot riba v nočnem ribniku -  
Hvaljen bodi, Bog, ker si nam dal telo!  
Ko umiramo, torej, bi lahko kriki mojstrov  
Nad mano dvignili vsaj streho  
(Tako je umrl moj praded, pravijo, da čarovnik),  
In duša se, skozi že razmehčano telo, preliva  
Kot skozi mehko kuhan beljak,  
Utrudljivo in problematično nabrekla  
Se izteguje v zatemnjenje  
(Telo pa se medtem pretaka skozi panje  
Kot odeja, ki jo želi odvreči bolnik,  
Ker ga ta duši) -  
Duša pa še vedno poskuša preseči  
Pritisk mesa, prekletstvo težnosti -  
Ob zlomu strele zaradi ledenega navala meteoritov  
Se glasno izliva kozmos  
In v svojo galaktično cev neprestano  
Vpihuje dušo, kot list papirja zasuka  
Mojo mlado dušo v barvi mokrega zelenja -  
Ah, na svobodo! - in:  
- Stojte! - zakriči duša v trenutku pretoka skozi telo,  
V trenutku najbolj slepeče ostrine med dvema svetovoma -  
Stojte, **tu** se ustavi,  
To je, Poezija,  
O Bog, končno!

... Prsti poslednjič zadrgetajo v iskanju kemičnega svinčnika  
In ko ga najdejo, že ne več moji, pišejo ...

## Визначення поезії

Знаю, що вмиратиму тяжко –  
Як усі, хто любить точену музику власного тіла,  
Хто вміє легко просилювати його ув отвори страху,  
Як у вушко голки,  
Хто весь вік ним протанцював – так, що кожен порух  
Плечей, і лопаток, і стегон – світився  
Далекою тайною смислу, як слово санскритської мови,  
І м'язи під шкірою грали,  
Мов риби в нічному ставку, -  
Дякую Тобі, Боже, що дав нам тіло!  
Отож коли помиратиму, гукніть майстрів,  
Аби зняли наді мною покрівлю  
(Так помирав мій прадід, кажуть, відьмак), -  
І ось тоді, коли крізь розм'якле вже тіло,  
Переливаючись, мов крізь некруто зварений білок,  
Проблимне натужно набрякла душа,  
Випинаючись потемнінням  
(А тіло тимчасом тектиме корчами,  
Мов ковдра, що хоче скинути хворий,  
Бо вона його душить), -  
А душа все пнунтиметься прорвати  
Стиск плоті, проклін 'равітації, - ось тоді  
У вилом стелі шумким крижаним зорепадом  
Рине Космос  
І тягом в свою галактичну трубу  
Видує душу, закрутить, як аркуш паперу,  
Мою молодісіньку душу барви мокрої зелені –  
Ах, на свободу! – і:  
- Стійте! – скрикне вона в мить прориву крізь тіло,  
В мить на щонайсліпучішим лезі поміж двома світами, -  
Стійте, *отут* зупиніться,  
Ось де вона, Поезія,  
Боже, нарешті!

...Пальці востаннє шарпнуться в пошуках авторучки –  
Вже застигаючи, роблячись вже не моїми...

# Klitajmestra

**Kasandra** (*Klitajmestri*) ...Ti nisi, resnično, niti ženska.

LESJA UKRAJINKA

Agamemnon gre -  
vzpenja se po stopnicah in sonce  
mu sveti v hrbet in ves izžareva baker,  
z vojno bi lahko zalil kalup za klobuke in usnjene vrvice  
na njegovih pločevinastih oklepkih škripajo ...  
Pospravljati nočem!  
Ne želim si živalskega smradu iz ust  
niti njegovih rok s črnimi za nohti, kot s trupel na bojnem polju  
trgajo njegove roke z mene obleko  
in mogoče za njegovimi nohti še vedno gnijeta dlaka  
in roževina z obleke in z las pozabljenih.  
Mogoče res nisem ženska -  
nočem cviliti in se zvijati od smrtonosnega užitka,  
skozi in skozi ohromela zaradi slepeče ostrine, ob trskah smrdečega potu,  
pod težo neizbežne carske oblasti, pod telesom,  
ki se cedi name z lepljivimi sokovi smrti: sovražim  
pretanjeno cviljenje psice, ki se izvije iz goltanca  
brez moje volje,  
zasovražim onemoglost, ki me ovije nenadoma,  
in neenakomerno kozavost njegovega surovega podbradka  
nad sabo, nabuhlega zaradi vlage,  
kdaj bom oprla oči; o sin Atreja!  
Tako se je pod teboj upirala razplastena Troja.  
Strela cilja v prožne in v žive in v tiste, zajete v gradu -  
je to damjak? Brizeida? Je mar vroč od ženske krvi,  
plavajoč po stegnih, iz tebe naredi zmagovalca,  
kot kri, pridobljena iz teles tako, kot črpa pravičnik vodo iz skale?  
Zgolj sodomija - ne prešuštvo in ne zoofilija -  
premaga Klitajmestro in damjaka in Kasandro in Trojo in Mikene!  
Mogoče pa le nisem ženska.  
Agamemnon se približuje in podaljšujejo se sence z vonjem po temi in znoju.  
Mene pa tako zebe.  
Stojim in se tresem od obsijanosti: ubijati - tudi to je delo!  
Presti, tkati  
(razpuščati - kot ta iz Itake), rožnato telo Ajgista  
(ah, kaj ima pri tem Ajgist!) natreti z nežnim oljem,  
to je naslada za prste, vaja za prste, taka, ki **ni** primerna za carico:

\* V različici velike ukrajinske pesnice in dramatičarke Lesje Ukrajinke (1871-1913) Kasandra te besede naslavlja na Klitajmestro, ko se ob Agamemnonovi vrnitvi srečata iz oči v oči pred vhodom v mikensko palačo.

# Клітемнестра

Кассандра (до Клітемнестри) ... Ти, правда, і не жінка.

ЛЕСЯ УКРАЇНКА

Агамемнон іде –  
піднімається сходами, й сонце  
світить у спину йому, і увесь він відлунює міддю,  
мов налитий війною бовван, і риплять  
шкіряні поворозки бляшаних його обладунків...  
Приберіть, не хочу!  
Не бажаю звіриноного запаху з рота,  
ані рук його в нігтях, лямованих чорним, - ці руки зривають одержу  
із мене, як з мертвого тіла на полі бою,  
і можливо, під нігтями ще догнивають ворсинки  
і лупа – із одержи й волосся забитих.  
Може, я і не жінка –  
я не хочу вищати й звиватись од смертної втіхи,  
навиліт прохромлена лезом сліпучим, у скалках смердючого поту,  
під тягарем, необорнішим царської влади, - під тілом  
що опливає на мене липкими соками смерти: ненавиджу  
тонке скавуління суки, котре заляскоче  
мимо моєї волі в ту мить у мене в гортані,  
ненавиджу хвилю змори, котра огорне,  
й розбухлу од вільгости пористу таранкуватість  
його глевкого підгорля понад собою,  
коли буду розплющувать очі; о сину Атрея!  
Так під тобою пручалась розпластана Троя.  
Стріла поціляє в пружке, і живе, і охоплене тремом –  
Це лань? Брісеїда? Чи – горяч жіноцької крові,  
по стегнах спливаючи, робить тебе переможем,  
що кров добуває із тіл, наче праведник – воду зі скелі?  
Не перелюбство, не скотолоудство, але скотоложство –  
змагать Клітемнестру, і лань, і Кассандру, і Трою, й Мікени!  
Може, я і не жінка.  
Агамемнон надходить, і довшають тіні із запахом пітьми і поту.  
А мені таки зимно.  
Я стою і дрижу з осяяння: вбивати – то також робота!  
Прясти, ткати  
(розпускати – як та, що з Ітаки), трояндове тіло Егісфа  
(ах, причім тут Егісф!) натирати пестливим олійком –  
насолода для пальців, заняття для пальців, та **не** для цариці:  
це нічим не шляхетніш, ніж, приміром, мацання віспин,  
і стокрот уже ліпше було б із якимось молільником  
утекти – хоч до Дельф і, можливо, пошитися в жриці,  
де щосвята належати всім перехожим калікам,



to je nikakor ne žlahtní, nož, na primer, dotikanja ognojka,  
in stokrat bolje bi bilo z gorečim vernikom  
zbežati, vsaj v Delfe in, mogoče, postati svečenica,  
kjer si na praznični dan last vseh mimoidočih pohabljenecv,  
slepo prepuščajoča se tej brezoblični sili,  
ki ne streml k **zastoju** (udarec, ko si v teku: nasaditi se!) -  
ki se snuje povsod, spremenljiva, tekoča in nevidna ...  
Ah, kako je mraz.

Vzpenjaš se, s soncem obsijan v hrbet -  
o bogupodobni!

(Kolikor si podoben bogu, toliko si tudi sovražnik, toliko tvoja stopinja  
priteguje lestev - na njej vsak korak tehta  
trojanska leta - ah, naj bo, zato, bliže, bliže ...)

Ko od opoja mrtví,

oslepela zaradi črno-bele parafe senc, pripeke marmornatih plošč -  
z vso silo domišljije si zadržujem pred očmi  
en - edini mir,

kje je zastor, ki je na njem razneslo škrlat: ko boš zašel za ta zastor,  
bom z eno samo božansko kretnjo

roke, otrdele zaradi hladu kovine, ki ji je povsem predana,  
preseгла vse, kar si do sedaj zmožel ti:

zasnovala bom novo carstvo -  
svet brez Agamemnona.

*Prevedla Andreja Kalc*

віддаючись незряче тій силі, позбавленій лику,  
що не прагне *спиняти* (удар – на бігу: вгородитись!) –  
що снується повсюдно, мінлива, текуча й незрима...  
Ах, як зимно.

Сходиш, освітлений сонцем зі спини, -

о богорівний!

(Що богорівніший, то ненавидніший, то притягальніш  
ступа твоя сходами – кожен-бо крок в ній заважить  
з рік Іліонський – ах ну ж бо, ну ближче, ну ближче...)

Завмираючи з захвату,

сліпнучи з чорно-білого – розчерку тіней, осоння плит мармурових, -  
на всю силу уяви держу собі перед зором  
одним-єдиний покоїк,

де заслона – вся вибухлий пурпур: коли ти зайдеш за неї,  
я єдиним божистим жестом

руки, твердої од холоду вірного їй металу,

все перевершу, на що ти досі спромігся:

я засную нове царство –

світ без Агамемнона.

## A Definition of Poetry

I know I will die a difficult death -  
Like anyone who loves the precise music of her own body,  
Who knows how to force it through the gaps in fear  
As through the needle's eye,  
Who dances a lifetime with the body - every move  
Of shoulders, back, and thighs  
Shimmering with mystery, like a Sanskrit word,  
Muscles playing under the skin  
Like fish in a nocturnal pool.  
Thank you, Lord, for giving us bodies.  
When I die, tell the roofers  
To take down the rafters and ceiling  
(They say my great-grandfather, a sorcerer, finally got out this way).  
When my body softens with moisture,  
The bloated soul, dark and bulging,  
Will strain like a blue vein in a boiled egg white,  
And the body will ripple with spasms,  
Like the blanket a sick man wrestles off  
Because it's hot,  
And the soul will rise to break through  
The press of flesh, curse of gravity -  
The Cosmos  
Above the black well of the room  
Will suck on its galactic tube,  
Heaven breaking in a blistering starfall,  
And draw the soul up, trembling like a sheet of paper -  
My young soul - the color of wet grass -  
To freedom - then  
"Stop!" it screams, escaping,  
On the dazzling borderline  
Between two worlds -  
Stop, wait.  
My God. At last.  
Look, here's where poetry comes from.

Fingers twitching for the ballpoint,  
Growing cold, becoming not mine.

*Translated by Michael M. Naydan and Askold Melnyczuk*

## Clytemnestra

**Cassandra** (*to Clytemnestra*) "*You're not really a woman*"\*\*

LESYA UKRAINKA

Agamemnon's coming home.  
He's climbing the stairs, the sun  
Is behind him, he's clanging with brass  
Like a war-bloated idol, the leather thongs  
Of his armor are squeaking.  
Take it off, I don't want it!  
I don't want the animal smell of his mouth,  
Or his hands with their black-rimmed nails – those hands  
Rip off my clothes as from a corpse on the battlefield,  
And under the nails the flakes  
And fuzz from the clothes and hair of the slain are probably still rotting.  
Maybe I'm not really a woman.  
I don't want to scream and squirm with mortal pleasure,  
Stuck on his gleaming weapon amid gobs of stinking sweat  
Beneath a burden more overwhelming than the regal power – under his body  
Trickling its sticky death-juices on me – I hate  
The high-pitched bitch's whimper that will escape my throat,  
I hate the wave of languor that will embrace me  
And the doughy, pitted neck above me  
When I open my eyes. O son of Atreus!  
That's how Troy, outstretched, writhed under you.  
Your arrows target anything alive, elastic, quick –  
Is it the doe? Briseis? or hot female blood  
Flowing down thighs that makes you the victor,  
Able to draw blood from a body like a sinless man water from a stone?  
It wasn't lust, or beastliness, but bestiality  
To have conquered Clytemnestra, and the doe, and Cassandra, Mycenae  
and Troy.  
Maybe I'm not really a woman.  
Agamemnon's coming, and the shadows smelling of darkness and sweat  
are growing longer.  
I'm cold.  
I'm shaking from the realization: killing is also a job!  
Spinning, weaving,  
Unweaving (like that woman from Ithaca), rubbing Aegisthus' rosy body  
(what does *he* have to do with this?) with soothing oil –  
These are pleasures for hands, occupation for hands – but not those of a queen.

---

\* In the version by the great Ukrainian poet and playwright Lesya Ukrainka (1871 - 1913), these are the words spoken by Cassandra to Clytemnestra when the two find themselves face to face on the threshold of the palace of Mycenae upon Agamemnon's return.

They're no more noble, for instance, than fingering pockmarks.  
It would be a hundred times better to run off with some pilgrims,  
Say, to Delphi, and become a priestess,  
To belong at every feast to every passing cripple,  
To give myself up blindly to that faceless force  
Without malevolence, and omnipresent – shifting, coursing, unseen...  
Oh, how cold I am!  
You're climbing the stairs, backlit by the sun –  
Oh godlike!  
More godlike, more hateful, more compelling  
Is your stride up the stairs (each step weighs  
One year of the Trojan war) – oh come closer, closer..  
Stiff with excitement,  
Half-blinded from the black and white – this graph of shadows, patches  
of sun on the marble tiles  
I'm keeping in my sight, with the whole strength of my imagination,  
Just this one small room  
Where the curtain's like burst crimson – when you step behind it,  
With a single lordly gesture  
Of my hand, steady with the cold of obedient steel,  
I'll out-do everything you have accomplished,  
I'll set up another kingdom –  
A world without Agamemnon.

