

The background features a soft, abstract watercolor wash in shades of yellow, green, and brown. A single white feather is drawn vertically, extending from the top center to the bottom center of the page. The feather's barbs are finely detailed with thin white lines. The overall aesthetic is artistic and literary.

vilenica

**33. MEDNARODNI
LITERARNI FESTIVAL**

**33RD INTERNATIONAL
LITERARY FESTIVAL**

PISATI IN PREŽIVETI

WRITING AND SURVIVING

Nagrajenec Vilenice 2018 /
Vilenica Prize Winner 2018
Ilija Trojanow

Slovenska avtorica v središču 2018 /
Slovenian Author in Focus 2018
Mojca Kumerdej

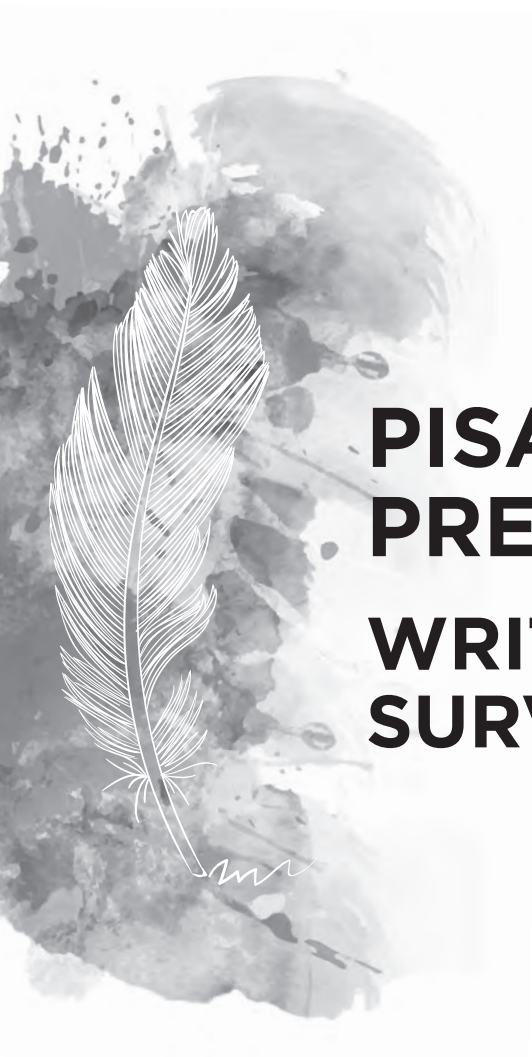
Literarna branja Vilenice 2018 /
Vilenica Literary Readings 2018
David Bandelj
Petre Barbu
Wioletta Grzegorzewska
Šota Iatašvili
Noémi Kiss
Uršuľa Kovalyk
Andrij Ljubka
Karin Peschka
Primož Repar
Simona Semenič

Gostje Vilenice 2018 /
Vilenica Guests 2018
Éilís Ní Dhuibhne
Brian Henry
Stuart Ross

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**33. MEDNARODNI
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PISATI IN PREŽIVETI WRITING AND SURVIVING

Vilenica 2018

33. Mednarodni literarni festival Vilenica /
33rd Vilenica International Literary Festival

Vilenica 2018

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Nagrajenec

Vilenice 2018

Vilenica

Prize Winner 2018



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Ilija Trojanow

Ilija Trojanow se je rodil leta 1965 v Sofiji v Bolgariji. Leta 1971 je družina poiskala politično zatočišče v Nemčiji, že leto kasneje pa so se preselili v Kenijo. S triletno vmesno prekinitvijo je Trojanow živel v Nairobiju vse do leta 1984, ko se je vrnil v Evropo, da bi v Münchnu študiral pravo in etnologijo, a je študij opustil in se podal v založništvo. Leta 1989 je ustanovil založbo Marino, specializirano za izdajanje afriške literature, ki jo je prevajal. V tem času je začel intenzivno potovati, najprej po Afriki, nato Aziji, predvsem Indiji. Med drugim je prehodil pot od izvira do izliva reke Ganges, se udeležil hadža oz. muslimanskega romanja v Meko in Medino ter peš potoval po Tanzaniji po poteh ekscentričnega angleškega raziskovalca in orientalista sira Richarda Francis Burtona, ki je tudi vir navdiha za njegovo največjo uspešnico, roman *Der Weltensammler* (2006; v slov. *Zbiralec svetov*, prevedel Brane Čop, 2015).

Tudi na poti vseskozi piše, tako leposlovje kot reportaže in eseje, ki jih objavlja v različnih časnikih in revijah. Kadar ne potuje, kar je sicer zelo redko, živi na Dunaju. Ves čas pa strastno bere. Včasih si postavi tudi kakšen nenavadnejši cilj; tako se je med olimpijskimi igrami 2012 odločil, da bo treniral vseh 80 poletnih olimpijskih disciplin in bil v njih vsaj pol tako dober kot londonski zmagovalci. Svojo izkušnjo o premikanju mej, odnosu do duha in telesa ter o staranju je z veliko humorja in ironije opisal v

delu *Meine Olympiade. Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen* (Moja olimpijada: amater, štiri leta, 80 disciplin, 2016).

Doslej je izdal 17 knjig in bil zanje večkrat nagrajen, med drugim z nagrado Leipziškega knjižnega sejma za *Zbiralca svetov* (2006) in nagrado Heinricha Bölla (2017); je tudi dolgoletni član odbora nemškega PEN-a. Njegova dela so prevedena v trideset jezikov, tri so izšla tudi v slovenščini: zbirka esejev *Der überflüssige Mensch* (2013; v slov. *Odvečni človek*, prevedla Ana Jasmina Oseban, 2014) ter romana *Zbiralec svetov* (2015) in *Eistau* (2011; v slov. *Tajanje*, prevedla Mojca Kranjc, 2013). Tudi v slednjem potujemo, tokrat na Antarktiko, ki jo doživljamo skozi dnevniške zapise glaciologa. V svojem zadnjem delu, poetičnem eseju *Nach der Flucht* (Po begu, 2017), pa razmišlja o življenju beguncev po begu, o njihovih težavah, izzivih in možnostih.

Omeniti velja še njegov romaneskni prvenec *Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall* (Svet je velik in rešitev preži povsod, 1996), katerega osrednja tema je družinski beg iz Bolgarije. Po njem je bolgarski režiser Stefan Komandarev leta 2008 posnel uspešen istoimenski film, pri produkciji katerega je sodelovala tudi Slovenija.

Trojanow si kot človek, od otroštva razpet med različnimi jeziki in kulturami, nenehno prizadeva izboljšati odnos Evrope do ostalega sveta, še posebej do Afrike in Azije. Meni, da se

ta v zgodovini ni kaj dosti spremenil – ostaja aroganten in nezmožen razumeti drugačnost. Je tudi oster kritik sodobnega kapitalizma in vse večjega državnega nadzora v imenu obrambe pred terorizmom. Ker je javno kritiziral ameriško vohunjenje in prisluškovanje v Evropi in drugod (oboje je razkril žvižgač Edward Snowden) ter bil pobudnik svetovne peticije Writers

Against Mass Surveillance (Pisatelji proti množičnemu nadzoru), ki jo je podpisalo približno 600 avtorjev iz 80 držav, tudi iz Slovenije, so mu leta 2013 zavrnilo vstop v ZDA. Zelo je angažiran tudi pri pomoči literatom v eksilu.

Ilija Trojanow je večni popotnik in zaradi svoje neukoreninjenosti morda celo najsvobodnejši človek na svetu.

Izbrane nagrade in priznanja

- 2017 Nagrada Heinricha Bölla (Nemčija).
- 2011 Nagrada Carla Ameryja za literaturo (Nemčija).
- 2010 Nagrada fundacije Würth za evropsko literaturo (Nemčija).
- 2007 Nagrada mesta Berlin za literaturo (Nemčija).
- 2006 Nagrada Leipziškega knjižnega sejma (Nemčija) za roman *Der Weltensammler (Zbiralec svetov)*.
- 2000 Nagrada Adelberta von Chamissa (Nemčija).
- 1997 Nagrada Thomasa Valentina (Nemčija) za roman *Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall* (Svet je velik in rešitev preži povsod).
- 1996 Nagrada mesta Marburg (Nemčija).
- 1995 Nagrada Bertelsmann (Avstrija), ki se podeljuje v okviru literarnega natečaja Ingeborg Bachmann, za roman *Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall* (Svet je velik in rešitev preži povsod).

Izbrana izvirna bibliografija

Poezija

verwurzelt in stein. Gedichte (zakoreninjen v kamnu. Pesmi). Heidelberg: Das Wunderhorn Verlag, 2017.

Romani

Macht und Widerstand (Oblast in upor). Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2015.

EisTau (Tajanje). München: Hanser Verlag, 2011.

Der Weltensammler (Zbiralec svetov). München: Hanser Verlag, 2006.

Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall (Svet je velik in rešitev preži povsod). München: Hanser Verlag, 1996.

Esejistična dela

Hilfe? Hilfe! Wege aus der globalen Krise (Pomoč? Pomoč! Poti iz globalne krize), soavtor Thomas Gebauer. Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2018.

Nach der Flucht (Po begu). Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2017.

Meine Olympiade. Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen (Moja olimpijada. En amater, štiri leta, 80 disciplin). Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2016.

Der überflüssige Mensch (Odvečni človek). Dunaj: Residenz Verlag, 2013.

Angriff auf die Freiheit (Napad na svobodo), soavtorica Juli Zeh. München: Hanser Verlag, 2009.

Kampfabsage. Kulturen bekämpfen sich nicht, sie fließen zusammen (Odpoved boju. Kulture se ne spopadajo – kulture se zlivajo), soavtor Ranjit Hoskote. München: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2007.

Hundezeiten. Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land (Pasji časi. Vrnitev v tujo deželo). München: Hanser Verlag, 1999.

Potopisi in reportaže

Durch Welt und Wiese oder Reisen zu Fuß (Po svetu in travniku ali potovanje peš), soavtorica Susann Urban. Berlin: Die Andere Bibliothek, 2015.

Wo Orpheus begraben liegt (Kjer je pokopan Orfej), soavtor Christian Muhrbeck. München: Hanser Verlag, 2013.

Stadt der Bücher (Mesto knjig), soavtorica Anja Bohnhof. München: Langen Müller Verlag, 2012.

Der entfesselte Globus (Neobrzdani globus). München: Hanser Verlag, 2008.

Kumbh Mela. Indien feiert das größte Fest der Welt (Kumbh Mela. Indija proslavlja največji praznik na svetu), soavtor Thomas Dorn. München: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 2008.

Nomade auf vier Kontinenten. Auf den Spuren von Sir Richard Francis Burton (Nomad na štirih kontinentih. Po sledih sira Richarda Francisa Burtona). Frankfurt: Eichborn Verlag, 2007.

Gebrauchsanweisung für Indien (Indija – navodila za uporabo). München: Piper Verlag, 2006.

Indien. Land des kleinen Glücks (Indija – dežela majhne sreče), soavtorica Katrin Simon. Cadolzburg: Ars Vivendi, 2006.

Zu den heiligen Quellen des Islams. Als Pilger nach Mekka und Medina (K svetim izvorom islama. Romanje v Meko in Medino). München: Malik Verlag, 2004.

An den inneren Ufern Indiens. Eine Reise entlang des Ganges (Na notranjih obalah Indije. Potovanje vzdolž Gangesa). München: Hanser Verlag, 2003.

Der Sadhu an der Teufelswand (Sadhu v hudičevi steni). München: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 2001.

Hüter der Sonne. Begegnung mit Simbabwe Ältesten (Varuhi sonca. Srečanje s starešinami iz Zimbabveja), soavtor Chenjerai Hove. München: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 1996.

Naturwunder Ostafrikas (Naravne znamenitosti Vzhodne Afrike), soavtor Michael Martin. München: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 1994.

In Afrika. Mythos und Alltag Ostafrikas (V Afriki. Miti in vsakdan v Vzhodni Afriki), soavtor Michael Martin. München: Marino Verlag, 1993.

Dokumentarni film

Vorwärts und nie vergessen – Ballade über bulgarische Helden (Gremo naprej in nikdar ne pozabimo – balada o bolgarskih junakih), režiser Ilija Trojanow. Film je bil posnet za nemško televizijsko postajo ZDF leta 2007.

Prevodi v tuje jezike

Dela Ilije Trojanowa so prevedena v trideset jezikov, med drugim v angleščino, arabščino, bolgarščino, češčino, danščino, francoščino, hrvaščino, italijanščino, japonščino, katalonsščino, kitajščino, korejščino, madžarščino, nizozemščino, perzijsščino, poljščino, portugalsščino, romunščino, ruščino, slovenščino, španščino in turščino.

Knjižni prevodi v slovenščino

Zbiralec svetov, prevedel Brane Čop. Ljubljana: Beletrina, 2015.

Odvečni človek, prevedla Ana Jasmina Oseban. Celovec: Mohorjeva družba, 2014.

Tajanje, prevedla Mojca Kranjc. Ljubljana: Beletrina, 2013.

Ilija Trojanow was born in 1965 in Sofia, Bulgaria. In 1971, his family sought political asylum in Germany, and moved to Kenya a year later. With a three-year break, Trojanow lived in Nairobi up until 1984, when he returned to Europe to study law and ethnology in Munich; however, he quit his studies and turned to publishing. In 1989, he established Marino Verlag, a publishing house that specialized in publishing the African literature that he was translating. In this period he started travelling a lot, first in Africa, then in Asia, mostly India. He walked the distance from the source to the outlet of the Ganges river, he took part in Hajj (the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina), and he travelled on foot in Tanzania, following the paths of the eccentric English explorer and orientalist Sir Richard Francis Burton. Trojanow's most successful work, the novel *Der Weltensammler* (2006, *The Collector of Worlds*) is loosely based on his life. His travelling is accompanied by writing, be it in the form of fiction, reportages, or essays, which he publishes in various newspapers and other periodicals. When not travelling, which is rare, he lives in Vienna, and is always a passionate reader. Sometimes he sets himself more peculiar goals; during the 2012 Summer Olympics, he decided to train all of the 80 Olympic disciplines and was at least half as good as the winners in London. He described his experience of crossing limits, of one's relation to the body and mind,

as well as to ageing, in his work *Meine Olympiade. Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen* (2016, *My Olympics. An Amateur, Four Years, 80 Disciplines*). So far he has published 17 books and received many awards for them, among others, the Leipzig Book Fair Prize for *The Collector of Worlds* (2006) and the Heinrich-Böll-Preis in 2017. He is also a member of the German PEN Committee. His works have been translated into 30 languages, and three of his works have been published in Slovene as well: the collection of essays *Der überflüssige Mensch* (2013; in Slovene *Odvečni človek*, translated by Ana Jasmina Osiban, 2014), and the novels *The Collector of Worlds* (2016) and *EisTau* (2011; in Slovene *Tajanje*, translated by Mojca Kranjc, 2013). As readers, we travel in *EisTau* as well, this time to the Antarctic which we experience through the journal of a glaciologist. His latest work, *Nach der Flucht* (2017, *After Fleeing*), focuses on the life of refugees after they have fled, on the life-long complexities, challenges and chances.

It is also important to mention his first novel, *Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall* (1996, *The World is Big and Salvation Lurks Around the Corner*), the central theme of which is also a family escape from Bulgaria. Bulgarian film director Stefan Komandarev adapted the novel into a successful film of the same name in 2008, and Slovenia also took part in the production of the film.

Trojanow, a man torn between different languages and cultures since his childhood, is constantly trying to improve Europe's attitudes towards the rest of the world, especially towards Africa and Asia. He believes that Europe and its attitudes have not changed much through history – Europe remains arrogant and unable to comprehend otherness. He is a fierce critic of contemporary capitalism and the increasing state control in the name of the fight against terrorism. Since he pub-

licly criticized American espionage and wiretapping in Europe and elsewhere (both revealed by Edward Snowden) and was the initiator of the world petition *Writers Against Mass Surveillance*, signed by approximately 600 authors from 80 countries, Slovenia included, in 2013 he was denied entry into the United States. He is also very engaged in helping writers in exile.

Ilija Trojanow is an eternal traveler and because of that maybe even the freest man in the world.

Selected Prizes and Awards

- 2017 Heinrich Böll Prize (Germany).
- 2011 Carl Amery Award for Literature (Germany).
- 2010 Würth Prize for European Literature (Germany).
- 2007 Berlin Literature Prize (Germany).
- 2006 Leipzig Book Fair Prize for Fiction (Germany), for the novel *Der Weltensammler* (*The Collector of Worlds*).
- 2000 Adelbert von Chamisso Prize (Germany).
- 1997 Thomas Valentin Literature Prize (Germany), for the novel *Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall* (*The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner*).
- 1996 Marburg Literature Prize (Germany).
- 1995 Bertelsmann Literature Prize (Austria), which is conferred at the Ingeborg Bachmann literary competition in Klagenfurt, for the novel *Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall* (*The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner*).

Selected Bibliography of Original Works

Poetry Collections

verwurzelt in stein. Gedichte (rooted in stone. Poems). Heidelberg: Das Wunderhorn Verlag, 2017.

Novels

Macht und Widerstand (Power and Resistance). Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2015.

EisTau (*The Lamentations of Zeno*). Munich: Hanser Verlag, 2011.

Der Weltensammler (The Collector of Worlds). Munich: Hanser Verlag, 2006.

Die Welt ist groß und Rettung lauert überall (The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner). Munich: Hanser Verlag, 1996.

Essay Collections

Hilfe? Hilfe! Wege aus der globalen Krise (Help? Help! Ways Out of the Global Crisis), coauthor Thomas Gebauer. Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2018.

Nach der Flucht (After Fleeing). Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2017.

Meine Olympiade. Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen (My Olympics: Amateur, Four Years, 80 Disciplines). Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2016.

Der überflüssige Mensch (Redundant Man). Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 2013.

Angriff auf die Freiheit (Attack on Freedom), coauthor Juli Zeh. Munich: Hanser Verlag, 2009.

Kampfabsage. Kulturen bekämpfen sich nicht, sie fließen zusammen (Refusal to Fight: Cultures Do Not Clash – They Merge), coauthor Ranjit Hoskote. Munich: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2007.

Hundezeiten. Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land (Dog Days: Homecoming in a Foreign Land). Munich: Hanser Verlag, 1999.

Travelogues and Reportages

Durch Welt und Wiese oder Reisen zu Fuß (Through the World and the Meadow or Travelling on Foot), coauthor Susann Urban. Berlin: Die Andere Bibliothek, 2015.

Wo Orpheus begraben liegt (Where Orpheus Lies Buried), coauthor Christian Muhrbeck. Munich: Hanser Verlag, 2013.

Stadt der Bücher (The City of Books), coauthor Anja Bohnhof. Munich: Langen Müller Verlag, 2012.

Der entfesselte Globus (The Unbound Globe). Munich: Hanser Verlag, 2008.

Kumbh Mela. Indien feiert das größte Fest der Welt (Kumbh Mela. India Celebrates the Biggest Holiday in the World), coauthor Thomas Dorn. Munich: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 2008.

Nomade auf vier Kontinenten. Auf den Spuren von Sir Richard Francis Burton (Nomad on Four Continents. On the track of Sir Richard Francis Burton). Frankfurt: Eichborn Verlag, 2007.

Gebrauchsanweisung für Indien (India – Instructions for Use). Munich: Piper Verlag, 2006.