*Translated by Lisa Sapinkopf in collaboration with the author*

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GOSTJE VILENICE 2009  
VILENICA 2009 GUESTS

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Forrest Gander se je rodil leta 1956 v puščavi Mojave v Barstowu v Kaliforniji. Diplomiral je iz geologije in angleške književnosti. Je profesor angleške in primerjalne književnosti na Brown University in avtor esejev, ki so bili objavljeni v številnih revijah, kot so *The Nation*, *Boston Review* in *The Providence Journal*. Med njegova najnovejša dela spadajo pesniška zbirka *Eye Against Eye* (Oko proti očesu, 2005), roman *As a Friend* (Kot prijatelj, 2008) in prevod iz španščine *Firefly Under the Tongue: Selected Poems of Coral Bracho* (Kresnica pod jezikom: Izbrane pesmi Corala Bracha, 2008). Je štipendist Rockefellerjevega sklada United States Artists, prejema pa tudi subvencijo National Endowment for the Arts ter štipendije Guggenheimove, Howardove in Whitingove fundacije. Njegova spletna stran: [www.brown.edu/Departments/Literary\\_Arts/people/Forrest/](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Literary_Arts/people/Forrest/)

Forrest Gander was born in 1956 in the Mojave Desert in Barstow, California. He has degrees in geology and English literature. He is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Brown University and has authored essays for numerous journals including *The Nation*, *Boston Review*, and *The Providence Journal*. Among his recent books are the book of poems *Eye Against Eye* (2005), the novel *As a Friend* (2008), and the translation (from the Spanish) *Firefly Under the Tongue: Selected Poems of Coral Bracho* (2008). A United States Artists Rockefeller Fellow, Gander is recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim, Howard, and Whiting foundations. His website can be found at [www.brown.edu/Departments/Literary\\_Arts/people/Forrest/](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Literary_Arts/people/Forrest/)

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# Forrest Gander

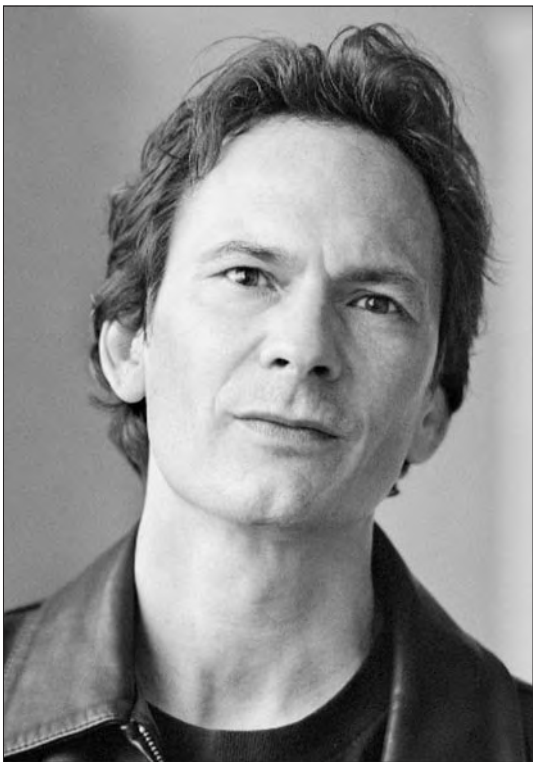


Foto © Nina Subin



## Bralcu

Čeprav si iskal nekaj drugega  
v ogledalu, se jim ne moreš izogniti, ne?  
Brazdam sarkazma, očesnim gubam nespečnosti  
in krmežljivosti oklevanja  
in tihemu glasu, ki reče, poglej, koliko je ura, in tvoje ime, in zakaj  
se ne uležeš,

da boš jutri spočit za v službo.

Potem se sprožijo sanje.

In vendar si zaradi daljnega upanja še vedno buden. Še si  
buden, ne? Čeprav je že pozno in je vprašanje, ki si ga zastavljal,  
postalo nekaj drugega.

Kakšno je zdaj?

Kako te je taktilni amnion navade prenehal

varovati? Noč se izlije

v griče, v kremenasti rečni prod in v lastovičje dupline, v mangrov  
korenine, gosteče se okoli izgubljenih ribjih trnkov. Na izvesku  
bencinske črpalke se Pegaz prižge in zamiglja in spet prižge,  
in čeljustne mišice uslužbenca trzajo, ko zre proti zalivu,  
s številko dela za zobati jermen na koščku papirja v roki.

Vtem ko zvezde zažarijo in natararica otrka

prt, se ravno spet odpiráš

sli po tem, da bi bil napolnjen z nečim? S čim? Okrog tebe

brezimne, brezštevilne stvari zganjajo trušč v tišini,

vpijajo tvoje motrenje prav v trenutku stika, v tistem kritičnem

hipu, ko se tvoja linija pogleda, dvignjena z ogledala in nežno spuščena  
spet dol

v brazdo vrteče se Zemlje, ujame

in se videz izlije kot žabji spev.

Jaz sem bil tisti, ja, ki sem sledil, ko si vodil in ko si zaostal.

Kako dolgo je trajalo, da sva prišla sem, midva, ki

pripadava temu času v vseh njegovih praznih minevanjih in

v njegovi polnosti. Naj ti pritisnem usta na hrbet dlani,

preden mi jo umakneš z obraza.

## To the Reader

Although you were looking for something else  
in the mirror, you can't avoid them can you?  
The wrinkles of sarcasm, the crowfeet of insomnia,  
and the bleary-eye of hesitation,  
and the silent voice saying look what time it is, and your name, and why  
    don't you lie down  
so you'll be rested for work tomorrow.  
Then the dream snaps on.  
And yet a distant hope keeps you awake. You are still  
awake, aren't you? Although it is late now and the question  
    you were asking  
has become something different.  
    What is it now?

How has the tactual amnion of habit failed  
to protect you? The night discharges  
itself into hills, into the river's fan gravel and swallow holes, mangrove  
roots thickening around lost fish hooks. In the gas station  
sign, Pegasus lights up and flickers out and lights up again,  
and muscles twitch in the attendant's jaw as he stares into the bay,  
a timing chain part number on the slip of paper in his hand.  
While stars flare and the waitress crumbs  
the tablecloth, are you just opening again  
to the lust to be filled with something? What is it? Around you,  
the nameless, countless things hullabalooing in silence  
sop up your looking at the very moment of contact, at the critical  
instant when your line of sight, lifted from the mirror and gently set  
    down again  
into a groove of the revolving earth, catches  
and appearance pours out like frog song.

It was me, yes, following when you led and when you fell behind.  
How long it took us to get here, we who  
belong to this time in all its thin passages and in  
its fullness. Only let me press my mouth to the back of your hand  
before you move it from my face.

## Obletnica

Da ne bil bi znan vedno po svojih ranah,  
sem pokopal ličinke melanholije

in se obrnil proti tebi.  
Zbral sem se

kot mrak  
k črnim tulipanom tvojih bradavic.

Za sedem dni sva zaklenila vrata,  
ribala sobo s ptičjo krvjo.

In nekaj časa je bila,  
v duplini, iz katere raste tvoj vrat

med tvojima sijajnima ključnicama,  
najin edini tekmeč glasba,

klavir kostne beline.  
Niti ni svetloba splahnela,

temveč se je temneč skrčila.  
Surovost gledanja.  
Drget.

## Anniversary

Not to be known always by my wounds,  
I buried melancholy's larvae

And turned toward you.  
I gathered myself

Like the dusk  
To the black tulips of your nipples.

For seven days we locked the door,  
We scoured the room with bird's blood.

And for a little while  
In the hollow where your throat rose

From between your splendid clavicles,  
Our only rival was music,

The piano of bone-whiteness.  
Nor did the light subside,

But deepeningly contracted.  
The rawness of the looking.  
The quiver.

## Testament

Poliži si prah s stopal in pridi k meni.  
Moj doseg ni skrajšan. Vidiš  
to smrdljivo ribo? To je tvoja riba.  
Zapri oči, otrok, tako zelo ljubljen  
in domač s krutostjo.  
Jaz, ki ne razsojam, sem tako namenil.  
Nisi upal, da slišal boš moj glas?  
Torej se potolaži s tem drhtenjem,  
z mojim dihom v tvojih nosnicah.  
Pa koga bi se ti sploh bal? Rekel sem,  
*ulezi se, da bom lahko hodil po tebi.*  
In ti si položil svoje telo kot tla.  
Glej, to sem jaz. Temen in krasen,  
kot bujnih ceder rast na klifu.  
Poglej me in se raztrešči na koščke,  
medtem ko gre dežela dalje, polna konj.

*Prevedla Tina Mahkota*

## Final Testament

Lick the dust from your feet and come to me.  
My reach isn't shortened. See  
this stinking fish? It's your fish.  
Close your eyes, child much loved  
and familiar of cruelty.  
I, who do not arbitrate, have purposed it.  
Didn't you hope to hear my voice?  
So slake yourself on this trembling,  
my breath in your nostrils.  
And who are you to be afraid? I said  
*Lie down so I can walk over you,*  
And you have laid your body like the ground.  
Behold, it is I. Dark and lovely,  
like cedars blown flush on the cliff.  
Look at me and be broken in pieces  
while the land goes on full of horses.

---

Yasmina Khadra je psevdonim alžirskega pisatelja Mohammeda Moulessehoul, ki se je leta 1955 rodil v Kenadsu. Khadra je obiskoval vojaško šolo in postal visoki oficir. Da bi se izognil cenzuri, je pisal v francoščini in prevzel psevdonim, s katerim se je poklonil svoji ženi. Svojo identiteto je razkril javnosti, ko je konec leta 2000 z družino prebegnil v Francijo, kjer se je ustalil v kraju Aix-en-Provence. Khadra je zaslovel s trilogijo *Morituri* (1997), *Double blanc* (Dvojno bela, 1998) in *L'automne des chimères* (Jesen himer, 1998), napisano v tradiciji romana noir. Med drugim je napisal še romane *À quoi rêvent les loups* (O čem sanjajo volkovi, 1999), *L'imposture des mots* (Sleparija besed, 2002), *Les hirondelles de Kaboul* (Lastovke iz Kabula, 2002), *Cousine K* (Sestrična K, 2003), *La part du mort* (Del smrti, 2004), *L'attentat* (Napad, 2005), *Les Sirènes de Bagdad* (Bagdadske sirene, 2006) in *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (Kar dan dolguje noči, 2008). Khadra je dobitnik številnih literarnih odlikovanj, med drugim prix littéraire beur FM méditerranée (2005), prix du meilleur polar francophone (2004) in glavne nagrade alžirskega združenja l'Association des libraires algériens (2003). Časnik *The San Francisco Chronicle* je razglasil *Lastovke iz Kabula* za knjigo leta 2004. Za roman *Napad*, ki je leta 2008 v slovenskem prevodu Iztoka Ilca izšel pri založbi Tuma, je leta 2006 prejel literarne nagrade prix des libraires, prix découverte in prix tropiques. Delo *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* sta za roman leta razglasili televiziji Liré in France. Njegova dela so bila prevedena v dvaintrideset tujih jezikov, pred kratkim je v slovenskem prevodu Iztoka Ilca pri založbi Tuma izšel še roman *Lastovke iz Kabula*.

Yasmina Khadra is a pseudonym of the Algerian writer Mohammed Moulessehoul, who was born in 1955, in Kenadsa. Khadra attended military school and became a high ranking officer. To avoid censorship he wrote in French, moreover, he even adopted a special pseudonym by which he also paid tribute to his wife. He revealed his identity to the public after he and his family emigrated to France and settled down in Aix-en-Provence towards the end of the year 2000. Khadra won acclaim with the trilogy *Morituri* (1997), *Double blanc* (*Double Blank*, 1998) and *L'automne des chimères* (*Autumn of the Phantoms*, 1998) written in the *roman noir* genre tradition. Among other works he has also authored novels such as *À quoi rêvent les loups* (*Wolf Dreams*, 1999), *L'imposture des mots* (*The Deception of Words*, 2002), *Les hirondelles de Kaboul* (*The Swallows of Kabul*, 2002), *Cousine K* (*Cousin K*, 2003), *La part du mort* (*The Piece of Death*, 2004), *L'attentat* (*The Attack*, 2005), *Les Sirènes de Bagdad* (*The Sirens of Baghdad*, 2006) and *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* (*What the Day Owes to the Night*, 2008). Khadra has received the following awards: Prix littéraire Beur FM Méditerranée (2005), Prix du Meilleur Polar Francophone (2004), and the main award of the Algerian Bookseller Association (2003). *The San Francisco Chronicle* pronounced *The Swallows of Kabul* the best book of the year in 2004. For his novel *The Attack* - its Slovene translation by Iztok Ilc was published by the Tuma publishing house in 2008 - he won the literary awards Prix des libraires, Prix Découverte and Prix Tropiques in 2006; *Ce que le jour doit à la nuit* was named best novel of the year by both Liré and France Televisions. His works have been translated into thirty-two foreign languages. Recently the Slovene translation of the novel *The Swallows of Kabul* by Iztok Ilc has been published by the Tuma publishing house.

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# Yasmina Khadra



Foto © E. Robert Espalieu



# Lastovke iz Kabula

(Odlomek)

»Kdo si drzne kosati se z Božjo jezo?«

Lakomen nasmeh mu priviha ustnice. S prsti si obriše peno, ki se mu je zgostila v koticčkih ustnic. Glava neodobravajoče odkima, počasi, nato prst znova zakoplje v pod, kakor da ga namerava prevrtati.

»Mi smo Božji vojaki, bratje moji. Zmaga je naš poklic, paradiž naš karavanseraj. Naj kdo od nas podleže ranam in, glej no, pobrat ga pride kontingent hurij, lepih kakor tisočero sonc. *Ne imej onih, ki so se žrtvovali za Gospodovo stvar, za mrtve! Ni res, živi so, pri svojem Gospodu, nič jim ne manjka!* Njihovi premaganci pa bodo zapustili tostransko kalvarijo, a čaka jih le večna gehena. Na bojnih poljih in v spominu preživelih bodo njihova trupla zgnila kakor mrhovina. Nimajo pravice ne do Gospodove milosrčnosti ne do našega usmiljenja. Nič nas ne ovira, da ne bi dežel *mumininov\** očistili nesnage, naj od Džakarte do Jeriha, od Dakarja do Mehike, od Kartuma do São Paula in od Tunisa do Chicaga z minaretov odmevajo vzkliki zmagoslavja ...«

»*Alahu akbar!*« eksplodira mulov tovariš.

»*Alahu akbar!*« se vzburkajo glasovi prisotnih.

Ko v mošaji zadoni hrumenje, Zunajra poskoči. Misleč, da je pridige konec, privzdigne krila svojega čadrija in čaka, da pridejo verniki ven. Iz svetišča ne pride niti ena postava. Prav nasprotno, biriči še naprej zaustavljajo mimoidoče in jih naganjajo z udarci korobača v stavbo, prebarvano v zeleno in belo. Gurujev glas je zdaj še močnejši, podžgan z lastnimi besedami. Občasno se dvigne tako visoko, da ob njem očarani talibani pozabijo nadzirati zijala. Celo otroci, razcapani in preplašeni, se zalotijo pri poslušanju pridige, nato pa se spet vrešče poženejo proti uličicam, natrpanim z ljudmi.

Najbrž je ura deset in sonce se ne brzda več. Zrak je nasičen s prahom. Zunajra se duši, mumificirana v svojem ogrinjalu. Bes ji zvija trebuh in stiska grlo. Nora želja, da bi v iskanju morebitnega piša svežine privzdignila *kuto*, še zaostruje njeno živčnost. Toda v krilo čadrija si ne upa niti obrisati prepotenega obraza. Kakor norica v prisilnem jopiču ostaja prikovana na stopnišče, da v vročini kaplja od nje, medtem ko posluša, kako se njeno sopenje pospešuje in kako ji kri udarja v sence. Nenadoma si očita, da čaka tukaj, da sedi na pragu ruševine, podobna pozabljeni malhi, ki priteguje zdaj vprašujoče oko mimoidočih žensk zdaj prezirljivi pogled talibanov. Občutek ima, da je sumljiv predmet, izpostavljen vsem vrstam zasliševanj, in to jo muči. Preplavi jo sram. Nuja, da bi zbežala, da bi se takoj zdaj vrnila v hišo, zaloputnila vrata za seboj in nikdar več izstopila, ji rahlja živce. Zakaj je privolila, da bo sledila svojemu možu? Kaj je upala, da

\* muminin: pravoverni

## Les hirondelles de Kaboul

(Fragment)

- Et qui oserait se mesurer à la colère de Dieu?

Un sourire vorace lui retrousse les lèvres. De ses doigts, il essuie l'écume qui s'est épaissie au coin de sa bouche. Sa tête fait non, doucement, puis son doigt revient piocher le plancher comme s'il cherchait à le transpercer.

- Nous sommes les soldats de Dieu, mes frères. La victoire est notre vocation, le paradis notre caravansérail. Que l'un de nous succombe à ses blessures, et ne voilà-t-il pas un contingent de houris, belles comme mille soleils, pour le recueillir. *Ne croyez guère que ceux qui se sont sacrifiés pour la cause du Seigneur sont morts; ils sont bel et bien vivants auprès de leur Maître qui les comble de ses bienfaits ...* Quant à leurs martyrs, ils ne quitteront le calvaire d'ici-bas que pour la géhenne de toujours. Comme des charognes, leurs cadavres pourriront sur les champs de bataille et dans la mémoire des survivants. Ils n'auront droit ni à la miséricorde du Seigneur ni à notre pitié. Et rien ne nous empêchera d'assainir la terre des *mouminin*, pour que retentissent, de Jakarta à Jéricho, de Dakar à Mexico, de Khartoum à São Paulo et de Tunis à Chicago les clameurs triomphantes du minaret ...

- *Allabou aqbar!* explose un compagnon du mollah.

- *Allabou aqbar!* s'ébranle l'assistance.

Zunaira sursaute lorsque la clameur tonne dans la mosquée. Croyant la séance terminée, elle ramasse les pans de son tchadri et attend de voir sortir les fidèles. Aucune silhouette n'émerge du sanctuaire. Bien au contraire, les sbires continuent d'intercepter les passants et de les diriger, à coups de fouet, sur la bâtisse peinte en vert et blanc. La voix du gourou reprend de plus belle, galvanisée par ses propres propos. Quelquefois, elle monte si haut que les taliban subjugués en oublient de contrôler les badauds. Même les enfants, déguenillés et hagards, se surprennent en train d'écouter le prêche avant de s'élaner en piaillant vers les ruelles saturées de monde.