Indien. Land des kleinen Glücks (India – the Land of Small Luck), coauthor Katrin Simon. Cadolzburg: Ars Vivendi, 2006.

Zu den heiligen Quellen des Islams. Als Pilger nach Mekka und Medina (Mumbai to Mecca: A Pilgrimage to the Holy Sites of Islam). Munich: Malik Verlag, 2004.

An den inneren Ufern Indiens. Eine Reise entlang des Ganges (Along the Ganges: To the Inner Shores of India). Munich: Hanser Verlag, 2003.

Der Sadhu an der Teufelswand (Sadhu in the Devil's Wall). Munich: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 2001.

Hüter der Sonne. Begegnung mit Simbabwe's Ältesten (Guardians of the Soil – meeting Zimbabwe's elders), coauthor, Chenjerai Hove. Munich: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 1996.

Naturwunder Ostafrikas (Natural Wonders of East Africa), coauthor Michael Martin. Munich: Verlag Frederking & Thaler, 1994.

In Afrika. Mythos und Alltag Ostafrikas (In Africa. The Myth and Everyday Life of East Africa), coauthor Michael Martin. Munich: Marino Verlag, 1993.

Documentary Film

Vorwärts und nie vergessen – Ballade über bulgarische Helden (Forward and Never Forgotten – A Ballad of Bulgarian Heroes), directed by Ilija Trojanow. The film was made for German television station ZDF in 2007.

Translations of Ilija Trojanow's Work

Works by Ilija Trojanow have been translated into many languages, including Arab, Bulgarian, Catalan, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish, English, French, Italian, Japanese, Hungarian, Korean, Dutch, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovenian, Spanish, Turkish.

Book Format Translations into English

The Lamentations of Zeno, New York: Verso Books, 2016.

The Collector of Worlds. London: Faber & Faber, 2008.

Along the Ganges: To the Inner Shores of India. London: Haus Publishing, 2008.

Mumbai To Mecca: A Pilgrimage to the Holy Sites of Islam. London: Haus Publishing, 2007.

Guardians of the Soil – meeting Zimbabwe's elders. Coauthor Chenjerai Hove. Harare: Baobab Books, 1996.

Večjezičnost kot spoznavanje soljudi

Utemeljitev nagrade

Vesna Kondrič Horvat

»Aleksandrija je gostila grške filozofe, judovske učenjake in indijske jogije. Ptolomej je tam kartografiral svet, Evklid pa napisal razprave o geometriji,« ugotavlja Ilija Trojanow, ki se je rodil v Bolgariji, živel v Nemčiji, Keniji, Franciji, Indiji ... in danes domuje v Avstriji. Sodi k najmočnejšim literarnim glasovom današnjega globalnega sveta in se kot tak v letu 2018 pridružuje vileniškim nagrajencem. S podobnimi ugotovitvami kot z zgornjo iz knjige *Kampfabgabe. Kulturen bekämpfen sich nicht – sie fließen zusammen* (2007; Odpoved boju. Kulture se ne spopadajo – kulture se zlivajo) svet vedno znova opozarja, čemu se moramo zahvaliti za to, kar imamo danes – raznolik svet, ki ga Trojanow literarizira in kritično motri prav s pomočjo lastne večjezične in večkulturne izkušnje. *Zbiralec svetov* zato ni po naključju naslov najbolj znanega in v več kot 30 jezikov (med drugimi tudi v slovenščino) prevedenega romana tega za različnost odprtega, transkulturnega pisatelja, ki je doma v več svetovih, s katerimi se srečujemo v njegovih reportažah, esejih, romanih, pesmih ...

Literarno kariero je Trojanow začel kot založnik in pisec strokovnih knjig in že tam razširjal transkulturno izkušnjo. Od leta 1995, ko je na znameniti prireditvi »Ingeborg-Bachmann-Wettbewerb« v Celovcu prejel nagrado Bertelsmann Preis, pa objavlja tudi leposlovje, ki prav tako ubeseduje njegovo transkulturnost. Vse njegovo pisanje je čedalje bolj aktualno: bodisi zgodba staršev kot političnih beguncev v prvencu *Die Welt ist groß und die Rettung lauert überall* (1996; Svet je velik in rešitev preži povsod), po katerem je bil leta 2008 posnet film, bodisi poročilo o ponovnem snidenju z bolgarsko domovino in o njenem političnem in gospodarskem stanju v knjigi *Hundezeiten. Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land* (1999; Pasji časi. Vrnitev v tujo deželo) ali pa opis romanja v Meko v reportaži *Zu den Heiligen Quellen des Islam (Mumbai to Mekka)* (2004), zelo plastična predstavitev »ranljivosti narave in njene lepote« v romanu *Eistau (Tajanje, v prevodu Mojce Kranjc, 2013)* ali pa intenzivna potopitev v svet športa, ko je Trojanow poskušal štiri leta trenirati in nastopiti v vseh posamičnih disciplinah poletnih olimpijskih iger in to popisal v delu *Meine Olympiade. Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen*

(2016; Moja olimpijada. Amater, štiri leta, 80 disciplin). V njem ob izkušnji izjemnih naporov razmišlja o mejah duha in telesa, pri čemer se ne more izogniti procesu staranja, saj je ob tem poskusu imel 47 let, izhajal pa iz mota, da ne more biti zmagovalec nikoli ponosen na zmago, saj je premagal slabšega tekmeca.

Sam naslov že prej omenjene knjige *Kampfabsage. Kulturen bekämpfen sich nicht – sie fließen zusammen*, ki jo je izdal skupaj z indijskim publicistom Ranjitom Hoskotéjem, pa pove, kako Trojanow vidi današnji svet. V boju proti »ali oni ali mi« želi ustvariti »vizijo kulture, ki jo vsi skupaj nenehno ustvarjamo in spreminjamo tukaj in zdaj, izvira pa tako iz dinamičnih sprememb in nepredvidljivega prepleta oz. zlivanja idej in misli, vrednot in tehnik kakor tudi iz različnih predispozicij in miselnih svetov, iz katerih nastaja naša družba«. Trojanow in Hoskoté to »predstavo označujeta kot kulturo zlivanja«. Za kulturo zlivanja ali transkulturo si Trojanow prizadeva na številnih področjih svojega delovanja: kot urednik in založnik, kot prevajalec, kot pisec strokovnih besedil, reportaž, esejev, filmskih scenarijev, pa tudi kot predavatelj, kot kurator na literarnih festivalih ... Leta 2008 je bil kurator na literarnem festivalu »RE ASIA – Avatar. Asiens Erzähler im Berliner Haus der Kulturen der Welt«; od tega leta je tudi urednik zbirke *Buchreihe Weltlese. Leser-eisen ins Unbekannte*, v kateri je že predstavil veliko prezrtih avtorjev in avtoric, pa tudi nenavadna in pozabljena besedila. V tem smislu je Trojanow tudi moderator pogovorov *Weltausstellung Prinzenstraße* v gledališču Schauspiel Hannover, kamor vabi mednarodno priznane filozofe, novinarje, znanstvenike in umetnike.

Trojanowega literarnega udejstvovanja in angažmaja pa nikakor ne moremo obravnavati ločeno od njegovega zelo pestrega življenjepisa, ki mu večinoma pomeni izhodišče za pisanje. Iz rojstne Bolgarije je družina Trojanow leta 1971 s takrat šestletnim Ilijo odpotovala preko Jugoslavije in Italije v Nemčijo, kjer je dobila politični azil. Leta 1972 je oče začel delati kot inženir v Nairobiju, kjer je Ilija živel do leta 1984 z vmesno prekinitvijo treh let, ki jih je preživel v internatu na Bavarskem. Leta 1984 se je preselil v Pariz, potem pa v letih 1985–1989 v Münchnu študiral etnologijo in pravo pa tudi havarijo. Leta 1989 je študij prekinil in ustanovil dve založbi, specializirani za afriško literaturo: leta 1989 založbo Kyrill und Method-Verlag in leta 1992 Marino-Verlag. Leta 1998 se je preselil v Mumbaj, potem pa od leta 2003 živel v Cape Townu in v Mainzu; trenutno živi in ustvarja na Dunaju, če seveda ni na potovanju, kjer zbira svetove.

Z namenom približevanja različnih svetov je Trojanow začel svojo kariero kot pisec strokovne literature in kot esejist, predvsem v času, ko je potoval po Afriki in objavil prvo izmed številnih potopisnih del, knjigo *In Afrika. Mythos und Alltag Ostafrikas* (1993; V Afriki. Mit in vsakdan v Vzhodni Afriki). Leta 1998 se je preselil v Mumbai in iz Indije pošiljal reportaže in eseje renomiranim nemškimi in švicarskim časopisom *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. To je počel tudi po letu 2003, ko se je preselil v Cape Town. Poleg Indije ga močno privlači prav Afrika, kontinent, ki se mu je sprva zdel tuj, ker ga je zanimal, pa sta občutek tujosti kmalu zamenjala občutek pripadnosti novi domovini Keniji in fascinacija. To je želel deliti z drugimi, zato sta začeli njegovi založbi izdajati prevode afriške književnosti v nemščino; objavil je tudi antologijo afriške književnosti. O njegovem videnju sveta veliko izvemo tudi iz reportaž o Afriki, Indiji, Aziji in Bolgariji, ki so zbrane v knjigi *Der entfesselte Globus* (2008; Neobrzdani globus). Dolgoletno poglobljeno zanimanje za Afriko pa se ne odraža le v številnih knjigah; Trojanow vodi tudi projekt *Weltempfänger-Bestenliste*, ki ga je iniciiral skupaj z litpromom (Gesellschaft zur Förderung von Literatur aus Afrika, Asien und Lateinamerika e.V.). Njegovo udejstvovanje in angažma na različnih področjih sta že skoraj nepregledna, vse bolj pa ga vleče v poetične vode, čeprav je poetičnost prisotna tudi v njegovih reportažah in esejih.

Po prvencu iz leta 1996, romanu *Die Welt ist groß und die Rettung lauert überall*, je leto pozneje objavil znanstvenofantastični roman *Autopol*, ki ga je najprej koncipiral kot spletni roman, kot roman v nastajanju. Največji odziv pa je Trojanowu, ki je doslej napisal več kot 30 knjig, prineslo pisanje o Indiji, tudi zbirka reportaž *An den inneren Ufern Indiens. Eine Reise entlang Ganges* (2003; Na notranjih obalah Indije. Potovanje vzdolž Gangesa). Kritika je zavidala Trojanowu, ki je že toliko prehodil, da se še ni nehal čuditi. Za to knjigo je šel od izvira Gangesa, začel potovati na višini 4000 metrov na ledeniku nad krajem Gangotri, kjer izvira »mati Ganga«, kakor Gangesu pravijo v Indiji. Pravi prodor pa mu je uspel z romanom *Weltensammler (Zbiralec svetov)* iz leta 2006, ki je bil nagrajen na Leipziškem knjižnem sejmu, v slovenščini pa ga lahko v prevodu Braneta Čopa beremo od leta 2015.

V romanu, za katerega je sedem let raziskoval in hodil po sledeh nemirnega raziskovalca in orientalista sira Richarda Francisa Burtona (1821–1890), le-tega predstavlja na treh glavnih postajah

njegovega življenja: v Indiji, kjer je delal za East India Company, v Arabiji, kjer je kot eden prvih Evropejcev pod krinko muslimana obiskal Meko in Medino in se udeležil hadža, ter v centralni Afriki, kjer je skupaj z Johnom Hanningom Spekom iskal izvir Nila. V prvem delu je Burton star 21 let, o njem pa pripoveduje njegov služabnik Naukaram, ki mu lahija, javni pisar, sestavlja priporočilno pismo. Njegovo osebno pripovedovanje se tako kot v drugih dveh delih meša s splošno znanimi podatki o Burtonu. Naukaram Burtona označi kot izjemno vedoželjnega mladeniča, ki se uči indijske jezike in spoznava indijsko kulturo. Uči se tudi arabsko, brahman Upaniče pa ga poučuje sanskrt; tako spozna tudi *Kamasutro*, ki jo prevede v angleščino. Burton se seznanil z islamom, konvertira in odide v Kairo, kjer mu uspe delati kot zdravnik, odpravi pa se tudi na hadž. V drugem delu ga spoznavamo skozi oči prič, ki bi naj potrdile, da je bil Burton slepar in vohun, v tretjem delu pa Burtona predstavlja ostareli Sidi Mubarak Bombaj, njegov spremljevalec na poti k izviru Nila. Kot človeka, odprtega za različne svetove, kulture in izkušnje, vidimo Burtona iz različnih perspektiv, ki pa v nasprotju z njim ostajajo omejene, hkrati pa so kritične do Evropejcev, ker niso sposobni ali nočejo videti njihove različnosti. A tudi Burtonu poskusi približevanja drugim kulturam pogosto spodletijo. Knjiga se konča s kesanjem duhovnika, ki ga je Burtonova žena pred možovo smrtjo v Trstu prepričala, da ga je spovedal. Trojanowa je k pisanju te knjige motivirala ne le Burtonova biografija, ampak predvsem – bržkone tudi današnja – »(ne)zmožnost življenja v tuje«. Kot je zapisala žirija za podelitev nagrade na Leipziškem knjižnem sejmu, *Zbiralec svetov* »z orientalsko-čutno pripovedno slo in nazorostjo pripoveduje o čaru in avanturi tujega in v podobi fascinantne zgodovinske osebnosti zrcali pereča vprašanja našega časa«. Gotovo pa nekaj Trojanowega najdemo tudi v Burtonovih besedah, ki jih na koncu knjige v »Razodetju« po pogrebu premleva duhovnik: »Da, seveda hočemo iskati, a na noben način najti. Ravno to da je vse življenje počel, je rekel. Vsepovsod je iskal, večina ljudi pa, nasprotno, kar naprej gleda v isti lonec. Potem me je drzno pogledal v oči. S posmehom, moram reči.«

Knjige Ilije Trojanowa pogosto vsebujejo njegova politična stališča, saj je zelo angažiran sodobnik. Skupaj z Juli Zeh sta objavila knjigo *Angriff auf Freiheit* (2009; Napad na svobodo), kjer sta kritizirala državo, ki zaradi nasilja posameznikov sama izvaja nasilje in

pod pretvezo zaščite pred terorizmom čedalje bolj posega v posameznikovo privatno sfero. V nekem eseju za avstrijski *Standard* je Trojanow zapisal: »Že bežen pogled v zgodovino prejšnjega stoletja vsakega prepriča, da je državni kriminal tisočkrat hujši od vsakega individualnega kriminalnega dejanja in da teror posameznikov ni niti približno tako poguben kot državni teror. Zato velja preprosto načelo: politik, ki reducira državljanske pravice, je dolgoročno nevarnejši od terorista.« O neoliberalistični kapitalistični drži je napisal odmevno delo z naslovom *Der überflüssige Mensch* (2013; v slov. *Odvečni človek*, 2014), kjer postavlja ključno vprašanje o prenaseljenosti našega planeta: Namreč, ali sem odveč jaz ali ti? Midva gotovo ne. Kdo pa? *Kdor ničesar ne proizvaja in ničesar ne porablja*, ta je po morilski logiki poznega kapitalizma odveč. Mednarodne elite trdijo, da je največji problem prenaseljenost našega planeta. »*A če naj se število ljudi zmanjša, kdo je tisti, ki naj izgine?*« polemizira Trojanow v humanističnem zapisu o odvečnosti človeka. V pronicljivih analizah poveže katastrofalne posledice klimatskih sprememb z nezizprosnostjo neoliberalnega trga delovne sile ter apokaliptami, ki jih mi, navidezni zmagovalci, tako navdušeno spremljamo v množičnih občilih. Vendar se motimo: tudi za nas gre. Za vse gre.« Tako bremo na hrbtni strani prevoda Ane Jasmine Oseban. Za nas gre tudi v romanu *Tajanje* iz leta 2011, ko veliko naravovarstvenikov opozarja, da je ura že pet pred dvanajsto, nekateri pa si še vedno zatiskajo oči. *Tajanje* je ladijski dnevnik glaciologa, ki je dolga leta preučeval ledenik v Alpah, ki ga ni več. Sedaj dela kot strokovni vodja ekskurzije na Antarktiko. Hkrati gre za »ironičen opis tistih varuhov narave, ki uničevanje planeta izrabljajo za lastno promocijo in so nemočni spričo plenilske logike kapitala«. Leta 2002 je Trojanow postal član nemškega PEN-a, v utemeljitvi nagrade Heinricha Bölla, ki jo je prejel leta 2017, pa je žirija zapisala, da »političnega angažmaja Heinricha Bölla ne nadaljuje noben tukajšnji avtor tako dosledno, in to v literarni obliki kot Ilija Trojanow«.

Za izražanje svojih stališč uporablja Trojanow različne možnosti in oblike, predvsem pa so njegova dela vedno podkrepjena z izčrpnim raziskovanjem snovi, s katero se ukvarja. Tako je za roman *Zbiralec svetov* tri mesece hodil peš po sledih sira Richarda Francisa Burtona (1821–1890) v Tanzaniji in se udeležil tudi hadža, tradicionalnega romanja v Meko, ki se ga mora »vsaj enkrat v življenju udeležiti vsak odrasli musliman, ki je zdrav in ima dovolj finančnih sredstev, da si

to lahko privoščiti. Za nemuslimane je sodelovanje na romanju prepovedano.« Raziskovanje za roman po Burtonovih sledih v Indiji, Arabiji, Afriki in Severni Ameriki je v celoti trajalo sedem let in leta 2007 je Trojanow izdal knjigo *Nomade auf vier Kontinenten: Auf den Spuren von Sir Richard Francis Burton*. V njej predstavlja nekonvencionalno Burtonovo življenje na podlagi izsekov iz njegovih del, ki jih povezuje z lastnimi doživetji na potovanju. Na ta način mu uspe povezati preteklost in sedanost.

Preteklost in sedanost povezuje tudi v romanu *Macht und Widerstand* (2015; Oblast in upor) o življenju v Bolgariji. Roman temelji na ustnih in pisnih pričevanjih številnih nekdanjih političnih zapornikov in nekaterih oficirjev varnostne službe Ljudske republike Bolgarije. Oblast in upor pa prikazuje na primeru dveh prijateljev. Konstantin in Metodi sta od nekdanj prijatelja, a tudi velika nasprotnika. Medtem ko je Metodi karierist, Konstantin ostaja upornik in se v iskanju resnice prebija skozi arhive službe državne varnosti. Že pred tem romanom je Trojanow skupaj s fotografom Christianom Muhrbeckom upodobil življenje v Bolgariji v knjigi *Wo Orpheus begraben liegt* (2013). Čeprav jo je zapustil kot šestletni fantič, se v Bolgarijo vrača vedno znova. Že leta 2007, ko je bil mestni pisar v Mainzu, je posnel dokumentarec *Vorwärts und nie vergessen – Ballade über bulgarische Helden* (Naprej in nikoli pozabljeno – balada o bolgarskih junakih), kjer je intervjuval nekdanje politične zapornike in kritiziral komunistično diktaturo. Iz številnih pogovorov z begunci pa izhaja njegov poetični esej *Nach der Flucht. Ein autobiographischer Essay* (2016; Po begu. Avtobiografski esej), v katerega je, kot pove podnaslov, vgradil tudi avtobiografsko izkušnjo begunca in migranta. Hkrati pa Trojanow tudi v tem eseju ubeseduje izkušnjo številnih pisateljev, ki jih samo zaradi drugače zvenečega imena pogosto sprašujejo, od kod prihajajo in kako to, da tako dobro govorijo nemško, in zakaj ne pišejo v materinščini. Tako stigmatizira Trojanowa prvih šest let življenja bolj kot preostalih 47, ko se je udomačil v nemškem jeziku. O tem govori zelo pogosto, saj ga kot gostujočega predavatelja vabijo številne univerze; tako je imel leta 2007 skupaj s Feridunum Zaimogljem predavanja o poetiki na univerzi v Tübingenu, ki so izšla pod naslovom *Ferne Nähe* (Daljna bližina). Med številnimi nagradami je Trojanow leta 2000 prejel nagrado Adelbert von Chamisso Preis, ki jo podeljujejo nemško piščočim avtorjem in avtoricam, katerih materinščina ni nemščina.