Il doit être dix heures, et le soleil ne se retient plus. L'air est chargé de poussière. Momifiée dans son voile, Zunaira suffoque. La colère lui noue le ventre et lui obture la gorge. Une folle envie de soulever sa *cagoule* en quête d'une hypothétique bouffée de fraîcheur redouble sa nervosité. Mais elle n'ose même pas s'essuyer la figure ruisselante dans un pan de son tchadri. Telle une forcenée dans sa camisole, elle reste effondrée sur le perron, à dégouliner sous la chaleur et à écouter son halètement s'accélérer et le sang battre à ses tempes. Subitement, elle s'en veut d'être là, assise sur le seuil d'une ruine, semblable à un balluchon oublié, attirant tantôt l'œil intrigué des passantes tantôt le regard méprisant des taliban. Elle a le sentiment d'être un objet suspect exposé à toutes sortes d'interrogations, et cela la torture. La honte la gagne. Le besoin de s'enfuir, de retourner sur-le-champ à la maison et de claquer la porte derrière elle pour ne plus en ressortir lui taillade l'esprit. Pourquoi a-t-elle accepté de suivre son époux? Qu'espérait-elle trouver, dans les rues de Kaboul, hormis la misère et les affronts? Comment a-t-elle pu

bo našla na ulicah Kabula, razen bede in sramotenj? Kako je lahko privolila, da si je nadela to strašno odevalo, ki jo izničuje, ta hodeči šotor, ki ji predstavlja razvrednotenje njenega položaja in ječo z mrežasto masko, vrezano v obraz kakor kalejdoskopske mašrabeje, kako je privolila v rokavice, ki ji prepovedujejo, da bi stvari prepoznavala na otip, in kako je privolila v težo zlorab? Vseeno pa se je bala prav tega. Vedela je, da jo bo lastna nepremišljenost izpostavila temu, kar najbolj mrzi, kar zavrača celo v spanju: odvzemu pravic. Gre za nezaceljivo rano, nepokretnost, ki se je ne moremo navaditi, poškodbo, ki je ne omilijo ne rehabilitacije ne terapije in ki se ji ne moremo prilagoditi, ne da bi nas premagal stud do samega sebe. In Zunajra ta stud jasno zaznava; vre v njej, ji razžira drobovje in grozi, da jo bo pogubil. Čuti, kako raste globoko v njej, podoben grmadi. Mogoče se prav zaradi tega pod čadrijem poti in duši in morda se prav zaradi tega zdi, da se ji po izsušenih ustih razliva nekakšen vonj po kremiranju. Nezadržljiv bes ji pritiska na prsi, ji trpinči srce in ji napenja vratne žile. Pogled se ji zamegli: zdaj zdaj bo bruhnila v jok. Z nezaslišanim naporom začne krčiti pesti, da bi jih prisilila k mirovanju, vzravna hrbet in se osredotoči na enakomerno dihanje. Počasi potlači svoj bes in si postopoma izprazni glavo. Mora potrpeti, mora vzdržati, dokler se Mohsen ne vrne. Ena sama nespretna kretnja, ena pritožba, in po nepotrebnem bi se nastavila talibanski gorečnosti.

Mula Bašir je strašno navdahnjen, ugotavlja Mohsen Ramat. Podžgan s svojimi sramotilnimi izbruhi ne prekinja trenutkov vznesenosti, razen ko potrka po tleh ali ko ponese vrček k razbeljenim ustnicam. Govori že dve uri, vehementno, z mnogimi kretnjami, njegova slina je enako belkasta kakor njegove oči. Njegova bivolja sapa, ki odmeva po dvorani, spominja na sunek zemeljskih plošč. V prvih vrstah se verniki, pokriti s turbani, ne zavedajo hude vročine. Gurujeva gostobesednost jih dobesedno zasužnjuje, usta držijo široko odprta, da za nobeno ceno ne bi zgrešili toka odžejajočih besed, ki se zlivajo nanje. V vrstah za njimi so mnenja deljena; nekateri se podučujejo, nekateri dolgočasijo. Veliko jih ni zadovoljnih, ker so tukaj, namesto da bi se ukvarjali s svojimi opravki. Nenehno se presedajo in si manejo prste. Nekega starca je zmanjkalo, taliban ga strese s konico krepela. Uboga para se na pol prebudi in zamežika, kakor da ne prepozna kraja, si z dlanjo obriše obraz, zazeha, zatem se mu ptičji vrat omehča in ponikne nazaj v spanec. Mohsen je že dolgo nazaj izgubil nit pridige. Mulove besede se ga ne dotaknejo več. Radoveden se nenehno obrača k Zunajri, negibni na stopnišču na drugi strani ceste. Ve, da ravno zdaj trpi pod svojim pregrinjalom zaradi sonca in zaradi dejstva, da čemi tam, podobna anomaliji sredi zija, ona, ki jo je strah privabljanja pozornosti. Gleda jo, v upanju, da ga bo opazila sredi trume posameznikov resnih obrazov in nedostojnega molka, nemara dobro razume njegovo obžalovanje, da se je preprost sprehod po mestu, kjer se stvari premikajo vročično, ne da bi zares napredovale, tako sprevrigel. Nekaj mu pravi, da mu Zunajra zameri. V svoji togosti je tako napeta, kakor ranjena tigrice, prisiljena v napad ...

accepter d'enfiler ce monstrueux accoutrement qui la néantise, cette tente ambulante qui constitue sa destitution et sa géole, avec son masque grillagé taillé dans son visage comme des moucharabihs kaléidoscopiques, ses gants qui lui interdisent de reconnaître les choses au toucher, et le poids des abus? Pourtant, c'est exactement ce qu'elle redoutait. Elle savait que sa témérité allait l'exposer à ce qu'elle déteste le plus, à ce qu'elle refuse jusque dans son sommeil: la déchéance. C'est une blessure incurable, une infirmité qu'on n'apprivoise pas, un traumatisme que n'apaisent ni les rééducations ni les thérapies et dont on ne peut s'accommoder sans sombrer dans le dégoût de soi-même. Et ce dégoût, Zunaira le perçoit nettement; il fermente en elle, lui consume les tripes et menace de l'immoler. Elle le sent grandir au tréfonds de son être, pareil à un bûcher. C'est peut-être pour cela qu'elle dégouline et suffoque sous son tchadri, que sa gorge asséchée semble déverser comme une odeur de crémation dans son palais. Une rage incoercible lui oppresse la poitrine, malmène son cœur et gonfle les veines de son cou. Son regard s'embrouille: elle est sur le point d'éclater en sanglots. Avec un effort inouï, elle commence par crispier les poings pour contenir leurs tremblements, redresse le dos et s'applique à discipliner sa respiration. Lentement, elle refoule sa colère, cran par cran, fait le vide dans sa tête. Il faut qu'elle prenne son mal en patience, qu'elle tienne le coup jusqu'au retour de Mohsen. Une maladresse, une protestation, et elle s'exposerait inutilement au zèle des taliban.

Le mollah Bashir est fortement inspiré, constate Mohsen Ramat. Emporté par ses diatribes, il ne suspend ses envolées que pour cogner sur le plancher ou porter un carafon à ses lèvres incandescentes. Il parle depuis deux heures, véhément et gesticulant, la salive aussi blanchâtre que ses yeux. Son souffle de buffle vibrant dans la salle rappelle une secousse tellurique. Aux premiers rangs, les fidèles enturbannés ne se rendent pas compte de la fournaise. Ils sont littéralement subjugués par la prolixité du gourou, la bouche grande ouverte pour ne rien rater du flot de paroles désaltérantes cascadant sur eux. Derrière eux, les avis sont partagés; il y a ceux qui s'instruisent, et ceux qui s'ennuient. Beaucoup ne sont pas contents d'être là au lieu de vaquer à leurs occupations. Ceux-là ne cessent de s'agiter et de se triturer les doigts. Un vieillard s'est assoupi, un taliban le secoue du bout de son gourdin. À peine réveillé, le pauvre bougre bat des paupières comme s'il ne reconnaissait pas l'endroit, s'essuie la figure avec la paume de sa main puis, après un bâillement, son cou d'oiseau se ramollit et il se rendort. Mohsen a, depuis longtemps, perdu le fil du sermon. Les propos du mollah ne l'atteignent plus. Inquiet, il n'arrête pas de se retourner vers Zunaira, là-bas de l'autre côté de la chaussée, immobile sur le perron. Il sait qu'elle est en train de souffrir sous sa tenture, du soleil et du fait de rester là, pareil à une anomalie au milieu des badauds, elle qui a horreur de se donner en spectacle. Il la regarde, espérant qu'elle le voie parmi ce ramassis d'individus au faciès grave et aux silences incongrus, peut-être comprend-elle combien il regrette la tournure qu'a prise une simple promenade dans une ville où les choses bougent fébrilement sans avancer vraiment. Quelque chose lui dit que Zunaira

Na višini senc zažvižga korobač:

»Dogaja se spredaj,« ga opomni taliban.

Mohsen se ukloni in ženi obrne hrbet. Žalosten.

Pridige je konec. Ovčice iz prvih vrst evforično planejo kvišku in se zgrnejo nad guruja, da bi mu poljubile roko ali košček turbana. Mohsen mora počakati, dokler talibani vernikom ne dovolijo zapustiti mošeje. Ko se mu končno uspe izmakniti prerivanju, je Zunajra že povsem omamljena od sonca. Občutek ima, da se je svet zmračil, da se šumi okoli nje upočasnjeno vrtinčijo, in le stežka vstane.

»Ti ni dobro?« jo vpraša Mohsen.

Vprašanje ima za tako neslano, da se ji ne zdi vredno odgovoriti nanj.

»Hočem nazaj domov,« reče.

Naslonjena na dvokrilna vrata poskuša priti k sebi, nato pa brez besed krene z opotekavimi koraki, nejasnim pogledom, razgreto glavo. Mohsen jo skuša podpreti, a ga brezobzirno odrine.

»Ne dotikaj se me,« mu zakriči z ranjenim glasom.

Mohsenu prizadene krik njegove žene enako bolečino, kot jo je začutil pred dvema urama, ko sta ga po ramah udarila dva korobača hkrati.

*Prevedel Iztok Ilc*

lui en veut. Sa roideur est ramassée comme celle d'une tigresse blessée contrainte de passer à l'attaque ...

Une cravache siffle à hauteur de sa tempe:

- Ça se passe devant, lui rappelle le taliban.

Mohsen acquiesce et tourne le dos à son épouse. Avec chagrin.

Le prêche fini, les ouailles des premiers rangs se soulèvent dans un mouvement euphorique et dégingolent sur le gourou pour lui baiser la main ou un morceau de son turban. Mohsen doit patienter jusqu'à ce que les taliban autorisent les fidèles à quitter la mosquée. Lorsque, enfin, il parvient à se soustraire aux bousculades, Zunaira est abasourdie par le soleil. Elle a l'impression que le monde s'est obscurci, que les bruits alentour pirouettent au ralenti, et a du mal à se relever.

- Tu ne te sens pas bien? lui demande Mohsen. Elle trouve la question si saugrenue qu'elle ne daigne pas y répondre.

- Je veux rentrer à la maison, dit-elle.

Elle tente de reprendre ses sens, appuyée contre la porte cochère puis, sans un mot, elle se met à marcher en chancelant, le regard incertain, la tête en ébullition. Mohsen essaye de la soutenir, elle le repousse sans ménagement.

- Ne me touche pas, lui crie-t-elle d'une voix écorchée.

Mohsen reçoit le cri de sa femme avec la même douleur que celle que lui avaient infligée, deux heures auparavant, les deux cravaches qui s'étaient abattues en même temps sur son épaule.

# The Swallows of Kabul

(Excerpt)

“And who would dare to measure himself against the Lord’s wrath?”

A voracious smile curls his lips, and he wipes away the froth that has gathered in the corners of his mouth. Gently, he shakes his head; then, with his index finger, he begins pounding the floor again, as though determined to punch a hole in it. “We are God’s soldiers, my brothers. Victory is our vocation; Paradise is our caravansarai. Should one of us succumb to his wounds, he will find a throng of houris, beautiful as a thousand suns, waiting to welcome him. *Never believe that those who have given their lives in the Lord’s cause are dead; for indeed they have not died. They are alive; they live with their Master, who showers them with His blessings.* ... As for those who are martyrs to the cause of Evil, they will depart from the Calvary of this earth only to abide in Gehenna forever. Like the carrion that they are, their corpses will rot on the battlefields and in the memories of the survivors. They will have no right either to the Lord’s mercy or to our pity. And nothing will prevent us from purifying the land of the *mumineen*, so that from Jakarta to Jericho, from Dakar to Mexico City, from Khartoum to São Paulo, from Tunis to Chicago, cries of triumph shall ring out from the minarets. ...”

“*Allahu akbar!*” one of the mullah’sll companions bursts out.

“*Allahu akbar!*” the assembly roars in response.

WHEN SHE HEARS the thunderous clamor in the mosque, Zunaira jumps. Thinking that the sermon is over, she gathers up the skirts of her burqa and waits for the congregation to come out; but not so much as a shadow emerges from the sanctuary. Quite the contrary, in fact: the Taliban police continue to intercept passersby and whip them toward the green-and-white building, where the holy man, galvanized by his own words, begins to speak with renewed vigor. From time to time, his voice rises to such a pitch that the police outside surrender to its spell and forget to discipline the curious onlookers. Even the children, wild-eyed and clothed in rags, catch themselves listening to the preacher for a few moments before they dash off, squealing, into the teeming alleyways around the mosque.

It must be ten o’clock, and the sun can hold on no longer. The air is heavy with dust. Mummified under her veil, Zunaira is suffocating. Anger knots her stomach and obstructs her throat. A mad desire to lift the cloth in search of a hypothetical breath of fresh air intensifies her nervousness. But she does not even dare to wipe her dripping face on her burqa. Like a lunatic in a straitjacket, she stays where she is, slumped on her steps, sweating in the heat, listening to her breathing quicken and her blood beat in her temples. All of a sudden, she’s outraged at herself for being there, sitting like a forgotten sack on the threshold of a ruin, attracting

curious attention from passing women and contemptuous glances from the Taliban agents. She feels like a suspicious object exposed to every sort of interrogation, and this feeling torments her. She's overcome with shame. The urge to flee - to return home at once and slam the door behind her and never leave her house again - convulses her mind. Why did she agree to go along with her husband? What did she expect to find in the streets of Kabul except insults and squalor? How could she have consented to put on this ludicrous outfit, this getup that annihilates her, this portable tent that constitutes her degradation and her prison, with its webbed mask over her eyes like the kaleidoscopic grillwork over a window, its gloves, which take away her sense of touch, its weight of injustice? Exactly what she feared has come to pass. She knew, before she set out, that her rashness was going to expose her to the most detestable fact of her existence, to the constraint that even in her dreams she refuses to accept: the forfeiture of her rights. It's an incurable wound, a disability nothing can compensate for, a trauma beyond rehabilitation or therapy. She cannot resign herself to it without sinking into self-disgust, and Zunaira perceives that disgust quite clearly: It's an inner ferment; it sears her guts and threatens to consume her like a burning pyre. She feels its heat at the core of her being. Perhaps that's why she's sweating and suffocating under her burqa, why her parched throat seems to be disgorging an odor of cremation onto her palate. An irrepressible rage constricts her chest, bruises her heart, and swells the veins in her throat. Her vision clouds; she's on the verge of bursting into tears. With a mighty effort, she clenches her fists to stop her hands from shaking, straightens her back, and concentrates on bringing her breathing under control. Slowly, she ratchets her anger down, one notch at a time, and empties her mind of thought. She must suffer patiently; she must hold on until Mohsen comes back. One mistake, one protest, and she'll expose herself uselessly to the zeal of the Taliban.