Kot v nekem intervjuju ugotavlja Trojanow, današnja književnost močno zaznamujejo večjezični avtorji in avtorice, tako imenovani menjalci jezikov. Trojanow vidi v tem možnost za spoznavanje sveta od zunaj. Če namreč zavestno stopiš v jezik, je drugače, kot če si vanj rojen. Z novim jezikom si v svoj svet prinesel nov svet in večjezičnost je gotovo pomembna izkušnja današnjega globalnega, z migracijami, a žal tudi s ksenofobijo prežetega sveta. Z Ilijo Trojanowom smo dobili še enega vileniškega nagrajenca z izjemno kritično in pokončno držo, ki jo prepričljivo ubeseduje v dokumentarni literaturi, predvsem pa zelo poetično v esejih, romanih in pesmih.

Multilingualism as Coming to Know Fellow Human Beings

Laudation of the Prize

Vesna Kondrič Horvat

‘Alexandria hosted Greek philosophers, Jewish scholars and Indian yogis. It was there that Ptolemy mapped the world and that Euclid wrote his treatises on geometry,’ observes Ilija Trojanow. Born in Bulgaria, he has lived in Germany, Kenya, France, India ... and now resides in Austria. One of the strongest literary voices of today’s global world, he joined the Vilenica laureates in 2018. With statements such as the above one, taken from his book *Kampfabgabe: Kulturen bekämpfen sich nicht – sie fließen zusammen* (Refusal to Fight: Cultures Do Not Clash – They Merge, 2007), he is reminding the world, time and again, of what we should thank for what we have today – for a varied world, depicted and critically scrutinised by Trojanow through his own multilingual and multicultural experience. It is no coincidence that the best known novel (translated into more than thirty languages) by this open, culture-transcending author, who is at home in the many worlds encountered in his reportages, essays, novels or poems, should bear the title *Der Weltensammler* (*The Collector of Worlds*).

Trojanow began to disseminate his transcultural experience at the very start of his literary career as a publisher and author of professional books. Since 1995, when he received the Bertelsmann Literature Prize at the eminent Ingeborg Bachmann competition in Klagenfurt, he has been publishing fiction as well, again expressing his transculturality. His writings are proving to be ever more topical, be it the story of his parents as political refugees in his debut novel, *Die Welt ist groß und die Rettung lauert überall* (*The World Is Big and Salvation Lurks around the Corner*, 1996), which formed the basis for the 2008 film, or the account of his reunion with his Bulgarian homeland, as well as its political and economic conditions, in the book *Hundezeiten: Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land* (*Dog Days: Homecoming in a Foreign Land*, 1999); the description of his pilgrimage to Mecca in the reportage *Zu den Heiligen Quellen des Islam* (*Mumbai to Mecca: A Pilgrimage to the Holy Sites of Islam*, 2004), the graphic presentation of ‘nature’s vulnerability and beauty’ in the novel *EisTau* (*The Lamentations of Zeno*), or an intensive immersion

in the world of sport. Trojanow attempted to take part in all individual disciplines of the summer Olympic games after four years of training, a venture described in *Meine Olympiade: Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen* (My Olympics: Amateur, Four Years, 80 Disciplines, 2016). His reflections on the limits of mind and body, inspired by this experience of extreme effort, cannot skirt the process of ageing: at the time of his experiment he was 47, and acted on the motto that winners could never be proud of their victory because they had bested an inferior competitor.

The very title of the book mentioned above, *Kampfabsage: Kulturen bekämpfen sich nicht – sie fließen zusammen*, which was published in collaboration with Indian poet and theorist Ranjit Hoskote, expresses Trojanow's view of the contemporary world. In his struggle against the either-them-or-us mentality, he seeks to conjure up 'the vision of a culture which we are incessantly creating and changing together, here and now, a culture stemming from dynamic changes and the unpredictable intertwining or confluence of ideas and thoughts, values and techniques, as well as from the various predispositions and mental worlds which are shaping our society'. This concept is labelled by Trojanow and Hoskote as a 'culture of confluence'. The culture of confluence, or transculture, is what Trojanow strives for in his numerous fields of activity: as editor, publisher, translator, writer of professional texts, reportages, essays, and film scripts, or as lecturer or literary festival curator. In 2008 he was curator of the literary festival 'RE ASIA–Avatar: Asiens Erzähler im Berliner Haus der Kulturen der Welt', and since the same year he has edited the series 'Buchreihe Weltlese: Lesereisen ins Unbekannte', in which he has presented many overlooked authors as well as unusual and forgotten texts. In addition, Trojanow moderates the 'Weltausstellung Prinzenstraße' discussions at the Schauspiel Hannover theatre, to which he invites internationally acclaimed philosophers, journalists, scientists and artists.

Trojanow's literary activity and commitment cannot be discussed separately from his colourful life, which usually provides the starting point for his writings. The year 1971 saw the journey of the Trojanow family, including six-year-old Ilija, from his native Bulgaria through Yugoslavia and Italy to Germany, where they were granted political asylum. In 1972 his father began working as an engineer in Nairobi, where Ilija lived until 1984 except for three years spent at a Bavarian boarding school. He moved to Paris in 1984 but spent

the years 1985–1989 studying ethnology, law, and ‘disaster’ at the University of Munich. He interrupted his studies in 1989 to found two publishing houses specialising in African literature: Kyrill und Method Verlag in 1989 and Marino Verlag in 1992. After moving to Mumbai in 1998, he went on in 2003 to live in Cape Town and Mainz. Currently he is living and working in Vienna – except, of course, when he is busy travelling and collecting worlds.

Aiming to bring different worlds closer, Trojanow began his career as a professional literature writer and essayist – especially during his travels in Africa, when he published the first of his many travelogues, the book *In Afrika: Mythos und Alltag Ostafrikas* (In Africa: The Myth and Everyday Life of East Africa, 1993). Having moved to Mumbai in 1998, he supplied reportages and essays from India to such renowned German and Swiss newspapers as *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, and continued this practice even after his move to Cape Town in 2003. In addition to India, he is strongly attracted to Africa. The African continent felt foreign at first, but his interest soon supplanted the sense of foreignness with a feeling of belonging to his new home, Kenya, and with fascination. To share it with others, his two publishing houses began to print translations of African literature into German, complementing them with an anthology of African literature. Trojanow’s perception of the world likewise comes to the fore in his reportages on Africa, India, Asia and Bulgaria, collected in his book *Der entfesselte Globus* (The Unbound Globe, 2008). His deep and enduring interest in Africa is not expressed through books alone: in addition, Trojanow is presiding over the project Weltempfänger-Bestenliste, which he has initiated together with Litprom (Gesellschaft zur Förderung von Literatur aus Afrika, Asien und Lateinamerika e.V.). His activities and involvements in various fields are well-nigh impossible to keep track of. Lately he has been increasingly drawn to poetry, and a poetic quality suffuses his reportages and essays as well.

His debut novel from 1996, *Die Welt ist groß und die Rettung lauert überall*, was followed a year later by a science fiction novel, *Autopol*, originally conceived as an online novel, a novel in progress. Of his thirty-odd books, the widest response was elicited by his writings about India, including the collection of reportages *An den inneren Ufern Indiens: Eine Reise entlang Ganges* (Along the Ganges, 2003). The critics envied Trojanow, who had walked so far yet never

lost his sense of wonder. For the purpose of this book he had begun his journey at a height of 4000 metres, on a glacier above the town of Gangotri, where ‘Mother Ganga’, as the Ganges is called in India, has its source. His real breakthrough, however, was the 2006 novel *The Collector of Worlds*, which won the Leipzig Book Fair Prize.

The novel, which had involved seven years of research and pursuit in the footsteps of the restless researcher and Orientalist, Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821–1890), presents the protagonist at the three main stations of his life: in India, where he worked for the East India Company, in Arabia, where he was one of the first Europeans to visit Mecca and Medina in Muslim disguise or to take part in the Hajj, and in Central Africa, where he accompanied John Hanning Speke in search of the source of the Nile. In Part I, the story of a 21-year-old Burton is narrated by his servant Naukaram, who has commissioned a letter of recommendation from a lahiya, a public scribe. As in the following two parts, subjective narration blends with the information generally available on Burton. According to Naukaram, Burton is a young man of outstanding intellectual curiosity, learning Indian languages and exploring Indian culture. Studying Arabic and taking Sanskrit lessons with Brahman Upanishe, he encounters the Kama Sutra, which he translates into English. Moreover, Burton encounters and embraces Islam, leaves for Cairo, where he finds work as a doctor, and even sets out on the Hajj. In Part II he is portrayed through the eyes of witnesses who are to confirm that he was a fraud and a spy, and in Part III by the elderly Sidi Mubarak Bombay, who accompanied him to the source of the Nile. As a person open to different worlds, cultures and experiences, Burton is seen from different perspectives, which (in contrast to the protagonist) remain limited while criticising the Europeans’ inability or refusal to perceive their difference. In fact, even Burton’s attempts to approach other cultures often meet with failure. The book ends with the regrets of the priest who was persuaded by Burton’s wife before his death in Trieste to give him the last sacraments. Trojanow was spurred to write this book not only by Burton’s biography but especially by the – presumably enduring – ‘(in)ability to get into a foreign skin’. According to the Leipzig Book Fair jury, *The Collector of Worlds* ‘tells, with an Oriental-sensuous narrative pleasure and vividness, about the allure and adventure of the foreign, reflecting the topical issues of our time in the portrait of a fascinating historical personage’. And there is certainly something of Trojanow in

Burton's words, which are mulled over by the priest after the funeral in the concluding 'Revelation': '[t]hat we want to search of course but under no circumstances find. That's exactly what he did all his life, he told me. He searched everywhere, whereas most people are happy just to look in the same pot. Having said which he looked me frankly in the eye. Somewhat mischievously, I have to say.'

The books by Ilija Trojanow, an intensely committed contemporary, often contain his political views. Together with Juli Zeh, he published the book *Angriff auf die Freiheit* (Attack on Freedom, 2009), criticising a state which responds to the violence of individuals by exercising violence itself, thus encroaching on the individual's private sphere under the pretence of protection against terrorism. In an essay for the Austrian newspaper *Standard*, Trojanow writes: 'A mere glance at the history of the previous century convinces anyone that state crime is a thousand times worse than any individual criminal act, and that the terror practised by individuals is not nearly as destructive as state terror. A simple principle holds true: in the long run, a politician who reduces citizens' rights is more dangerous than a terrorist.' His resonating work on neoliberal capitalist attitude, *Der überflüssige Mensch* (Redundant Man, 2013), poses the key question about the overpopulation on our planet: who is redundant, me or you? Neither of us, to be sure. Who is, then? By the murderous logic of late capitalism, the redundant one is 'the one who neither produces nor consumes'. According to international elites, the biggest problem is the overpopulation on the planet. 'But,' argues Trojanow in a humanist note on man's redundancy, 'if the number of mankind is to decrease, which of us should disappear?' His trenchant analyses link the disastrous consequences of climate change to the inexorability of the neoliberal labour force market and to the apocalypses which we, as seeming victors, eagerly follow in the mass media. But we are wrong: our lives are at stake, too. Everyone's. Our lives are similarly at stake in his 2011 novel *EisTau*, in which many environmentalists are pointing out that time is running out, while others are still sticking their heads in the sand. *EisTau* is the log of a glaciologist, who has spent years studying a – now vanished – glacier in the Alps. He is currently working as the professional leader of an Antarctic expedition. At the same time, the book is an ironic description of those environmentalists who are using the destruction of the planet for their own promotion and are helpless against the predatory logic of capital. In 2002 Trojanow joined the German

PEN Centre. According to the jury which bestowed on him the Heinrich Böll Prize in 2017, 'no author residing here continues the political commitment of Heinrich Böll as consistently, as well as in a literary form, as does Ilija Trojanow'.

To voice his views, Trojanow employs various means and various forms. Most importantly, his works are always underpinned by comprehensive research into his subject-matter. For the purposes of his novel *The Collector of Worlds*, for instance, he spent three months walking in the footsteps of Sir Richard Francis Burton in Tanzania and even participated in the Hajj, the traditional pilgrimage to Mecca, 'which should be undertaken at least once in a lifetime by every adult Muslim who is in good health and has the means to afford it. Non-Muslims are forbidden to participate in the pilgrimage.' Trojanow's research for the novel, which followed Burton's tracks in India, Arabia, Africa and North America, took seven years, and the year 2007 saw the publication of his book *Nomade auf vier Kontinenten: Auf den Spuren von Sir Richard Francis Burton* (A Nomad on Four Continents: Tracking Sir Richard Francis Burton). This depiction of Burton's unconventional life is based on excerpts from Burton's own works, which Trojanow connects with his own travel experiences, thus successfully linking past to present.

The past and the present are similarly connected in his novel *Macht und Widerstand* (Power and Resistance, 2015), which deals with life in Bulgaria. The novel is based on the oral and written testimonies by numerous former political prisoners and by several State Security officers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. Power and resistance are illustrated with the case of Konstantin and Metodi, who have always been friends but fierce opponents as well. While Metodi is a careerist, Konstantin remains a rebel and ploughs through the State Security archives in search of the truth. Even before this novel, Trojanow and photographer Christian Muhrbeck had depicted life in Bulgaria in the book *Wo Orpheus begraben liegt* (Where Orpheus Lies Buried, 2013). Although he left Bulgaria as a six-year-old, Trojanow keeps returning to it. As early as 2007, when he was the Mainz city writer, he shot a documentary, *Vorwärts und nie vergessen – Ballade über bulgarische Helden* (Forward and Never Forgotten – A Ballad of Bulgarian Heroes), in which he interviewed former political prisoners and criticised the Communist dictatorship. His many conversations with refugees inspired his poetic essay, *Nach der Flucht: Ein autobiographischer Essay* (After Fleeing:

An Autobiographical Essay, 2016), which – as suggested by the subtitle – includes his autobiographical experience as a refugee and migrant. Moreover, the essay voices the experience of many writers who are often asked, simply because of the different sound of their names, where they come from, how they acquired such good German, and ‘Why don’t you write in your mother tongue?’ Trojanow is thus branded by the first six years of his life rather than by the other 47 years, when he had settled into the German language. This is one of his favourite topics, since he is invited to many universities as a guest lecturer: in 2007 he delivered, together with Feridun Zaimoğlu, a series of lectures on poetics at Tübingen University, published as *Ferne Nähe* (Distant Closeness). His numerous awards include the 2000 Adelbert von Chamisso Prize, bestowed on those German-writing authors whose mother tongue is not German.

As Trojanow observes in an interview, contemporary literature is heavily marked by multilingual authors, ‘language switchers’. Multilingualism offers the possibility of getting to know the world from the outside. To enter a language consciously is different from being born into it. With a new language, you have brought a new world into your own. Multilingualism is undoubtedly an important experience of today’s global world, teeming with migrations but, sadly, with xenophobia as well. With Ilija Trojanow we have acquired another Vilenica laureate with an exceptional critical and upright stance, which is convincingly rendered in his documentary writings and, above all, with an exquisite poetic quality in his essays, novels and poems.

Translated by Nada Grošelj

Tepe

Als Kind wuchs er auf den Tepe zu, Grasbüschel hinter den Feldern, im Frühjahr hüpfen die Bäche über Stock und Stein, sein Tepe, nächstens eine Silhouette, im Vollmond ein buckelndes Schaf. Jeder Tag begann vor Sonnenaufgang, er schüttelte die Kälte aus den Gliedern, hielt die Nase in den Nebel, führte die Tiere die Hänge hinauf, kaute an Halmen, döste in vertrautem Schatten, kehrte zu Sonnenuntergang heim, zur kochenden Mutter und ihren rauen Händen. Schmetterlinge und Libellen flirrten durch seine Tagträume, Würgfalken fielen vom Himmel wie gierige Engel, er drehte sich eine Zigarette, keine fünfzehn Jahre alt, blickte den emporsteigenden Falken hinterher, Beute in den Krallen, er zündete sich die Zigarette an. Still sei es am Tepe, behaupteten die Leute. Selten gab es Tage, an denen er die Schreie der Schelladler und Heidelerchen nicht hörte, selten Tage, an denen sein Vater am Esstisch voller Kerben nicht unvermittelt murmelte: Morgen ist auch noch ein Jahr. Gelegentlich vernahm er das Trillern des Mauerläufers, einmal flatterten die roten Flügel vor dem schneebedeckten Tepe, in diesem Augenblick war es wahrlich still. Wenn Jäger Auskunft von ihm forderten, antwortete er: Das Auerhuhn könnt ihr nur treffen, wenn es singt, das Auerhuhn nimmt nichts wahr außer seinen eigenen Gesang. Die Jäger winkten grimmig ab, das wissen wir schon, laß ab von der Hirschkuh, sang abends sein Vater, sieh dich lieber nach Mädchen um. Die Jäger stiegen weiter in ihren schweren Stiefeln, deren Abdruck die Erde stempelte, er ärgerte sich und sah darüber hinweg, bis Unbekannte auftauchten, die ohne einen Gruß Löcher in den Tepe bohrten, er beobachtete sie von dem Vorsprung aus, von dem aus er alles überblicken konnte. Fremde parkten ihre Fahrzeuge, wo es ihnen beliebte, am Abend saß er mit den anderen Männern des Dorfes zusammen, die gute Nachricht beratschlagend, die schlechte Nachricht. Die Mine wird uns zerstören, sagte der alte Koljo, wir haben doch alles, was wir brauchen. Einige lachten ihn aus. Wir haben alles? Wie wenig wir haben, wirst du erst begreifen, wenn wir bald viel mehr haben. Sie stritten sich, als hinge die Entscheidung von ihnen ab. Morgen ist auch noch ein Jahr, ließ sein Vater versöhnlich vernehmen. Der Tepe wurde aufgeschlitzt, aufgerissen, ausgehöhlt, im ausgeweideten Berg war sein Tepe nicht mehr zu erkennen. Er stand am Rande eines großen Lochs, das immer tiefer ausgehoben wurde.