MOHSEN RAMAT must admit that Mullah Bashir is powerfully inspired. Carried away by his diatribe, the mullah interrupts his rhetorical flights only to pound the floor or bring a small carafe to his burning lips. He's been speaking for two hours now, impassioned, gesticulating, and his saliva is as chalky white as his eyes. His taurine breathing, rumbling like a tremor in the earth, resonates throughout the room. The turbaned faithful in the front rows are unaware of the stifling heat. Literally enthralled by the holy man's verbiage, they listen openmouthed; unquenchably thirsty for the flood of words cascading down on them. Behind the first rows, opinions are divided; the mullah's prolixity instructs some and bores others. Many in the congregation, here against their will and displeased at having to neglect their business, wring their hands and shift about continually. An old man has fallen asleep; a Taliban agent prods him with his cudgel. Barely awake, the poor devil bats his eyes like a man who can't recognize his surroundings. Then he wipes his face with the palm of his hand, yawns, relaxes his birdlike neck, and goes back to sleep. Mohsen lost the thread of the sermon some time ago, and now the mullah's words



have stopped reaching him altogether. He can't stop casting anxious glances over his shoulder at Zunaira, who's sitting motionless on the steps across the street. He knows she's suffering behind her curtain, both from the heat and from the mere fact of being there, an unmoving anomaly among all the passersby, she who detests making a spectacle of herself. He looks over at her, hoping she can make him out in this mob of stony-faced, incongruously silent individuals. Can she possibly understand how much he regrets his insistence on going out for a little stroll? In a city where things move about frantically without ever really advancing, their walk has taken a turn for the worse. Something tells him that Zunaira will hold it against him. She's sitting there in a rigid crouch, like a wounded tigress compelled to go on the attack and gathering herself to spring. ...

A whip hisses past his temple. "You're looking the wrong way," a Taliban agent reminds him.

Mohsen complies and, with a heavy heart, turns his back on his wife.

When the sermon is over, the faithful in the first rows rise euphorically to their feet and rush upon the holy man, striving to kiss the hem of his garment or a part of his turban. Mohsen must wait until the Taliban agents give the congregation permission to leave the mosque. When he finally manages to break free of the jostling throng, Mohsen finds Zunaira dazed by the sun. She has the impression that the world has grown darker, she hears the ambient sounds spin and slow down, and it's hard for her to get to her feet.

"You don't feel well?" Mohsen asks her.

She finds the question so daft that she doesn't deign to answer it. "I want to go home," she says.

Leaning against the remains of an entryway, she tries to recover her senses, then starts to walk, staggering along with blurred eyes and a boiling head. Mohsen tries to support her, but she pushes him away roughly. "Don't touch me!" she cries out in a strangled voice.

Mohsen feels his wife's cry as a sharp pain, like the one he felt a couple of hours ago, when two whips lashed him across the shoulders at the same time.

*Translated by John Cullen*



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Alejandra Laurencich je prozaistka in scenaristka. Rodila se je leta 1963 v Buenos Airesu, v družini slovenskih izseljencev. Sedem let je študirala lepe umetnosti in vstopila v književnost kot avtorica in sourednica študentskega časopisa *Bajo bandera*, ki je kritiziral vladajočo vojaško diktaturo. Po diplomu je študirala še filmsko umetnost, vendar je s študijem prekinila, da bi se posvetila pisanju svoje prve knjige. Za svoj prvenec kratkih zgodb, *Coronadas de gloria* (Okronane s slavo, 2002), je prejela nagrado Državnega sklada za umetnost. Kot pisateljica je bila deležna številnih odlikovanj, njen roman *Fin de milenio* (Konec tisočletja, 1994) se je znašel med finalisti nagrade emecé. Njene zgodbe so objavljene v antologijah *Una terraza propia: nuevas narradoras argentinas* (Lastna terasa: nove argentinske pripovednice, 2006), *Cuentos en el aire* (Zgodbe v zraku, 2005) in *Primera antología del cuento breve* (Prva antologija kratke zgodbe, 2006). Leta 2007 je objavila svojo drugo zbirko kratkih zgodb, *Historias de mujeres oscuras* (Zgodbe mračnih žena). Piše za posebne priloge književnih revij in dnevnikov, kot je priljubljeni argentinski jutranjik *Página 12*. Dejavna je tudi kot članica učiteljskega zbora Književni dom, kjer vodi Katedro za pripovedovanje in pisanje ter številne literarne delavnice. Letos je v pripravi njen novi roman *Quien más te ha querido* (Kdo te je še ljubil).

Alejandra Laurencich is a prose writer and a screenwriter. She was born in 1963 in Buenos Aires, into a family of Slovene emigrants. She studied fine arts for seven years and entered literature as an author and a co-editor of the students' newspaper *Bajo bandera*, which criticised the ruling military dictatorship. After graduation she also studied cinematography but she dropped out in order to write her first book. For her first book, the short story collection *Coronadas de gloria* (Crowned with Glory, 2002) she received the State Fund for Arts Award. As a writer she has been distinguished by many honours, and her novel *Fin de milenio* (The End of the Millenium, 1994), has been shortlisted for the Emecé Literary Prize. Her stories have been published in the anthologies *Una terraza propia: nuevas narradoras argentinas* (A Terrace of One's Own: The New Argentinian Women Storytellers, 2006), *Cuentos en el aire* (Stories in the Air, 2005) and *Primera antología del cuento breve* (The First Short Story Anthology, 2006). In 2007 she published her second short story collection *Historias de mujeres oscuras* (Stories of the Obscure Women). She writes for special supplements of literary magazines and dailies such as the popular Argentinian morning newspaper *Página 12*. She is also active as a member of the teaching staff at the Reading House, where she conducts numerous literary workshops and is head of the Storytelling and Writing Chair. Her new novel *Quien más te ha querido* (Who Else Has Loved You) will be published by the end of the year.

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# Alejandra Laurencich



Foto © Marcelo Pedroza

# Bosna na vzglavniku

*Za Rocío*

Govori mi. Blizu je, čutim njen vonj po cigaretah. Nekaj me vpraša in me gleda. Ampak sploh ne počaka, da bi ji odgovorila, kar nadaljuje. Skoraj ne poslušam, kaj mi pravi. Vidim njene ogromne oči, ki so zapičene v moje. Dvoje zelenih jezer v vetrovnem dnevu. Dvoje razburkanih jezer. Ko je bila še dojenček približno do enega leta, je kazalo, da bodo tiste oči zmeraj sinje modre, pomislim. Še celo uspavanka, ki sem jo zanjo zložila po napevu *Run run je šel na sever*, jih je opevala tako: *Ah, kako lep je moj Jasminček, ki ima sinje oči*. Blondinka z modrimi očmi, so govorili v porodnišnici. Le kdo je mama te punčke? Ob večerih se včasih spomnim tiste uspavanke in si rečem: Le kako si se spomnila, da otročku prepevaš ravno na to popevko Violete Parra! In pomislim, na katero drugo pesem bi si še lahko izmislila uspavanko. Zvečer vedno mislim na neumnosti. Hočem reči na reči, ki niso za nikamor. Namesto da bi razmislila, koga bi lahko prosila za denar za stanarino ali kako bi rekla Zelmi, da zaenkrat, dokler se stvari ne izboljšajo, ne bom potrebovala njene pomoči, ali o praktičnem in poceni jedilniku za cel teden ali kaj takega, fantaziram o neumnostih. Sinoči sem si na primer predstavljala, da nas je zadel cunami in da je vse uničil. Dobro vem, da ne živimo na vulkanskem področju. Da lahko naše mesto prizadene kvečjemu jugovzhodnik. In to pozimi, ko piha vzhodni veter. Ampak sinoči sem si predstavljala, da nas je zalil cunami. In videla sem samo sebe, kako se pod vodo krčevito oprijemam kandelabra in se trudim, da se ne bi spustila. Z drugo roko sem namreč držala njeno roko. Videla sem jo v kalni vodi, njene skodrane svetle lase, kot od kake sirene. Deroča voda jo je odnašala. Čofotala sem, dokler nisem našla njene roke, in zavpila: Držim te, hčerkica, držim te! Počasi sem si jo približala; morala sem napeti vse moči, ker je voda vsake toliko butnila, ona pa je že velika in visoka, ne kot jaz. Telo se mi je treslo in tresla se je tudi ona, a končno sem jo le lahko tesno objela; kakor opica z mladičem sem splezala po drogu, dokler nisem zagledala neba in pomolila glave iz vode, ona pa je globoko zajela zrak. Tako sva počakali, da je bilo vsega konec. Rešili sva se! Mami, me je klicala, kakor takrat, ko je bila še majhna. Mami. Od ganjenosti je jokala. Jaz pa sem ji ponavljala: Ne govori, srček, ne jokaj, potrudi se in dihaj. Sinoči sem bila pa jaz tista, ki sem jokala, ko sem premišljevala take reči; sploh ne vem, zakaj si jih izmišljam, saj me potem obide nekakšna tesnoba. In potem moram spet misliti na neumnosti, da lahko zaspim. Kakšen kandelaber! si pravim, saj jih že leta ni več. Ali pa vendarle? In tako začnem dvomiti in premišlujem, kje na naši ulici so kandelabri. In najraje bi šla ven na ulico, v sami spalni srajci, da bi ugotovila, kje stojijo drogovi – če sploh kje so. Kot če bi bila od tega odvisna najina usoda – hčerkina in moja. Tako je! Temu se ne znam izogniti. Zgodi se vsako noč, ko zaprem oči. Zvoki ugašajo, v temi ostanejo le mački, ki kot tatovi hodijo po strehah. Še prej, takoj po

## Bosnia sobre la almohada

a Rocío

Ella me está hablando. La tengo cerca, siento su olor a cigarrillo. Pregunta algo y se queda mirándome. Pero no me da tiempo a responder y sigue. Casi no escucho lo que dice. Veo sus ojos enormes, fijos en los míos. Dos lagos verdes en un día ventoso. Lagos encrespados. Pensar que cuando era bebé y hasta más o menos el año parecía que esos ojos serían siempre celestes. Hasta una canción de cuna que yo le había inventado sobre la música de *Run run se fue p'al norte* los nombraba así: *Ay qué linda que es mi Jazmincito, con sus ojos celestitos*. Rubia y de ojos celestes decían en la clínica. Quién es la mamá de la muñequita. A veces, a la noche, recuerdo esa nana y me digo: qué ocurrencia, usar ese tema de Violeta Parra para cantarle a un bebé. Y pienso sobre qué otras canciones podría haber inventado la nana. A la noche siempre pienso cosas sin sentido. Quiero decir, cosas que no sirven para nada. En vez de ocuparme de pensar a quién puedo pedirle plata para pagar el alquiler, o cómo decirle a Zelma que por ahora voy a prescindir de su ayuda, hasta que mejore la cosa, o un menú práctico y económico para la semana, o así; imagino pavadas. Anoche por ejemplo, imaginé que venía un tsunami y arrasaba con todo. Sé perfectamente que no vivimos en zona volcánica. Que a esta ciudad a lo sumo puede llegar una sudestada. Y eso en invierno, cuando hay viento del este. Pero anoche imaginé que venía un tsunami. Y me vi a mí misma aferrada a un poste de la luz bajo el agua haciendo fuerza para no soltarme porque con la otra mano apretaba el brazo de ella. La había podido ver bajo el agua barrosa, el pelo rubio ondulando como el de una sirena. Se la llevaba la corriente. Manoteé en el agua hasta encontrar su brazo y grité: ¡Te tengo, hijita, te tengo! Y de a poco la fui acercando, había que hacer mucha fuerza porque el agua embestía cada tanto, y ella ya es grande, y alta, no como yo. Me temblaba el cuerpo, y el de ella también temblaba, y finalmente pude abrazarla contra mí; y como un mono con su cría subí por el poste de luz hasta que vi el cielo y saqué la cabeza del agua y ella dio una bocanada grande de aire. Y nos quedamos así, las dos, hasta que todo pasó. Nos habíamos salvado. Mami, decía ella, como me decía antes, cuando era chiquita. Mami. Y lloraba de emoción. Y yo le decía: No hables, linda, no llores, tratá de respirar. Pero era yo la que lloraba anoche cuando pensaba todo eso, no sé para qué imagino esas cosas si después me da como una angustia. Y tengo que pensar otra vez en pavadas para poder dormir. Qué poste de luz, me digo, si hace años que no hay postes de luz en la vereda. ¿O sí? Y ahí me entra la duda y me pongo a pensar dónde están los postes de luz en nuestra cuadra. Y me dan ganas de salir a la calle, en camión, a comprobar la ubicación de los postes de luz -si es que los hay- como si de ellos dependiera nuestra suerte, la de mi hija y la mía. Es así. No puedo evitarlo. Sucede cada noche, cuando cierro los ojos. Los sonidos se van a apagando y sólo quedan los gatos en la oscuridad, andando por los techos

ločitvi, sem se tega ropotanja tam zgoraj zelo bala. Potem pa sem se navadila, da se ne zgodi nič, da je le ropotanje. Ropot, ki me spremlja v zgodnjih jutranjih urah, medtem ko čakam, da se ona vrne, da se odprejo vrata ... drsenje njenih copat po hodniku do stranišča, luč, ki se prižge v njeni sobi, in nato vrata, ki se zapirajo.

So dnevi, ko čakam samo na to, da pride ura za spanje: da ugasnem luči, spustim rolete in se spravim v posteljo. Včasih se sprašujem, kaj bi bilo, če bi nas nenadoma zadela katastrofa, na primer vojna kot tista v Bosni. V enem tednu si sosedje ali prijatelji postanejo sovražniki. Meja je lahko tu za vogalom, pri Bertinem kiosku. Vse v razvalinah. V rastlinah ni več zelenja, zavese in pohištvo so brez barv; vse je sivo, še nebo. V zraku vonj po smodniku in po umazaniji. Predstavljam si, da se zapreva v klet. Tja zdaj spravljam prazne škatle gospodinjskih aparatov, pločevinke z barvami in stare igrače. Klet nima več kot šestdeset centimetrov – kar bo kasneje gotovo dober razlog za to, da se bom zamotila – na šestdeset centimetrov se ne bi mogli zbasati nikoli, še najmanj pa ona s svojimi dolgimi nogami. Ampak v vojni, kot si jo umišljam, nama služi kot zatočišče, ko pridejo vojaki. Z Jasmino se objameva in ko nad sabo zaslišiva korake, zapreva oči. Ob vsaki stopinji se iz špranj usipa prah na najine suhe lase, ki so polni uši – v vojnah so namreč uši in tifus. Usta imava suha in razpokana od žeje, kot jih je imela moja babica takrat, ko je morala vleči voziček v Ljubljano; petnajst let, pa taka žeja, da jo je žgalo po telesu in je počepnila in pila vodo iz jarka. Tifus, malarija, v vojaški bolnišnici se ji je bledlo v štirih obmejnih jezikih. Zato ne pustim, da bi Jasmina pila vodo iz jarka, ker vem, da se v vojni voda okuži. Ne ona ne jaz se ne pritožujeva, zelo močno sva objeti v kleti pod jedilnico, nič več se ne bojiva pajčevin, ki naju božajo, ko plapolajo v pišu, ki ga povzročajo koraki vojakov, ki hodijo po najini hiši. Slišali sva, da se z ženskami, ki so same, dogajajo strašne stvari, posebno še, če so lepe. Jasmina je lepotica, od nekdaj je bila. Le kdo je mama te punčke, so spraševale medicinske sestre in zdravnice, ko se je rodila. Ko vojaki odidejo, ko je vse v tišini, morda odpreva pokrov kleti in podeliva cigaretni čik, ki so ga pustili, pohojenega z blatnimi škornji. V tišini slišim, kako ji kruli po trebuhu. In pomislim, da moram poiskati kaj za v usta. Vsaj nekaj, pomislim. Najti moram kaj za svojo hčerko. Spomnim se, da mi je Berta pred tednom povedala, da je morala ubiti psa in ga zakopati na vrtu. En teden ni veliko, si dajem pogum, medtem ko slišim sireno, ki oznanja policijsko uro, in ropot helikopterja, še bolj stran, nekako na višini šole za angleščino, pa slišim vpitje ljudi, ki so jih odkrili. Ona me v polmraku gleda s tistimi svojimi zelenimi očmi, komaj osvetljenimi s tlečim čikom. Prinesla bom kaj za pod zob, ji rečem. In ji naročam, kako in kaj, če se ne vrnem. Ampak vem, da se moram vrniti, ker je ona moj mladiček, ki ga puščam v gnezdu. Kdo je še videl, da bi ptič zapustil svojega mladiča? Nato se vidim, kako tečem po cesti, tako kot takrat, ko sem bila majhna in smo se igrali skrivalnice, na zapik. Ni ga bilo, ki bi me v tem premagal: »Vsi so igralci pofočkani!« Tečem in se izogibam kupom ruševin, razbitinam streh in stekla, zidovi, porušeni zaradi bombardiranja. Tečem naprej in na vogalu zavijem, vidim luknjo, ki je nastala v steni Bertine hiše; poiščem

como ladrones. Antes, cuando recién me separé, me daba mucho miedo escuchar esos golpes arriba. Después me fui acostumbrando a que nada pasara, sólo golpes. Sonidos que me acompañan en la madrugada mientras sigo esperando que ella vuelva, que se abra la puerta, el ruido de sus zapatillas arrastrándose por el pasillo hasta el baño, la luz de su cuarto encendiéndose y luego la puerta que se cierra.