Die Brunnen trockneten aus, ein Lastwagen brachte Kanister mit Wasser, was beschwert ihr euch, hieß es von Amts wegen, der Sommer war heiß, es hat zu wenig geregnet. Das Wasser wurde trübe, es stank. Könnt ihr euch erinnern, sagte Koljo, das Wasser war unser Reichtum. Der Fluß war im Sommer ein nacktes Bett, Schlangen krochen durchs Geröll, in der Erinnerung baumelten die Füße im Wasser. Es war nicht mehr still am Tepe, es dröhnte und ratterte, er malochte in Reih und Glied, er wusch sich den Dreck vom Körper, er hustete sich den Staub aus der Lunge, er holte am Monatsende das Geld im Lohnbüro ab, das gab er aus, für eine Hochzeit, für ein Kind, für einen Fernseher, für eine Sitzgarnitur, für eine Hütte auf einer kleinen Koppel inmitten des Waldes, fernab von allen Straßen, weit weg vom Tepe. Er ließ sich in die Liste eintragen und zahlte für einen Wagen an. Einmal im Jahr wurde er von einem Arzt untersucht, flüchtiger als er einst die Schafe abgetastet hatte. Die Jahre waren grau, wer starb, hinterließ trauernde Eltern, alles wurde minutiös vermerkt, von Buchhaltern hinter verschlossenen Fenstern, er hatte keine Ahnung, wieviel Fels sie abgetragen hatten, er konnte nicht schätzen, wieviel Bauschutt und Bodenschutt, wie viele Tonnen Rückstände sie zu einem künstlichen Tepe aufgetürmt hatten, an dessen Hängen kein Baum wuchs, kein Tier graste. Er trug Handschuhe, einen Helm, eine Schutzmaske, niemand warnte sie, bis zu jenem Tag, als das Verborgene zur Sprache kam. Er saß in dem kahlen Raum und wartete auf den Arzt, er war fast nackt, ein einziges Bild an der Wand, das schief hing, das Bild eines mächtigen Mannes, dessen Name er vergessen wollte, er fröstelte, er schlang die Arme um die Schultern und harrte aus, vor seinen Augen der dicht bewachsene Tepe, grün und nicht behütet. Der Arzt teilte ihm in kargen Worten mit, was er mitzuteilen hatte. Er verspürte Schuld. Ich habe unser Leben vergiftet, sagte er zu seiner Frau. Wir müssen wegziehen. Wohin, fragte sie. In die Hütte, sagte er. Für wie lange, fragte sie. Nicht für lange, sagte er, höchstens für ein Jahr, und er begann zu husten, und das Husten nahm kein Ende.

Kühe hütet er statt Schafe, hustet weitaus seltener als einst, hat seit Monaten keinen Menschen gesehen außer seiner Frau und vor Wochen den Viehdieben im Visier seines Jagdgewehrs, während neben ihm Neda die Makarow-Pistole entsicherte, sie war nicht bereit, den Verlust einer weiteren Kuh hinzunehmen. Das eine Jahr ist immer noch nicht vorbei, auch nicht nach zwei Jahrzehnten, die zu-

sammengeschusterten Bretter halten, auf jedem Brett Proviant für den Winter, Walnüsse, Äpfel, Paprika und Eingewecktes, sie haben sich eingerichtet im Provisorium, mit warmer Milch, Joghurt und Lakenkäse, von dichtem Laubwald umgeben, eine andere Art zu leben ist ihnen nicht mehr geläufig, wenn seine Frau lächelt, setzt sich die Landschaft in ihrem Gesicht fort. Beim Aufwachen denkt er manchmal an den Tepe, an die roten Flügel des Mauerläufers, an die prophetische Einsamkeit des alten Koljo. Er steht auf, die Kühe zu melken, der Laubwald ist auf andere Weise still als der Tepe. Was wir gemeinsam erleben, ist ein Segen, sagt Neda, ist eine Gelegenheit, sagt er. Sie trinken auf diesen Segen, auf diese Gelegenheit, und er richtet sich auf, dieser Tage bedächtigt, die Schmerzen hausen in allen Gliedern, er lüpfte die Plastikuhr auf dem gehäkelten Deckchen und zieht ein Stück Papier hervor, das er behutsam auseinander faltet, eine Zeitungsmeldung von wenigen Zeilen auf vergilbtem Papier. Er sucht seine dicke Hornbrille, er flucht über diese Brille, die nie dort ist, wo er sie vermutet, er benutzt sie nur, um seiner Frau diese Meldung vorzulesen, mit Verblüffung in der Stimme, als hätte er soeben erfahren, daß der älteste Mann auf Erden im Alter von 124 Jahren gestorben sei, hörst du, Neda, hörst du mir zu?, ganze 124 Jahre hat er gelebt, so lange wie wir beide zusammen, stell dir das mal vor. Wenn der Kerl es geschafft hat, können wir es auch schaffen, trotz Hühneraugen und eingefallener Lunge, er hustet wieder, wie immer, wenn er lachen muß beim Vorlesen der Nachricht über den ältesten aller Alten, einmal an jedem ihrer Tage. Schmunzelnd nimmt Neda den Zeitungsausschnitt und legt ihn unter die Plastikuhr zurück, ehrfurchtsvoll wie eine kleine Ikone, die den Glauben ans Überleben nährt, und er greift unter den Stuhl, nach zwei Stücken Draht, beide im rechten Winkel gebogen, das kürzere Ende liegt in seinen Händen, das dreimal längere zeigt zu Boden, er tritt hinaus und bleibt stehen, mit der Geduld eines Menschen, der direkt mit der Zeit verhandelt. Wenige Meter von der Baracke entfernt, neben dem Kartoffelacker, richtet er die beiden Drahtwinkel parallel aus, setzt einen Schritt und dann einen weiteren, in seinen Gedanken liegen Schelladler und Heidelerchen, fallen Schatten, die allein er kennt, er wartet, bis die beiden Bügel sich bewegen, bis sie sich kreuzen, da bleibt er stehen, hält einige Augenblicke inne, bevor er Neda zu sich ruft, ich habe die Wasserrader gefunden, hier mußt du dein Gemüse anbauen. Neda tritt

hinaus, auf ihrem Gesicht ein frisches Staunen über ihren Mann. Er lächelt zufrieden, und für eine Weile vergißt er den Tepe, den Husten, die Viehdiebe und die vermaledeite Zeit.

Der gefressene Zoo

Es ist nicht leicht, einen Zoo aufzubauen. Nicht in einem Provinzstädtchen. Erst recht nicht in diesen Zeiten. Wir müssen unseren Beitrag leisten, den Sozialismus zu errichten, sagt der Parteisekretär, nicht einen Zoo! Er läßt nicht mit sich reden, nicht einmal, wenn es sich um ein kleines, bescheidenes Gehege handelt, mit einigen Rehen und einigen Hirschen, mit Pfauen, Perlhühnern, Bergziegen und vielleicht einem hinkenden Fuchs. Wie schlecht stehen da erst die Chancen für einen richtigen Zoo, wie er mir vorschwebt, während ich Tag für Tag die Holztische der Gaststätte abwische und sehnsüchtig auf den Frühling warte, während ich den Fußboden fege und von Zebras und Giraffen träume, und sogar von einem Elefanten, während ich die Dachrinne säubere. Wenn die ersten Besucher sich draußen an den See setzen, ein Bier bestellen, die felsigen Buckel betrachten und ihre Glieder in den frühen Sommer strecken, huscht ein Löwe durch meine Gedanken.

Meine Träume sind geduldig. Die Gaststätte wird renoviert, die Terrasse wird erweitert, die Wiese vor dem Wald wuchert vor sich hin und eines Tages beschließt das Partiekomitee, meinem Antrag zu entsprechen und ein Tiergehege an der Nordseite des Sees zu genehmigen. Und was für eine Freude, dass sie mich mit dieser Aufgabe betrauen. Ich kann einige Rehe und einen Hirsch auftreiben, etwas später auch fünf Bergziegen. Einem Zigeuner, der schwer an Gicht leidet, kaufe ich seinen alten, gebrechlichen Tanzbären ab. Es kann sich sehen lassen, das Kleingehege mit dem heimischen Wild. Ich pflanze Sträucher und Bäume an, ich fülle die Wassertröge, ich bemale Schilder und rufe den Tierarzt aus der Bezirksstadt, als das erste Reh wirft. Und so gehe ich weiterhin jeden Tag in meinen Träumen spazieren, am See entlang, ohne aus den Augen zu verlieren, was noch fehlt, was dieses Tiergehege in einen wirklichen Zoo verwandeln würde, etwas fremdes, etwas von ganz weit weg, so etwas wie ... na ... zum Beispiel ... eine Giraffe.

— Giraffe? Kein Problem, Onkel.

So spricht mein Neffe Grozdan, der es erstaunlich weit gebracht hat, in die Hauptstadt, wo er in einem Ministerium arbeitet, und uns einmal im Jahr mit seinem Dienstauto besucht.

— Was willst du damit sagen?

— Du hast Glück, Onkel, und dein Glück hat einen Namen: Sekou Touré.

— Zeku Ture?

— Nein, Se-kou Tou-ré. Liest du denn nicht Zeitung? *Der Pavian, der dem Leoparden trotzt. Die Spinne, die die Hyäne hereinlegt.*

— Was für eine Hyäne?

— De Gaulle, Onkel. General Charles de Gaulle. Zerbrich dir über so was nicht den Kopf, das ist komplizierte Geopolitik. Merk dir nur soviel — wir haben einen neuen Freund in Afrika, und vielleicht auch bald einen Lieferanten.

— Was liefert der?

— Giraffen oder Gazellen oder Gnus. Was weiß ich? Vielleicht schaut für dich eines Tages sogar ein Löwe dabei heraus.

— Ein Löwe!

— Nicht auszuschließen.

Ich muß die Holztische nicht mehr abwischen. Ich bin für das Gehege zuständig und habe mehr Zeit zum Nachdenken. Über die Hyäne, über den General und meinen Neffen. Ein glücklicher Zufall, einer aus der Familie, der Beziehungen nach Afrika hat. Woanders gibt es keine Giraffen. Nur muß ich mich schon wundern, dass Grozdan als Gegenleistung für die Giraffen Kloschüsseln liefern will. Vielleicht hat er ja einen Scherz gemacht. Ich verstehe ihn nicht immer. Meist ruft er aus heiterem Himmel an und überrumpelt mich ...