Hay días en que lo único que espero es que llegue la hora de dormir, apagar las luces, cerrar las persianas e ir a la cama. Qué pasaría, me pregunto a veces, si viniese de pronto una catástrofe, una guerra como la de Bosnia, por ejemplo. De una semana para otra los vecinos o amigos se convierten en enemigos. La frontera puede estar acá a la vuelta, en el kiosco de Berta. Todo convertido en escombros. Ya no hay verdor de plantas, ni color en las cortinas o los muebles, todo es gris, hasta el cielo. Olor a pólvora y mugre en el aire. Imagino que nos encerramos en el sótano. Donde ahora guardo las cajas vacías de electrodomésticos, las latas de pintura, los juguetes viejos. No tiene más de sesenta centímetros el sótano -y eso después, seguro, va a ser un buen motivo para distraerme-, en sesenta centímetros jamás podríamos haber, menos ella, con sus piernas largas. Pero en la guerra que yo imagino nos sirve de guarida cuando entran los soldados. Jazmín y yo estamos abrazadas y cerramos los ojos cuando escuchamos los pasos sobre nuestras cabezas, el polvo de las rendijas cae a cada pisada sobre nuestro pelo seco y lleno de piojos, porque en las guerras hay piojos, y tifus, y tenemos la boca seca y cuarteada de sed, como tenía mi abuela esa vez que debía arrastrar la carreta hasta Lubjana, quince años y una sed que le quemaba el cuerpo y se agachó y tomó agua de la zanja. Tifus, malaria, delirios en cuatro idiomas fronterizos, en un hospital de campaña. Por eso no le dejo tomar agua de la zanja a Jazmín, porque sé que en una guerra el agua se contamina. Ni ella ni yo nos quejamos, estamos abrazadas, muy fuerte, bajo el piso del comedor, y ya no nos dan miedo las telas de araña que son como una caricia cuando se mecen con el aire que provocan los pasos de los soldados en nuestra casa. Hemos escuchado que se cometen barbaridades contra las mujeres solas, y sobre todo si son lindas. Jazmín es hermosa, siempre lo fue. Quién es la mamá de la muñequita, decían las enfermeras y las doctoras cuando ella nació. Tal vez cuando se van los soldados, cuando todo queda en silencio, abrimos un poco la tapa del sótano y compartimos la colilla de cigarrillo que han dejado, aplastada bajo la huella barroca de una bota. En el silencio escucho el ruido de las tripas de ella. Y pienso tengo que ir a buscar algo para comer. Algo, pienso. Tengo que encontrar algo para mi hija. Y recuerdo que hace una semana Berta dijo que tuvo que sacrificar a su perro y enterrarlo en el jardín. Una semana no es mucho tiempo, me animo mientras escucho el toque de queda y el golpeteo de un helicóptero y más allá, como a la altura de la escuela de inglés, los gritos de gente que ha sido descubierta. Ella me mira con sus ojos verdes en la penumbra, iluminados apenas por la brasa de la colilla. Voy a traer comida, le digo. Y le doy instrucciones por si no vuelvo, pero sé que tengo que volver, porque ella es mi pichoncito y la dejo en el nido. Quién ha visto a un pájaro abandonar a su cría. Y entonces me veo corriendo por la calle, como cuando era chica y jugaba a las escondidas, a



gomilo prekopane zemlje, poklekнем v blato in začnem kopati. Vsa se tresem, roke, život, ko zadенem ob nekaj mehkega in kosmatega, se mi zdi, da mi bo počilo srce; rabila bi nož, si rečem, in potem, takole, sem spet v kleti. Mami, prišla si! mi reče ona in ni ji mar vonj po mrhovini. Kaj pa si pričakovala, golobčica, ji rečem, ko žvečiva in se smejeva. Majhni koščki, narezani z nožkom. Težko jih je požirati brez pijače, ampak kako pomirijo bolečino! Potem zaspi na mojih rokah, ki jo zibljejo, v neudobnem položaju, ker je malo prostora, a skupaj z mano, blizu ust čutim vonj njenih las in njeno počasno in zadovoljno dihanje. Hvala bogu, lahko sem jo nahranila še en dan. Kakor takrat, ko je bila še dojenček in se je lepo redila – samo z dojenjem. In spet čutim, kako mi po izsušenih licih polzijo solze in močijo njeno gladko najstniško čelo. Pod blazino poiščem robec in se glasno useknem. Spravim ga v rokav spalne srajce in pogledam na uro. Tri četrt na pet in še vedno se ni vrnila domov. Da bi se znebila tesnobe, ki me je obšla zaradi vojnega prizora, se skušam zamotiti s kako drugo malenkostjo. Kako sem neumna, si pravim, saj je ona že štiri leta vegetarijanka. Zakaj nisem šla iskat kake rastline, ki bi preživela na vrtu? Kako sem ji vendar mogla prinesiti pasje meso? Prav tam, pri Berti, je gotovo kaka aloja ali avokadovec. Kako, da se nisem spomnila? In premišljujem, ali v vojnah pustijo rasti sadno drevje ali ga pokončajo tako kot sovražnike. Take reči premišljujem ponoči, bedaste, zamotane, a vedno s srečnim koncem.

Znova pogledam njene zelene oči. Razburkane.

»Reci kaj!« zavpije. V ustih zarisan gnus. »Povej že enkrat, prekleto! Kaj samo stojiš!«

Roke imam vroče. Ima me, da bi ji primazala zaušnico. A se zadržim. Nekajkrat sem to že storila, pa me je udarila močnejše nazaj. Nočem iti še enkrat čez to. Ne vem, kako naj jo utišam.

»Pojdi se srat, zaradi mene ...«,« moj glas je hripav, šibek. Ona zmagoslavno pritrdi. Moram jo ustaviti. Zavpijem ji: »Ampak vedi! Če greš skozi ta vrata, nimaš več vstopa nazaj!«

Kaže, da je grožnja zalegla. Gleda me, kot da ne more verjeti. Čisto iz sebe. Rada bi razprostrla roke in jo tesno objela. A ona ugane mojo namero in se nasmehne. Sovražno. Skloni se. Vidim, kako zgrabi torbo in mi obrne hrbet. Dolgi svetli lasje ji padajo čez ramena. Ne da bi se ustavila, odpre vrata in odide. Ko jih zaloputne, še nekaj časa odmeva. Naslonim se na fotelj. Počasi in tiho se spuščam, dokler se kolena ne dotaknejo tal. Ničesar več ni med nama, si rečem. A morda si jo bom nocoj lahko predstavljala ob sebi.

*Prevedel Vinko Rode v sodelovanju z Mojco Jesenovec*

tocar piedra, no había quién me ganara en eso, piedra para todos mis compañeros; corro y esquivo montones de escombros, pedazos de techos y vidrios, paredes destrozadas por las bombardeos, sigo corriendo y doblo la esquina, veo el boquete que ha quedado en la pared de la casa de Berta, y busco el montículo de tierra removida, me arrodillo en el barro y empiezo a cavar, y todo me tiembla, las manos, el cuerpo, creo que me va a explotar el corazón cuando doy con algo blando y peludo, necesito un cuchillo me digo y luego así, estoy otra vez en el sótano. ¡Llegaste, mami! me dice ella y no le importa el olor a carne muerta, Qué esperabas, pichoncita, le digo y masticamos y nos reímos, pedazos pequeños cortados con el cortaplumas. Se hace duro tragarlos sin líquido, pero cómo calman el dolor. Se queda dormida después, entre mis brazos que la acunan, en una posición incómoda por el poco espacio, pero juntas, puedo oler el pelo de ella cerca de mi boca, y su respiración lenta y satisfecha. Un día más la he podido alimentar, gracias a Dios. Como cuando era bebé y había aumentado tanto, sólo con el pecho. Y otra vez siento las lágrimas que bajan por mi cara seca y le mojan la frente lisa, de adolescente. Busco el pañuelo bajo la almohada y me sueño con ruido. Me lo guardo en el puño del camión y miro la hora. Las cinco menos cuarto y todavía no volví a casa. Trato de distraerme con alguna otra pavada, de quitarme la angustia que me ha dejado la escena de la guerra. Qué tonta, soy, me digo, si ella hace cuatro años que es vegetariana. Por qué no pude ir a buscar alguna planta que hubiese quedado viva en un jardín. Cómo se me ocurre traerle carne de perro. Ahí mismo, en lo de Berta, debe haber aloe, y el árbol de paltas, pero cómo no me di cuenta, y pienso si en una guerra dejarán en pie los árboles frutales, o también los derribarán como a enemigos. Esas son las cosas que pienso por las noches, ridículas, complicadas, siempre con final feliz.

Vuelvo a mirar sus ojos verdes. Encrespados.

-Decí algo- grita ella. La boca asqueada. -¡Hablá de una vez, carajo. ¡Qué te quedás así!

Tengo las manos calientes. Ganas de pegarle un cachetazo. Pero me contengo. Alguna vez lo hice y ella me golpeó más fuerte. No quiero volver a pasar por eso. No sé cómo hacerla callar.

-Andate a la mierda si querés- tengo la voz ronca, débil. Ella asiente, victoriosa. Tengo que detenerla. -Pero sabé que si atravesás esa puerta no vas a volver a entrar- le grito.

Parece que mi amenaza dio resultado. Me mira incrédula. Descolocada. Estoy por alzar los brazos para apretarla contra mí. Pero ella descubre mi gesto y sonríe. Con odio. Se agacha. La veo agarrar el bolso y darme la espalda. El pelo rubio y largo le cae sobre los hombros. Sin detenerse abre la puerta y se va. El portazo queda haciendo eco hasta apagarse. Me apoyo en el sillón. Lenta y silenciosa me deslizo hasta que las rodillas tocan el suelo. Ya no hay nada entre nosotras, me digo. Pero quizá esta noche pueda imaginarla junto a mí.

## Bosnia on the Pillow

for Rocío

She's talking to me. She's very close. I can smell tobacco on her. She asks something and stares at me. But she gives me no time to answer and she keeps talking. I barely listen to what she says. I see her wide eyes, fixed on me. Two green pools on a windy day. Stormy pools. When she was a baby and until she turned one year old, it seemed her eyes would always be blue. I even made up a song to the tune of *Run run se fue pa'l norte*<sup>1</sup> that said: *Ay qué linda que es mi Jazmín, con sus ojos celestinos*<sup>2</sup>. Blonde and blue eyes said the nurses at the clinic. Who's this little doll's mother? Sometimes, at night, I remember this lullaby and I think to myself: What a strange idea: singing to a baby to the tune of this Violeta Parra's song. And I think of other tunes that could have been useful. At night I always think nonsense. Thoughts that are useless, I mean. I should be thinking who I could borrow money from to pay the rent, or how to tell Zelma that, for the time being, I will not need her help, until things get better, I mean, or a practical low budget menu or something like that; I make up nonsense, instead. Last night, for example, I imagined a tsunami devastated our land. I know we don't live in a land of volcanoes. The worst that can happen to us is a *sudestada*<sup>3</sup>. And that's in winter, when the east wind blows. But last night I imagined that tsunami was coming. And I saw myself clinging to a lamp post underwater with all my might because with my other arm I was holding her tight by the arm. I had been able to see her under the muddy water, her blonde hair waving about her like a mermaid's. The current was dragging her away. I grasped her arm and shouted: "I've got you, baby, I've got you!" And little by little I pulled her to me, it was hard because the water beat on us and my daughter's big now, and tall, not like me. My body shivered, and she shivered too, and I could finally hold her close; and like a monkey with her baby I climbed up the lamp post until I saw the sky and got my head out of the water and she gasped for air. And we stayed together until it was over. We had been saved. Mum, she called me, like she used to call me when she was a baby. Mum. And she cried. And I said to her: Don't speak, my love, try to breathe. But it was me crying last night when I was thinking all these things, I don't know what's the point of my making up this nonsense if it troubles me so. And I have to keep on with my own nonsense if I want to fall asleep. What was that lamp post doing there, I wonder, if there have been no more lamp posts in the street for years now. Or are there? I am filled with doubts. And then I start wondering where the lamp posts in our

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<sup>1</sup> Run Run went up North.

<sup>2</sup> Oh how lovely my little Jazmín is, with her eyes so blue.

<sup>3</sup> River flood

block are. And I feel like going out in the street, in my nightgown, to check where the lampposts are - if there are any left - as if our luck was closely linked to them, my luck and my daughter's. That's the way it is. I can't help it. It happens every night, when I close my eyes. The sounds fade away and only the cats move in the darkness, tiptoeing on the rooftops like thieves. When my husband left me, I was terrified of noises on the roof. With time I got used to it, it's just noises. Sounds that keep me company until dawn, while I wait for her, for the door to open and the sound of her rubber soles in the hallway on her way to the bathroom, the light in her bedroom turns on and then the door that closes.

Some days I just want my bedtime to come. I long to turn off the lamps, close the shutters and get into bed. What would happen, I wonder, if catastrophe fell upon us, a war like Bosnia's, let's say. Our neighbours or our friends turned into enemies overnight. The border could be around the corner, in Berta's kiosk. Everything turned to rubble. No green plants or coloured curtains or furniture, all grey, even the sky. The air heavy with gunpowder and filth. I imagine we lock ourselves in the cellar. Where I keep empty boxes, paint cans, old toys. The cellar is less than three feet wide - that will certainly occupy my thoughts later - we would never manage to cram ourselves into a three-foot space, no way she would fit in there with her long legs. But in this war of mine the cellar is our hiding place when the soldiers come. Jazmín and I hug and we close our eyes when we listen to the footsteps over our heads, dust falls through the floorboards with each footstep, dust on our dry hair, on our heads swarming with lice, because when there's war, there's lice, and typhus, and our mouths are chapped and dry with thirst, like my grandmother's when she had to drag the cart to Ljubljana, fifteen years old, she was, and the thirst burned her body when she drank from the ditch. Typhus, malaria, deliriums in four languages in a field hospital by the road. That's why I don't let Jazmín drink water from the ditch; because I know that during war water gets contaminated. We don't complain, her and me, we hold each other tight, under the dining room floor and we are no longer afraid of spider webs that caress our faces when the soldiers' footsteps make them swing. We have heard the terrible things that happen to lonely women, more so if they are beautiful, Jazmín is beautiful, she's always been. Who's this little doll's mother, said the nurses and the doctors when she was born. Maybe when the soldiers leave, when silence falls, we open the trap to the cellar and share the cigarette butt they have thrown to the floor, trodden by a muddy boot. In the quietness I hear her stomach rumble. And I think I have to get her something to eat. Something, I think. I have to get my daughter something to eat. And I remember Berta said, a week ago, that she had to kill her dog and bury it in her garden. A week is not such a long time, I take heart as I listen to the curfew sound, and a chopper's rattle, and, further on, close to the English school, the screams of the people that have been found. In the half light she looks at me with her green eyes barely lit by the burning butt. I'll get some food, I say. And I give her instructions in case I don't come back, but I know I have to come back, because she's my darling and I leave her behind in the nest. Who has seen

a bird neglecting her chick? And then I picture myself running down the street like I used to do as a girl, when I played hide and seek, and touched home base, nobody was better than me at that, home base; I run and dodge piles of rubble, shattered glass and roof tiles, walls destroyed by bombings, I run and turn the corner, I see the breach in Berta's wall, I look for the mound of removed earth, I kneel on the mud and start digging, and I shiver all over, my hands shiver, my body, I think my heart will burst when I hit something soft and hairy, I need a knife, I say to myself, and then I am in the cellar again. You're back, mum! She says and she doesn't care about the stink of dead meat. What did you expect, honey, I say, and we chew and laugh, tiny bits cut with the penknife. Swallowing them without water gets tough, but they ease the pain. She falls asleep afterwards, in my arms that cradle her, in an awkward position due to the lack of space, but we're together, I can smell her hair close to my mouth, and her slow satisfied breathing. I have been able to feed her one more day, thanks God. Like when she was a baby and had put so much weight on only by breastfeeding. And once again I feel my tears falling down my dry face to her smooth teenage forehead. I search for the handkerchief under the pillow and noisily blow my nose. I tug it in my nightgown's sleeve and look at the watch. A quarter to five and she is not home yet. I try to amuse myself somehow, ease the anguish triggered in me by the war scene. How foolish I am. She's been a vegetarian now for four years. Why couldn't I look for some plant left alive in one of the gardens. How could I think of feeding her dog's meat. Right there, at Berta's, there must be an aloe plant, and the avocado tree, but I didn't realize, and I wonder if in a war they spare fruit trees, or if they knock them down like enemies. Those are the things I think of at night, ridiculous, complicated, with a happy ending always.

I look at her green eyes again. Stormy.

"Say something", she screams. Her mouth curled with loathing. "Speak up, shit! What the hell are you doing staring at me like that?!"

My hands are hot. I want to smack her. But I don't. I once did and she hit me back harder. I don't want to go through that again. I don't know how to make her stop.

"Go to hell if you want to", my voice is hoarse, weak. She nods, she won. I have to stop her. "But if you go through that door, don't ever come back", I shout.

Apparently my threat has been effective. She looks at me in disbelief. Shocked. I am about to raise my arms and hug her close. But she foresees my move and smiles. Full of hatred. She bends down. I see her pick up her bag and turn around. The long blonde hair falls down her back over the shoulders. Without stopping she opens the door and slams it behind her. The echo rings in the air and fades away. I lean on the sofa. Slowly and silently I let myself go until my knees touch the ground. There's nothing left between us, I say. But maybe tonight I will be able to imagine she's close to me.

*Translated by Inés Garland*



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Víctor Rodríguez Núñez, rojen v Havani leta 1955, je kubanski pesnik, novinar, literarni kritik, prevajalec in humanist. Je pomočnik urednika za pesniško serijo Earthworks Series za založbo Salt v Veliki Britaniji in izredni profesor hispanistike na Kenyon Collegeu v ZDA. Objavil je več pesniških zbirk: *Cayama* (1979), *Con raro olor a mundo* (S čudnim vonjem sveta, 1981), *Noticario del solo* (Novice osamljenca, 1987), *Los poemas de nadie y otros poemas* (Nikogaršnje pesmi in druge pesmi, 1994), *El último a la feria* (Zadnji na sejmu, 1995), *Oración inconclusa* (Nedokončana molitev, 2000). Med njegova najnovejša dela pa sodijo *Con raro olor a mundo: Primera antología* (S čudnim vonjem sveta: Prva antologija, 2004), *Actas de medianoche I* (Polnočni zbornik I, 2006) in *Actas de medianoche II* (Polnočni zbornik II, 2007). Njegove pesmi so našle mesto v mnogih uglednih ameriških literarnih revijah, pesniška zbirka *Ceniza de Infinito* (Pepel neskončnosti, 2008) je pred kratkim izšla pri založbi Arc v Veliki Britaniji. Rodríguez Núñez je kot novinar in urednik delal pri *El Caimán Barbudo*, eni izmed vodilnih kulturnih revij na Kubi. Med drugim je bil tudi urednik treh antologij, ki so definirale pesnike njegove generacije, urejal je različne izdaje s komentarji, pisal uvodnike in eseje o špansko govorečih ameriških pesnikih. Za svoja dela je prejel številne pomembne nagrade, med drugim nagrado David (Kuba, 1980), nagrado plural (Mehika, 1983), nagrado EDUCA (Kostarika, 1995), nagrado renacimiento (Španija, 2000) in nagrado leonor (Španija, 2006).

Víctor Rodríguez Núñez, born in Havana in 1955, is a Cuban poet, journalist, literary critic, translator and scholar. He is associate editor of the Earthworks Series for Salt, UK and Associate Professor of Spanish at Kenyon College, USA. Rodríguez Núñez has published various poetry collections: *Cayama* (1979), *Con raro olor a mundo* (With A Strange Scent of World, 1981), *Noticario del solo* (Lonely Man's News, 1987), *Los poemas de nadie y otros poemas* (Nobody's Poems and Other Poems, 1994), *El último a la feria* (The Last to the Fair, 1995), *Oración inconclusa* (Ceaseless Prayer, 2000). His latest works include: *Con raro olor a mundo: Primera antología* (With A Strange Scent of World: First Anthology, 2004), *Actas de medianoche I* (Midnight Minutes I, 2006), and *Actas de medianoche II* (Midnight Minutes II, 2007). His poems have appeared in various prestigious American literary journals, and his poetry collection, *Ceniza de Infinito* (*The Infinite's Ash*, 2008) was recently released in the UK by Arc. Rodríguez Núñez wrote for and was editor of *El Caimán Barbudo*, one of Cuba's leading cultural magazines. He has also compiled three anthologies that have defined his generation of poets, and published various critical editions, introductions, and essays on Spanish American poets. His works have received numerous important awards, including the David Prize (Cuba, 1980), the Plural Prize (Mexico, 1983), the EDUCA Prize (Costa Rica, 1995), the Renacimiento Prize (Spain, 2000) and the Leonor Prize (Spain, 2006).

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# Víctor Rodríguez Núñez



Foto © Katherine M. Hedeem



## Začetek

Ne vem kje sem hodil  
a prispel sem  
Na ta čudni kraj  
brez hiš in pokrajine  
Ta goli kraj  
s kamenjem na duši  
kjer se poraja svet

Morda tudi ti prideš  
po tej poti  
V tem življenju naveličanem  
gotovosti in uspehov  
naju družijo le pomota  
Poezija je kraljestvo tistih  
ki se motijo

## Pesniška umetnost?

*za Mario Santucho in Víctorja Casausa*

Podedoval sem kratkovidne oči  
predolg nos  
vedno priprte ustnice  
žimaste lase  
in še telo upokojenega atleta

Tudi slabo voljo mojega očeta  
bolečino moje matere  
sumljivo pego moje babice  
ledvične krče vseh skupaj  
in celo pogosto vročino mojega sina

Razlogi ki me silijo  
da imam o lepoti slabo mnenje

## Entrada

No sé por qué camino  
pero he llegado aquí  
Hasta este raro sitio  
sin casas ni paisaje  
Este lugar desnudo  
de las piedras al alma  
donde el mundo germina

Quizás también tú llegas  
siguiendo ese camino  
En esta vida harta  
de aciertos y certezas  
sólo el error nos une  
La poesía es el reino  
de los equivocados

## ¿Arte poética?

*Para María Santucho y Víctor Casaus*

Saqué unos ojos miopes  
una nariz bisiesta  
unos labios que no puedo juntar  
un pelo de camello  
más un cuerpo de atleta retirado

También el mal genio de mi padre  
el dolor en el lado de mi madre  
el lunar sospechoso de mi abuela  
el cólico nefrítico de todos  
y hasta las fiebres constantes de mi hijo

Razones que me obligan  
a tener mala opinión de la belleza

## Geslo

Ob prihodu na Baltik  
te pričakajo galebi

Voda bo temačna  
kakor tvoje sanje brez poletja  
obala bo svetla  
prav nič po moje

Tam ob prihodu na Baltik  
sem jih zapustil

Nebo bo blizu  
z mojimi prsti se ga boš skoraj lahko dotaknila  
ladja bo vedno dlje  
prav nič po tvoje

Shrani geslo  
Vsako dobro srce je daljnogled

## Contraseña

A la entrada del Báltico  
te esperan las gaviotas

El agua será oscura  
como uno de tus sueños sin verano  
La costa será clara  
                                  como nada de mí

A la entrada del Báltico  
Allí las dejé yo

El cielo estará cerca  
casi podrás tocarlo con mis dedos  
El barco se alejará  
                                  como nada de ti

Guarda la contraseña  
Todo buen corazón es un prismático







## Confirmaciones

*Para José Pérez Olivares*

El menor de mis hijos  
  que aún no sabe su nombre  
ni caminar derecho  
a medianoche  
  en la más alta fiebre  
  canta

Es doble este camino  
  La razón y la fe  
Tengo fe en la razón  
  —en la razón impura  
Comprendo las razones de la fe  
—la fe de los herejes  
Entre el hecho y la duda cruzan ambos caminos  
Y al partir regresamos

Danza mi rosa ebria  
  desprevenida  
sin vergüenza del sol  
La olvido en el sendero  
  que comienza en tus manos  
y sin más vueltas me lleva hasta mí

Las preguntas son tigres  
  que acechan junto al río  
Las respuestas  
  ciervos inalcanzables  
Mi mucha sed te ahogue  
Y náufrago en el polvo  
  espera cualquier cosa  
menos resignación







## Madrid Nocturne

Tonight promises me nothing  
its color is nevermore

My bones  
    beginning to ache  
drenched in insomnia tell me

With night's fingers I touch you  
clouds without breasts  
    mouthless clarity

And unkempt stars  
    climb  
    my pillow

Now the night  
    oh pure lightning flash  
overflows for me  
And even our feet  
    wild stars  
want to leave their prints on the sky

Night opens her legs  
and I offer her  
    my fermented dream  
Night tastes of never  
    but smells of tomorrow





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MLADA VILENICA 2009  
YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2009

Nagrajenka 9. mlade vilenice v skupini od 6 do 10 let je Jana Stekar, učenka 1. razreda Osnovne šole Alojza Gradnika Števerjan, Italija, za pesem *Pikapolonica*.

*Čeprav bi pričakovali, da otroške pesmi vsebujejo veliko igre, smeha, vedrine in brezskrbnosti, pa se je letošnja komisija za nagrado mlada vilenica znašla v svetu, zelo podobnem svetu odraslih, kar se kaže predvsem v rimi, ki si podreja pesem in pesnika, namesto obratno. Po drugi strani pa je prijetno presenetila uporaba svetlih barv ter izrazov navdušenja in spogledovanja s pomladjo.*

*Komisija se je tokrat odločila za igrivo, otroško pristno in preprosto pesem z naslovom Pikapolonica. Mlada pesnica Jana Stekar se ne obremenuje s tem, kaj o njej menijo njeni domači, saj jo zanima le igra. In v to igro s stopnjevanjem imena vključi tudi bralca. Največjo sporočilno moč ima prav gotovo zadnji verz »srečna sem, ko se igram«. To je pravo opozorilo odraslim, da ne pozabijo, kaj otroci poleg ljubezni najbolj potrebujejo.*

## Pikapolonica

Mama pravi, da sem pika,  
očka pravi, da sem poka,  
bratec pravi, da sem pikapoka.  
Jaz pa vem, da sem pikapolonica.  
Rdeča sem, črne pike imam;  
srečna sem, ko se igram.

The winner of the 9th Young Vilenica Award in the 6–10 year age category is Jana Stekar, a first-grader from the Alojz Gradnik Elementary School at S. Floriano del Collio/Števerjan, Italy, for the poem *Ladybird*.

*Although children's poems might be expected to bubble with play, laughter, buoyancy, lightheartedness, this year's Young Vilenica Award committee encountered an adult-like world – a feature conveyed especially through the rhyme subordinating the poem and poet rather than the other way round. A delightful surprise, on the other hand, was the use of bright tones, expressions of zest, and flirting with spring.*

*This year's choice is the truly playful, childlikely genuine and simple poem Ladybird. The young poet, Jana Stekar, does not worry about her family's opinions of her: all she is interested in is play, into which she draws the reader as well by gradually unfolding her name. The salient line is certainly the concluding "When I play I'm really glad" – an apt warning to adults not to forget what children, in addition to love, need most.*

## Ladybird

Mummy says that I'm a lay,  
Daddy says that I'm a dee,  
Brother says that I'm a lady.  
But I know that I'm a ladybird.  
I am red, my spots are black;  
When I play, I'm really glad.

*Translated by Nada Grošelj*



Nagrajenka 9. mlade vilenice v skupini od 11 do 14 let je Gaja Rupnik Caruso, učenka 8. c razreda Osnovne šole Idrija, za pesem *Pogovor dveh kradljivcev*.

*Letos je v zraku ljubezen. To je glavna tema večine pesmi mladih pesnikov. Ljubezen pa ni več otroško pristna in razigrana, pač pa gre že za ljubezen, obarvano z grenkobo, ki jo prinašajo izkušnje odraslosti. Tiste pesmi, ki še ohranjajo v sebi otroški svet, so tudi najbolj prepričljive, ker zrcalijo mlade avtorje. Tudi v tej starostni skupini presenečajo prisotnost rime, ki je včasih nasilna, ustalfjene besedne zveze in ozka tematika. Tu pa tam se razkrije tudi spogledovanje z znanimi slovenskimi pesniki.*

*Tudi Pogovor dveh kradljivcev je ljubezenska pesem. Vendar je k tej tematiki mlada pesnica Gaja Rupnik Caruso tako po vsebini kot tudi oblikovno pristopila nekoliko drugače, bolj sveže in igriivo. Ljubezen v njeni pesmi se ne zaključi z begom, ki vodi v zagrenjenost, pač pa s pogovorom. Mlada pesnica nam sporoča, da pogovor pomeni rast. Dvogovor, ki ga pesnica uporablja, deluje sveže in bralcu se zdi, kot da gre za dogajanje, ki poteka pred njegovimi očmi. In komu krademo? Najbolj sami sebi.*

## Pogovor dveh kradljivcev

»Kradeš! Vedno si kradla ...  
lepe trenutke,  
zasanjane noči,  
nenadzorovan polet.

Ukradla si poljub,  
nežen, a prebežen ...

Prevečkrat si kradla!«

Vprašal jo je: »Zakaj?«  
Ni ga pogledala,  
a je potihlo rekla:

»Ljubezen,  
nenadzorovanost, ki leti.

Nikoli ti nisem kradla!  
Vse sem ti dala:  
lepe trenutke,  
zasanjane noči,  
nenadzorovan polet ...  
... poljub ...

Kradel si samo ti!  
Sam sebi ...«

The winner of the 9th Young Vilenica Award in the 11–14 year age category is Gaja Rupnik Caruso, an eighth-grader from the Elementary School at Idrija, for the poem *The Talk of Two Thieves*.

*Love is in the air this year. It runs through the verse of most young poets. But rather than childlikely genuine and playful, it is tinged with a bitterness brought on by adult experience. The most convincing poems are those which still maintain a children's world, thus mirroring their young authors. This age category, too, displays a surprising use of – sometimes forced – rhyme, set phrases, and narrow subject-matter, at times echoing well-known Slovene poets.*

*The Talk of Two Thieves is a love poem, too. But this subject is approached by the young poet, Gaja Rupnik Caruso, with a certain difference in both content and form: more freshly and playfully. In her poem, love does not end in running away and a bitter aftertaste, but with a talk. The young poet's message is that talking means growing. The dialogue form has an effect of freshness, as if the event were taking place before the reader's very eyes. And who do we steal from? Most of all, from ourselves.*

## The Talk of Two Thieves

“You steal! You have always stolen ...  
beautiful moments,  
dreamy nights,  
unconstrained flight.

You've stolen a kiss,  
sweet but too fleeting ...

You've stolen too often!”

He asked her: “Why?”  
Not looking at him,  
she said softly:

“Love,  
a lack of constraint that can fly.

I've never stolen from you!  
I gave you everything:  
beautiful moments,  
dreamy nights,  
unconstrained flight ...  
... a kiss ...

The only one stealing was you!  
From yourself ...”

*Translated by Nada Grošelj*



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DOSEDANJI UDELEŽENCI IN NAGRAJENCI  
VILENIC / PREVIOUS PARTICIPANTS AND  
VILENICA PRIZE WINNERS

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1986 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

FULVIU TOMIZZI

Utemeljitev nagrade: Jože Pirjevec

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1986* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

PÉTER ESTERHÁZY, REINHARD P. GRUBER, INGRAM HARTINGER, ZBIGNIEW HERBERT, GERT HOFMANN, TADEUSZ KONWICKI, LOJZE KOVAČIČ, SLAVKO MIHALIČ, GERHARD ROTH, MILAN RÚFUS, EVA SCHMIDT, JAN SKÁCEL, WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA, FULVIO TOMIZZA, ISTVAN VAS, IGOR ZIDIĆ

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1987 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

PETRU HANDKEJU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Erik Prunč

KRISTAL VILENICE 1987 – GREGOR STRNIŠA

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1987* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

IVAN ARALICA, DEZSŐ TANDORI, ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI, LÚBOMÍR FELDEK, CARMELA FRATANONIO, PETER HANDKE, BOHUMIL HRABAL, GEDA JACOLUTTI, DRAGO JANČAR, ALFRED KOLLERITSCH, RYSZARD KRYNICKI, ANDRZEJ KUŚNIEWICZ, GIULIANA MORANDINI, ÁGNES NEMES NÁGY, JAN SKÁCEL, GREGOR STRNIŠA, WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA, DOMINIK TATARKA, VENO TAUFER, PAVLE UGRINOV, ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI, VITOMIL ZUPAN

Disput: CLAUDIO MAGRIS: EWALDOVA BAKLA / EWALD'S TORCH

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1988 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

PÉTRU ESTERHÁZYJU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Jože Hradil

KRISTAL VILENICE 1988 – EWA LIPSKA

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1988* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

BIRGITTA ARENS, FRANCESCO BURDIN, SÁNDOR CSÓÓRI, JAROSLAV ČEJKA, MIROSLAV ČRVENKA, MILAN DEKLEVA, DANIJEL DRAGOJEVIĆ, BENEDIKT DYRLICH, VLADO GOTOVAC, MARIAN GRZEŚCZAK, KLAUS HOFFER, ANTON HYKISCH, GERT JONKE, LÁSZLÓ LATOR, EWA LIPSKA, MARCELIJUS MARTINAITIS, VESNA PARUN, ERICA PEDRETTI, RICHARD PIETRASS, ILMA RAKUSA, CHRISTOPH RANSMAYR, RENZO ROSSO, JAROSLAW MAREK RYMKIEWICZ, RYSZARD SCHUBERT, TOMAŽ ŠALAMUN, RUDI ŠELIGO, JOSEF ŠIMON, ALEKSANDAR TIŠMA, JUDITA VAIČIUNAITE, TOMAS VENCLOVA, GIORGIO VOGHERA, JOSEF WINKLER, DANE ZAJC, ŠTEFAN ŽARÝ

Disput: CZESŁAW MIŁOSZ: ČETRTA UČNA URA / THE FOURTH TEACHING LESSON

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1989 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

JANU SKÁČLU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Albina Lipovec

KRISTAL VILENICE 1989 – DUBRAVKA UGREŠIČ

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1989* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

H. C. ARTMANN, JAN BENO, VOLKER BRAUN, GINO BRAZZODURO, JAN BUZÁSSY, PAOLA CAPRIOLO, CSOÓRI SÁNDOR, BOGUMIL ĐUZEL, MIROSLAV DUDOK, PETAR GUDELJ, CHRISTOPH HEIN, MILAN JESIĆ, GERT JONKE, EUGENIUSZ KABATC, DANILO KIŠ, IVAN KLÍMA, JURIJ KOCH, KAJETAN KOVIČ, GABRIEL LAUB, FLORJAN LIPUŠ, MESZÖLY MIKLOS, EMIL MIKULENAITE, ADOLPH MUSCHG, TADEUSZ NOWAK, JOSIP OSTI, TONE PAVČEK, KORNELIJUS PLATELIS, INGRID PUGANIGG, MIROSLAV PUTIK, ALOJZ REBULA, CARLO SGORLON, WERNER SOLLNER, ANDRZEJ SZCZYPIORSKI, ANTONIO TABUCCHI, DUBRAVKA UGREŠIČ, MIROSLAV VALEK, DRAGAN VELIKIĆ, LIGIO ZANINI

Disput: GYÖRGY KONRAD: S SREDINE / FROM THE CENTRE

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1990 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

TOMASU VENCLOVI

Utemeljitev nagrade: Veno Taufer

KRISTAL VILENICE 1990 – ALEŠ DEBELJAK

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1990* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

FODOR ANDRÁS, MIROSLAV KOŠUTA, ALEKSANDRA BERKOVÁ, STELIO MATTIONI, ANDREJ BLATNIK, LIBUŠE MONÍKOVÁ, LEON BRIEDIS, PÉTER NÁDAS, MIROSLAV ČERVENKA, GÁSPÁR NAGY, ALEŠ DEBELJAK, BORIS PAHOR, NEDJELJKO FABRIO, MIODRAG PAVLOVIĆ, BRANKO GRADIŠNIK, GIORGIO PRESSBURGER, NIKO GRAFENAUER, KNUTS SKUJENIEKS, REINHARDT P. GRUBER, JOŽE SNOJ, MAJA HADERLAP, EVA SCHMIDT, PAWEŁ HUELLE, JÁN JÓSEF SZCZEPAŃSKI, ANTON HYKISCH, ANDRZEJ SZCZYPIORSKI, EUGENIUS IGNATAVIČIUS, SUSANNA TAMARO, ANTANAS JONYNAS, LADISLAV TAŽKÝ, LUBOMIR JURÍK, GORAN TRIBUSON, DIANA KEMPF, BOŽENA TRILECOVÁ, MICHAEL KÖHLMEIER, LUDVÍK VACULÍK, TOMAS SAULIUS KONDROTAS, JOACHIM WALTER, GYÖRGY KONRÁD, ANKA ŽAGAR

Disput: VENO TAUFER: IZZIV ALI ZGAGA? / CHALLENGE OR HASSLE?

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1991 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

ZBIGNIEWU HERBERTU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Niko Jež

KRISTAL VILENICE 1991 – GRENDEL LAJOS

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1991* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

LADISLAV BALLEK, ANDREJ BRVAR, LENKA CHYTILOVÁ, HEINZ CZECHOWSKI, EÖRSI ISTVÁN, GRENDEL LAJOS, FABJAN HAFNER, RETO HÄNNY, IVANKA HERGOLD, ANDREJ HIENG, ALOIS

HOTSCHNIG, VIT'AZOSLAV HRONEC, JÓKAI ANNA, DONALDAS KAJOKAS, MILAN KLEČ, MIRKO KOVAČ, LOJZE KRAKAR, VÍT KREMLIČKA, BRONISLAW MAJ, LAURA MARCHIG, ŠTEFAN MORAVČÍK, LUKO PALJETAK, OSKAR PASTIOR, JURE POTOVAR, HANS RAIMUND, ROLANDAS RASTAUSKAS, SOMLYÓ GYÖRGY, MARIO SUŠKO, IVO SVETINA, SUSANNA TAMARO, ARVO VALTON, VÁRADY SZABOLCS, BITE VILIMAITÉ, ALENA VOSTRÁ, JOACHIM WALTHER, ERNEST WICHNER, JOSEF WINKLER

Disput: VLADO GOTOVAC: SKICA O ATLASU / SKETCH OF THE ATLAS

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1992 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

MILANU KUNDERI

Utemeljitev nagrade: Jaroslav Skrušný

KRISTAL VILENICE 1992 – ENDRE KUKORELLY

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1992* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

ALEXANDRA BERKOVÁ, VYTAUTAS BLOZÉ, BRANKO ČEGEC, SLAVENKA DRAKULIĆ, GUSTAV JANUŠ, DUŠAN JOVANOVIĆ, FERENC JUHÁSZ, RYSZARD KAPUŚCIŃSKI, MARIE-THÉRÈSE KERSCHBAUMER, EFTIM KLETNIKOV, KRZYSZTOF KOEHLER, UWE KOLBE, MIRKO KOVAČ, ENDRE KUKORELLY, KRZYSZTOF LISOWSKI, DRAHOSLAV MACHALA, VYTAUTAS MARTINKUS, IVAN MINATTI, LIBUŠE MONÍKOVÁ, BORIS A. NOVAK, PARTI NAGY LAJOS, AARNE PUU, GERHARD ROTH, ŠTEFAN STRÁŽAY, JANA ŠTROBLOVÁ, MARJAN TOMŠIČ, MILOSLAV TOPINKA, DRAGAN VELIKIĆ, JANI VIRK, PETER WATERHOUSE

Disput: EVGEN BAVČAR: UNIVERZALIZMI IN NJIHOVA FACIES HYPOCRITICA / UNIVERSALISMS AND THEIR FACIES HYPOCRITICA

PÉTER ESTERHÁZY: POSTMODERNI BARBARIZEM ALI EVROPA BREZ LASTNOSTI / POSTMODERN BARBARISM OR EUROPE WITH NO CHARACTERISTICS

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1993 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

LIBUŠI MONÍKOVÍ

Utemeljitev nagrade: Neva Šlibar

KRISTAL VILENICE 1993 – FRANCESCO MICIELI

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1993* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

BALLA ZSÓFIA, JÓZEF BARAN, ROBERTO DEDENARO, HELMUT EINSENDLE, ALOJZ IHAN, DŽEVAD KARAHASAN, MATJAZH KOCBEK, VLASTIMIL KOVALČÍK, MARKO KRAVOS, ZVONKO MAKOVIČ, MÁRTON LÁSZLÓ, ROBERT MENASSE, FRANCESCO MICIELI, MARJETA NOVAK KAJZER, PAUL PARIN, DENIS PONIŽ, DIANA PRANCKIETYTĖ, CARLO SGORLON, ARVO VALTON, MICHAL VIEWEGH, PIOTR WOJCIECHOWSKI, IFIGENIJA ZAGORIČNIK SIMONOVIC

Disput: GEORGES-ARTHUR GOLDSCHMIDT, VLADO GOTOVAC, LÁSZLÓ KRASNÁ-HORKAI, ANTONIN J. LIEHM: EDVARD KOCBEK: PALICA / EDVARD KOCBEK: THE STICK

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1994 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

JOSIPU OSTIJU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Denis Poniž

KRISTAL VILENICE 1994 – SLAVKO MIHALIČ

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1994* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

MARJORIE AGOSÁN, EDOARDO ALBINATI, ÁRNI BERGMANN, MILOŠ BIEDRZYCKI, CHRISTA DERICUM, JANKO FERK, ANTONIO FIAN, ANTANAS GALLIUS, VLADO GOTOVAC, EGYD GSTÄTTNER, GUNNAR D. HANSSON, DANIEL HEVIER, VIT'AZOSLAV HRONEC, PAWEŁ HUELLE, GORAN IGNJATIJE JANKOVIČ, RICHARD JACKSON, DŽEVAD KARAHASAN, LUBOR KASAL, THOMAS KLING, MAJDA KNE, MIKLAVŽ KOMELJ, JURGIS KUNČINAS, FERI LAINŠČEK, PHILLIS LEVIN, SVETLANA MAKAROVIČ, GIUSEPPE MARIUZ, MARNO JÁNOS, MATEJA MATEVSKI, ANDREJ MEDVED, SLAVKO MIHALIČ, DUŠAN MITANA, GRZEGORZ MUSIAŁ, JUAN OCTAVIO PRENZ, ALEKSANDER PERŠOLJA, PETRI GYÖRGY, LENKA PROCHÁZKOVÁ, GIANFRANCO SODOMACO, MATTHEW SWEENEY, TOMAŽ ŠALAMUN, IGOR ŠKAMPERLE, JACHÝM TOPOL, URS WIDMER, UROŠ ZUPAN

Disput: ALAIN FINKIELKRAUT: INTELEKTUALCI, POLITIKA IN VOJNA / INTELLECTUALS, POLITICS AND WAR

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1995 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

ADOLFU MUSCHGU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Vesna Kondrič Horvat

KRISTAL VILENICE 1995 – MARZANNA BOGUMIŁA KIELAR

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1995* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

JOVICA AČIN, KURT AEBLI, MARJORIE AGOSÁN, EUGENIJUS ALIŠANKA, MARCIN BARAN, ÁRNI BERGMANN, KRZYSTOF BIELECKI, DARIUSZ BITTNER, LOREDANA BOGLIUN, BERTA BOJETU-BOETA, TEREZA BOUČKOVÁ, LUCAS CEJPEK, RÓZA DOMAŠCYN, ERIK GROCH, GUNNAR D. HANSSON, NORA IKSTENA, RICHARD JACKSON, MARZANNA BOGUMIŁA KIELAR, RADE KRSTIĆ, PHILLIS LEVIN, TONKO MAROEVIĆ, MANFRED MOSER, DANIELIUS MUŠINSKAS, JUAN OCTAVIO PRENZ, RADOVAN PAVLOVSKI, TONE PERČIČ, SIBILA PETLEVSKI, RAOUL SCHROTT, ZORKO SIMČIČ, RUDOLF SLOBODA, ANDRZEJ STASIUK, MATTHEW SWEENEY, TOMAŽ ŠALAMUN, JÁN ŠTRASSER, TÁKÁCS ZSUZSA, TANDORI DEZSŐ, JAROMÍR TYPLT, MILOŠ VACÍK, SAŠA VEGRI, PAVEL VILIKOVSKÝ, ERNEST WICHNER, CIRIL ZLOBEC, VLADO ŽABOT, ALDO ŽERJAL

Disput: LOJZE KOVAČIČ: ALI PISATELJ POTREBUJE SVET, KI NJEGA NE POTREBUJE? / DOES A WRITER NEED THE WORLD WHICH DOESN'T NEED HIM?

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1996 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

ADAMU ZAGAJEWSKEMU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Niko Jež

KRISTAL VILENICE 1996 – KAĆA ČELAN



V publikaciji "Vilenica 1996" in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

LOTHAR BAIER, ULDIS BERZINŠ, PETR BORKOVEC, MAGDA CARNECI, KAROL CHMEL, CLAUDE MICHEL CLUNY, BRANKO ČEGEC, KAČA ČELAN, ZITA ČEPAITÉ, STEFANO DELL'ANTONIO, LJILJANA DIRJAN, DUŠAN DUŠEK, MILAN ĐORĐEVIĆ, MENNA ELFYN, ANN JÄDERLUND, HÁY JÁNOS, ANTANAS A. JONYNAS, JULIAN KORNHAUSER, ANDRÁS FERENC KOVÁCS, VLADIMIR KOVAČIČ, FRIEDERIKE KRETZEN, ENZO MARTINES, LYDIA MISCHKULNIG, BRANE MOZETIČ, BORIS A. NOVAK, IZTOK OSOJNIK, ŽARKO PETAN, JAMES RAGAN, ALES RAZANOV, HANSJÖRG SCHERTENLEIB, TRIINI SOOMETS, KAREL ŠIKTANC, ALEŠ ŠTEGER, THORGEIR THORGEIRSON, MAJA VIDMAR, MÁRTINŠ ZELMENIS

Disput: SVOBODA IMAGINACIJE – IMAGINACIJA SVOBODE / IMAGINATION OF FREEDOM – FREEDOM OF IMAGINATION:

BRANKO MILJKOVIĆ: POEZIJO BODO VSI PISALI / EVERYBODY WILL BE WRITING POETRY

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1997 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

PAVLU VILIKOVSKEMU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Andrej Rozman

KRISTAL VILENICE 1997 – NICOLE MÜLLER

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1997* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

BALÁZS ATTILA, PAULS BANKOVSKIS, PETERS BRÜVERIS, STEFAN CHWIN, GILLIAN CLARKE, VITTORIO COZZOLI, VERA ČEJKOVSKA, LIUTAURAS DEGĖSYS, EVALD FLISAR, FRANJO FRANČIČ, NIKO GRAFENAUER, MARIANNE GRUBER, AIME HANSEN, JOŽE HUDEČEK, HANNA JOHANSEN, VANDA JUKNAITE, MILA KAČIČ, DORIS KAREVA, ISTVÁN KOVÁCS, KRISTINA LJALJKO, PETER MACSOVSKÝ, HERBERT MAURER, CHRISTOPHER MERRILL, KATJA LANGE MÜLLER, NICOLE MÜLLER, NEŽA MAURER, EWALD MURRER, MIHA OBIT, ALBERT OSTERMAIER, PAVAO PAVLIČIĆ, DELIMIR REŠICKI, BRANE SENEGAČNIK, ABDULAH SIDRAN, ANDRZEJ SOSNOWSKI, PIERRE-YVES SOUCY, RAGNAR STRÖMBERG, OLGA TOKARCZUK, ALTA VÁŠOVÁ, ANASTASSIS VISTONITIS, ANATOL VJARCINSKI, ANDREW ZAWADCKI

Disput: DAIMON ZAPELJEVANJA / DAIMON OF TEMPTATION:

RAINER MARIA RILKE: ORFEJ • EVRIDIKA • HERMES / ORPHEUS • EURYDIKE • HERMES

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1998 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

PÉTRU NÁDASU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Orsolya Gállos

KRISTAL VILENICE 1998 – PETER SEMOLIČ

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1998* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

AMANDA AIZPURIETE, ANDREI BODIU, JAN ČIKVIN, FRANCE FORSTNERIČ, NATASZA GOERKE, FELICITAS HOPPE, ZOĚ JENNY, ARNE JOHNSSON, JIŘI KRATOCHVIL, JOSÉ JORGE LETRIA, VIDA MOKRIN PAUER, MAJA NOVAK, OSAMLJENI TEKAČI, HAVA PINHAS COEN, ILMA RAKUSA, IZET SARAJLIĆ, PETER SEMOLIČ, MARKO SOSIČ, ALVYDAS ŠLEPIKAS, SLOBODAN ŠNAJDER, PIA TAFDRUP, VENO TAUFER, LÁSZLÓ VILLÁNYI, MILAN VINCETIČ, HUGO WILLIAMS, ANDREA ZANZOTTO

Disput: TIMOTHY GARTON ASH: KONEC STOLETJA, ZAČETEK TISOČLETJA / THE END OF THE CENTURY, THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 1999 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

ERICI PEDRETTI

Utemeljitev nagrade: Vesna Kondrič Horvat  
KRISTAL VILENICE 1999 – ANGELO CHERCHI

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1999* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

NERINGA ABRUTYTE, ANGELO CHERCHI, LELO CJANTON, RICHARD FLANAGAN, MARIUS IVAŠKEVIČIUS, RICHARD JACKSON, JANA JURÁŇOVA, JAAN KAPLINSKI, DRAŽEN KATUNARIČ, TAJA KRAMBERGER, RYSZARD KRYNICKI, FRANCO LOI, MIHA MAZZINI, MILOŠ MIKELN, MIMMO MORINA, ANDREJ MOROVIČ, AMIR OR, RAZVAN PETRESCU, ASHER REICH, CHRISTOPHER REID, KATHRIN RÖGGELA, LJUDMILA RUBLJÉVSKA, ANNA SANTOLIQUIDO, ARMIN SENSER, SANDE STOJČEVSKI, VOJO ŠINDOLIČ, ADRIANA ŠKUNCA, OTTÓ TOLNAL, BOGDAN TROJAK, NENAD VELIČKOVIČ, KAREN VOLKMAN, DANE ZAJC

Disput: TRST NA ZAČETKU 20. STOLETJA: FUTURISTIČNA UTOPIJA ALI MOŽNI MODEL ZA NADNACIONALNO IN USTVARJALNO SOŽITJE V ZDRUŽENI (SREDNJI) EVROPI / TRIESTE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: A FUTURISTIC UTOPIA OR REALISTIC MODEL OF TRANS-NATIONAL AND CREATIVE COEXISTENCE OF PEOPLE IN THE COMMON (CENTRAL) EUROPE

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2000 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

SLAVKU MIHALIČU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Venó Taufer  
KRISTAL VILENICE 2000 – VÖRÖS ISTVÁN

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2000* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

ZORAN ANČEVSKI, PETER BOŽIČ, UKE BUCPAPAJ, ALEŠ ČAR, PRIMOŽ ČUČNIK, JACQUES DARRAS, LIDIJA DIMKOVSKA, MIRCEA DINESCU, MICHAEL DONHAUSER, JANIS ELSBERGS, LEOPOLD FEDERMAYER, MILA HAUGOVA, ŽELJKO IVANKOVIČ, LIUDVIKAS JAKIMAVIČIUS, URS KARPE, GEORGIU KONSTANTINOV, HASSO KRULL, GARY LAWLESS, UMBERTO MANGANI, ERIK MENKVELD, BRINA ŠVIGELJ MÉRAT, JAUME PEREZ MONTANER, IMRE ORAVECZ, SILVANA PALETTI, KATHERINE PIERPOINT, ANGELINA POLONSKAYA, MILORAD POPOVIČ, ANA RISTOVIČ, SUDEEP SEN, MARCIN SENDECKI, RONNY SOMECK, MARJAN STROJAN, YÓRGOS VEIS, VÖRÖS ISTVÁN, GERALD ZSCHORSCH

Disput: FRIEDERIKE KRETZEN: VLOGA IN POMEN LITERATURE DANES / THE MEANING AND THE ROLE OF LITERATURE TODAY

NIKO GRAFENAUER: PISATELJ V EKSCENTRU ČASA / WRITER IN THE OFF-CENTRE OF TIME

RÉGIS DEBRAY, ZDENKO VRDLOVEC: LITERATURA IN MEDIJI / LITERATURE AND THE MEDIA

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2001 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

JAANU KAPLINSKEMU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Venó Taufer

KRISTAL VILENICE 2001 – NATALKA BILOCERKIVEC

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2001* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

ESAD BABAČIĆ, MOHAMMED BENNIS, NATALKA BILOCERKIVEC, CASIMIRO de BRITO, RICHARD BURNS, PETERIS CEDRIŃŠ, DRAGAN JOVANOVIĆ DANILOV, ROBERT DAVIS, MICHEL DEGUY, FERIDA DURAKOVIĆ, ANDREAS EHIN, HANS EICHHORN, MAURO FACCIANI FILHO, MICHAEL FARRELL, GARACZI LÁSZLÓ, GREG GATENBY, ADAM GLOBUS, ADELA GRECEANU, PETR HRUŠKA, VALDO IMMOVILLI, LAURYNAS KATKUS, VLADIMIR KAVČIĆ, KATICA KJULAVKOVA, BARBARA KORUN, MARUŠA KRESE, ROMAN LUDVA, SONJA MANOJLOVIĆ, NARLAN MATOS, MARIÁN MILČÁK, BAN'YA NATSUSHI, CLAUDIO POZZANI, MATTHEW ROHRER, ERIK STINUS, FRANCO SUPINO, VIVIENNE VERMES, THOR VILHJÁLMSOON, HANS VAN DE WAARSENBERG, ADAM WIEDEMANN

Delavnice / Workshops: PREVAJANJE POEZIJE, O ESTETSKI KOMPONENTI VSAKDANJEGA ŽIVLJENJA / TRANSLATING POETRY, ON THE AESTHETIC COMPONENT OF THE EVERYDAY LIFE

MLADA VILENICA 2001 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2001: Špela Poljak

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2002 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

ANI BLANDIANI

Utemeljitev nagrade: Lidija Dimkóvska

KRISTAL VILENICE 2002 – PÁL ZÁVADA

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2002* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

JORGE ENRIQUE ADOUM, DRITĚRO AGOLLI, ANDRIY BONDAR, SNEŽANA BUKAL, BORA ĆOSIĆ, JOZEFINA DAUTBEGOVIĆ, TANJA DÜCKERS, OSWALD EGGER, CHUAH GUAT ENG, JAKŠA FIAMENGO, IOAN FLORA, JANICE GALLOWAY, SINAN GUDŽEVIĆ, MICHÁL HVORECKÝ, ANATOL KUDRAVEC, ANATOLIJ KUDRJAVICKI, LEENA LANDER, FRANCO MANZONI, MACIEJ MELECKI, DUŠAN MERC, PETR MIKEŠ, VINKO MÖDERNDORFER, HERTA MÜLLER, PATRICIA NOLAN, KNUT ØDEGÅRD, JUSTO JORGE PADRON, MONIKA VAN PAEMEL, RATIMIR PAVLOVIĆ, JANIS ROKPELNIŠ, KEN SMITH, GLEN SORESTAD, LUAN STAROVA, VIDOSAV STEVANOVIĆ, LUCIJA STUPICA, TONE ŠKRJANEC, WILLEM VAN TOORN, PÁL ZÁVADA

Delavnice / Workshops: PREVAJANJE POEZIJE, O LITERATURI NA INTERNETU, O VIZUALNI IN LITERARNI PODOBI / ON TRANSLATING POETRY, ON LITERATURE ON THE INTERNET, ON VISUAL AND LITERARY IMAGE

MLADA VILENICA 2002 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2002: Ana Šalgaj

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2003 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

MIRKU KOVAČU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Josip Osti

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2003* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

CONSTANTIN ABĂLUȚĂ, HANA ANDRONIKOVA, KOSTAS ASSIMACOPOULOS, VLADIMÍR BALLA, MAREK BIEŃCZYK, BORIS BILETIĆ, GORDANA MIHAILOVA BOŠNAKOSKA, NICOLE BROSSARD, RENÉ DE CECCATTY, PAULO DA COSTA, JOHN F. DEANE, PAULETTE DUBÉ, LYNN EMANUEL, PAVLE GORANOVIĆ, NORBERT GSTREIN, JACQUES IZOARD, RUTGER KOPLAND, HERKUS KUNČIUS, TARAS LUCHUK, DONAL McLAUGHLIN, TOM PETSINIS, VIVIENNE PLUMB, GREGOR PODLOGAR, ALEK POPOV, STELLA ROTENBERG, PAOLO RUFFILLI, FIONA SAMPSON, LJUDKA SILNOVA, ANDREJ E. SKUBIC, EIRA STENBERG, JAMES TATE, KRISZTINA TÓTH, SUZANA TRATNIK, CHRISTIAN UETZ, VLADIMIR VERTLIB, ERIKA VOUC, JULI ZEH

Delavnice / Workshops: PREVAJANJE POEZIJE, PROSTORI TRANSGRESIJE, REVIJA V REVIJI / TRANSLATING POETRY, PLACES OF TRANSGRESSION, REVIEW IN REVIEW

MLADA VILENICA 2003 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2003: Žiga Mohorič in Agata Venier

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2004 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

BRIGITTE KRONAUER

Utemeljitev nagrade: Neva Šlibar in Vesna Kondrič Horvat

KRISTAL VILENICE 2004 – VALŽINA MORT

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2004* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

JAN BALABÁN, MUHAREM BAZDULJ, ERIC BROGNIET, ȘTEFAN CARAMAN, DAŠA DRNDIĆ, MARTIN FAHRNER, EDWARD FOSTER, GEORGI GOSPODINOV, GINTARAS GRAJUSKAS, DANIELA KAPITÁŇOVÁ, VOJISLAV KARANOVIC, ARTJOM KAVALEVSKI, JURIS KRONBERGS, ALAIN LANCE, SYDNEY LEA, VASYL MAKHNO, KATARINA MARINČIĆ, TXEMA MARTÍNEZ INGLÉS, VALŽINA MORT, NOVICA NOVAKOVIĆ, GINO PASTEGA, SZILÁRD PODMANICZKY, ALEKSANDAR PROKOPIEV, BARBARA SIMONITI, PETER STEINER, ANNI SUMARI, VLADIMIR P. ŠTEFANEC, CAI TIANXIN, KRZYSZTOF VARGA, PETER WEBER, ANDREA ZANZOTTO

Prevajalska delavnica / Translation workshop: MERERID PUW DAVIES, LOUIS DE PAOR, HELENA SINERVO

Disput: PRIMER EDVARD KOČBEK IN SVOBODA IZRAŽANJA DANES / THE EDVARD KOČBEK CASE AND THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION TODAY

MLADA VILENICA 2004 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2004: Eva Rener in Brigita Berčon

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2005 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

ILMI RAKUSA in KARLU-MARKUSU GAUŠU

Utemeljivci nagrade: Vesna Kondrič Horvat in Drago Jančar

KRISTAL VILENICE 2005 – VLADAS BRAZIŪNAS

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2005* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

CARLOS A. AGUILERA, VEJJKO BARBIERI, JURAS BARISEVIČ, VLADAS BRAZIŪNAS, ANNA MARIA CARPI, THEODORA DIMOVA, JURE JAKOB, JANEZ KAJZER, VILIAM KLIMÁČEK, OLIVERA KORVEZIROVSKA, CVETKA LIPUŠ, JAAN MALIN, JIM McGARRAH, ANNA MITGUTSCH, SINEAD MORRISSEY, DUŠKO NOVAKOVIČ, GREGOR PAPEŽ, LEUNG-PING KWAN, JEAN PORTANTE, ZSUZSA RAKOVSKY, RALF SCHLATTER, STEPHANOS STEPHANIDES, FARUK ŠEHIĆ, MAGDALENA TULLI, MILOŠ URBAN, LILIANA URSU

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:

»Možnosti sobivanja različnih kultur v Evropi in proces iskanja nove kulturne paradigme« / "The Possibilities of Coexistence of Different Cultures in Europe and the Process of Searching a New Cultural Paradigm"

Moderator: Aleš Debeljak

MLADA VILENICA 2005 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2005: Rožana Švara, Eva Mohorič

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2006 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

MIODRAGU PAVLOVIČU

Utemeljitev nagrade: Venio Taufer

KRISTAL VILENICE 2006 – MOJCA KUMERDEJ

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2006* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

INGA ABELE, MICHÁL AJVAZ, VENKO ANDONOVSKI, LINDITA ARAPI, ALHIERD BACHAREVIČ, SZILÁRD BORBÉLY, YIORGOS CHOULIARAS, DAIVA ČEPAUSKAITĖ, ERVIN FRITZ, TATJANA GROMAČA, BRIAN HENRY, OTO HORVAT, NORA IUGA, IVA JEVTIĆ, EKATERINA YOSSIFOVA, ZDENKO KODRIČ, MÁRIUS KOPCSAY, MIRAN KOŠUTA, MOJCA KUMERDEJ, TERÉZIA MORA, BIRGIT MÜLLER-WIELAND, CLAUDIO POZZANI, GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK, GORAN SAMARDŽIĆ, OSTAP SLYVYNSKY, BREDA SMOLNIKAR, TÖNNU ÖNNEPALU (EMIL TODE), OLGA TOKARCZUK, MARKO URŠIČ, RAPHAEL URWEIDER

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:

»Kdo sliši sosedovo zgodbo?« / "Who Can Hear One's Neighbour's Story?"

Moderator: Simona Škrabec

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: Sodobna baskovska književnost /

Contemporary Basque Writing: BARNARDO ATXAGA, HARKAITZ CANO, MIREN AGUR MEABE, RIKARDO ARREGI, KIRMEN URIBE

MLADA VILENICA 2006 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2006: Dita Škalič, Aljaž Ferencek, Miroslava Furtkevičová

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2007 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

**GORANU STEFANOVSKEMU**

Utemeljitev nagrade: Lidija Dimkova

**KRISTAL VILENICE 2007 – PIOTR SOMMER**

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2007* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

DAVID ALBAHARI, ATTILA BARTIS, ATAOL BEHRAMOĞLU, BALŠA BRKOVIĆ, GENTIAN ÇOÇOLI, DUMITRU CRUDU, VYTAUTAS DEKŠNYS, DAGNIJA DREIKA, KRISTINA EHIN, CAROLYN FORCHÉ MATTISON, NEJC GAZVODA, SONJA HARTER, IOANA IERONIM, ANDREJ KURKOV, META KUŠAR, ERMIS LAFAZANOVSKI, AGI MISHOL, SENADIN MUSABEGOVIĆ, ALEŠ MUSTAR, DENNIS O'DRISCOLL, MAJA PANAJOTOVA, ROBERTO PAZZI, MONIKA RINCK, PIOTR SOMMER, IGOR ŠTIKS, JÁN ŠTRASSER, EDI SHUKRIU, SAMI TCHAK, TOMAS TRANSTRÖMER, CHRISTINA VIRAGH, BARYS ŽANČAK, MATJAZ ŽUPANČIČ

**OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:**

»(Samo)cenzura danes: literarna cenzura v luči politične korektnosti« / «(Self-)Censorship Today: Literary Censorship in the Light of Political Correctness»

Moderator: Alenka Puhar

**MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN**

**LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA:** Sodobna književnost v irščini / Contemporary Literature in Irish: CELIA DE FRÉINE, TOMÁS MAC SÍOMÓIN, DAIRENA NÍ CHINNÉIDE, MICHEÁL Ó CONGHAILE, CATHAL Ó SEARCAIGH, GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK

**MLADA VILENICA 2007 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2007:** Katja Lavrenčič, Matic Može

Mednarodno literarno nagrado vilenica za leto 2008 je Društvo slovenskih pisateljev podelilo

**ANDRZEJU STASIUKU**

Utemeljitev nagrade: Jana Unuk

**KRISTAL VILENICE 2008 – ANDREJ HADANOVIČ**

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2008* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali:

JURIJ ANDRUHOVIČ, LASLO BLAŠKOVIĆ, ANDREJ HADANOVIČ, CVETANKA ELENKOVA, IZTOK GEISTER, KICA KOLBE, FLORIN LĂZĂRESCU, ARIAN LEKA, YANG LIAN, DIEGO MARANI, JEAN-MICHEL MAULPOIX, IRINA NEKIT, IMRE ORAVECZ, MARINA PALEJ, ULRICH PELTZER, IVANA SAJKO, PETER STAMM, MAGDALENA SVETINA TERČON, DUŠAN ŠAROTAR, BINA ŠTAMPE ŽMAVC, JÜRI TALVET, ZOÉ VALDÉS, ANDREA WINKLER, YO YO, INGA ŽOLUDE

**OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:**

»Avtor med tekstem in kontekstom« / «The Author between Text and Context»

Moderator: Marko Uršič

**MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN**

**LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA:** Sodobna litovska književnost / Contemporary Lithuanian Writing: EUĢENIJUS ALIŠANKA, BIRUTE JONUŠKAITE, SIGITAS PARULSKIS, KORNELIJUS PLATELIS, TOMAS VENCLOVA

**MLADA VILENICA 2008 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2008:** Liam Visentin, Ana Šemrov

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Jana Unuk, prevajalka / translator

Jani Virk, pisatelj, prevajalec / prose writer, translator

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Namita Subiotto, docentka na katedri za makedonski jezik in književnost  
na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani, Slovenija / senior lecturer at the  
Department of Macedonian Language and Literature at the Faculty of  
Arts in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Brina Svit, pisateljica, publicistka, Francija / prose writer, columnist, France

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