— Gute Nachrichten, Onkel. Es ist eine Giraffe dabei, und, jetzt halt dich fest, auch ein Löwe!

Die Leitung ist schlecht, aber soviel verstehe ich, dass mein Nefte mich in die Hauptstadt ruft, damit ich die Tiere abhole und in ihr neues Zuhause begleite. Ich bin erstaunt, wie begeistert sich der Parteisekretär auf einmal zeigt. Er klopft mir auf die Schulter und wünscht mir viel Erfolg. Ich nehme den Bus in die Hauptstadt, und als ich die schönen Tiere sehe, kommen mir die Tränen. Am nächsten Tag sagt mir der Tierarzt, der Löwe sei blind und die Giraffe lahm. Aber das trübt meine Freude kaum, zumal mir die freundlichen Kollegen aus dem großen Zoo in der Hauptstadt auch einige Zebras schenken ... Ich bedanke mich. Auch wenn sich die Zebras im Laufe der Jahre allesamt als unfruchtbar erweisen.

Die Sterne stehen günstig, das Telefon klingelt und eine fröhliche Stimme ruft:

— Dar-es-Salaam.

— Grozdan?

— Dar-es-Sa-laaaaaam.

— Bist du das, Grozdan?

— Wie hört sich das für dich an, Onkel? Ny-e-re-re, U-ja-maaaaa.

— Sprichst du von Tieren?

— So viele, wie du haben möchtest. Rat mal, mit wem wir Brüderschaft geschlossen haben ...

— Woher soll ich das wissen, Grozdan?

— Mit Tansania.

— Serengeti!

— Genau, Onkel, die Tierkammer Afrikas steht dir offen.

Grozdan hat dazugelernt. Nun verschifft er Pfirsichkompott und eingelegte Paprika. Die Tansanier revanchieren sich mit jungen, gesunden Gazellen.

Grozdan nimmt einen großen Schluck aus dem Bierglas. Er ist mal wieder auf Heimatbesuch.

— Ich wußte gar nicht, wie viele verschiedene Gazellen es gibt? Vor Ort haben sie mich gefragt, was wir uns denn wünschen, ob Grant oder Thomson oder Impala oder Kongoni oder Dik-Dik ... Mir blieb die Spucke weg. Ich dachte, Gazelle ist wie Reh. Ich habe mich für die Impala entschieden, ich hoffe, das ist dir recht, und ich habe auch einige Zebras nachbestellt, zeugungsfähige. Sonst sterben dir die Zebras bald aus.

— Du hast gut getan, Grozdan. Die Zebras sind die Lieblinge der Kinder.

— Das liegt nur daran, dass du noch keine Affen hast. Lass mich nur machen.

Seitdem ich weiß, wie wichtig Geopolitik für meinen Zoo ist, lese ich die Zeitung aufmerksam. Seite fünf, wo gelegentlich etwas über Afrika steht. Der Herbst hat sein Gold verloren, aber ich muß ja die Blätter nicht mehr zusammenkehren. Man hat mir zwar einen erfahrenen Zooverwalter vor die Nase gesetzt, doch ich arbeite an seiner Seite, als stellvertretender Direktor. Die Zeitung berichtet von dem Staatsbesuch eines unserer guten Freunde, eines Mann namens Agostinho Neto. Der Präsident der sozialistischen Republik von Angola habe uns ein ungewöhnliches Geschenk mitgebracht, eine Horde Paviane. Wir können sie gut gebrauchen, wird Grozdan H., ein hochrangiger Beamter im Außenministeriums, zitiert. Wochen später, pünktlich zum Wintereinbruch, erreichen die Paviane unser Städtchen. Die Affen gewöhnen sich schnell an das Leben bei uns zwischen See und Bergen. Ich bringe ihnen sogar das Schneeballwerfen bei.

Der Höhepunkt meines Lebens kündigt sich in einem unverhofften Telegramm an:

HAILE SELASSIE IN VOLKSREVOLUTION GESTÜRZT
STOP LÖWEN ZU HABEN STOP GROZDAN

Nach so vielen Jahrzehnten, nach so vielen Hoffnungen und Träumen, tritt eines Tages ein stolzer, gesunder Löwe in den Zoo ein — der blinde war im August des Prager Frühlings verstorben. In der Gaststätte am See feiern wir, der Zoodirektor, der Parteisekretär, Grozdan und ich. Nach vielen Trinksprüchen auf Löwen, Pavianen, Impalas und Giraffen schleppt sich die Zunge des Parteisekretärs an mein Ohr heran: Den Sozialismus, den haben wir nicht hingekriegt, aber dein Zoo, daraus ist immerhin was geworden. Verwirrt schaue ich zu den Felsen hinaus.

Und schaue tags darauf immer noch hinaus, als das trunkene Geständnis des Parteisekretärs im Radio bestätigt wird. Mich fröstelt es ein wenig bei dem Gedanken, was aus meinem Zoo nun werden soll.

Zuerst verschwinden zwei Perlhühner. Ich überprüfe alle Zäune und alle Tore. Und tröste mich, es sei nur ein Einzelfall gewesen. Doch die Verluste häufen sich und mir wird klar, dass ich etwas unternehmen muß. Ich suche die Polizei auf.

— In letzter Zeit hat man mir acht Pfauen, zehn goldene Perlhühner und sechs Bergziegen gestohlen.

— Gehören die Tiere dir?

— Nein, ich bin verantwortlich, ich passe auf die Tiere auf.

— Dann hast du wohl nicht gut aufgepaßt.

— Die sind in der Nacht gekommen.

— Wer sind die denn?

— Ich weiß es nicht.

— Onkelchen, hast du den blassesten Schimmer, wie viele Verbrechen es in dieser Stadt gibt, seit wir Demokratie spielen? Da kommst du daher und erwartest, dass wir uns um entlaufene Ziegen kümmern.

— Bergziegen, schwarze Bergziegen, die sind selten.

Ich beschließe, die Nacht über zu wachen. Nur einmal nicke ich ein. Am nächsten Morgen habe ich Kopfschmerzen und eine Beule am Kopf. Es fehlen vier Rehe. Die Räuber haben das Gittertor mit einem Draht wieder verschlossen. Sie könnten noch im Wald sein. Ich laufe durch den Wald, ich kenne jede Ecke des Waldes. Aber ich überschätze meine Kräfte. In einer Lichtung breche ich zusammen,

der Boden ist naß vom geschmolzenen Schnee. Ich sehe Asche, und dann sehe ich das Rippengehäuse einer Ziege. Eine unbekannte Kälte erfasst mein Herz. Um mich herum Knochen, und es stinkt, neben einem Stamm liegt ein abgezogenes Fell. Nicht einmal Grozdan kann mir helfen. Er ist nach Südafrika abgeordnet worden. Er soll dort als Botschafter neue Freundschaften schließen.

Als die Impalas verschwinden, begreife ich, dass ich dringend handeln muss. Ich rufe beim Zoo in der Hauptstadt an.

— Was sollen wir mit noch mehr Tieren.

— Ihr wolltet sie doch haben, damals. Die Paviane.

— Wer immer sie haben wollte, das muss lange her sein. Hören Sie, ich kann mir vorstellen, dass Sie es schwer haben, aber wir haben hier auch unsere Mühe, die Tiere zu ernähren. Meinen Sie, ich kann von den Arbeitern verlangen, dass sie den Leoparden Fleisch geben, wenn sie selbst vergessen haben, wie Fleisch schmeckt. Erklären Sie mir mal, wie man Leoparden ohne Fleisch ernähren soll. Unsere Raubtiere sehen schon aus wie Somalier.

— Hier ist es anders. Hier werden die Tiere gegessen.

— Bestimmt nicht die Leoparden.

— Ich habe keinen Leoparden.

— Da haben Sie aber Glück.

Ich telefoniere und telefoniere, ich rede auf jeden Zoodirektor des Landes ein. Vergeblich. Die Gazellen verschwinden, eine nach der anderen. Ich teile meine magere Rente mit dem alten abessinischen Löwen. An dem Morgen, an dem ich die Zebras dreimal durchzähle und jedes Mal eines fehlt, öffne ich die Tore. Ich nehme Abschied von jedem der Tiere und werfe die Schlüssel in den See. Dann laufe ich ein letztes Mal durch den Wald. Ich kann m

einen Zoo nicht mehr schützen. Ich bleibe irgendwo stehen. Ich heule, ohne Tränen, und es klingt in meinen Ohren wie das kraftlose Heulen eines alten Wolfes. Ich sinke in die Knie und heule weiter, auf allen Vieren.

Tepe¹

Kot otrok je rasel vse više proti vrhu tepeja, polja obdana s šopi trave, spomladi so čez drn in strn skakljali potoki, njegov tepe, sprva samo silhueta, je ob polni luni postal zgrbljena ovca. Dnevi so se začeli pred sončnim vzhodom, stresel si je hlad z udov, podržal nos v meglo, gnal živali po strmih pobočjih, grizljal travne bilke, dremal v dobro znani senci, se ob sončnem zahodu vrnil domov, k mami, ki je kuhala z raskavimi dlanmi. Metulji in kačji pastirji so se spretavali po njegovih sanjarjenjih, sokoli plenilci so padali z neba kot lakomni angeli, zvil si je cigareto, še petnajst jih ni imel, pogledoval je za dvigajočimi se sokoli, s plenom v krempljih, si prižgal cigareto. Tihotno je ob vznožju tepeja, so trdili ljudje. Le redko se je zgodilo, da ni slišal krikov velikih klinkačev in hribskih škrjancev, redki so bili dnevi, ko njegov oče za razbrazdano jedilno mizo ne bi kar tako zamrmral: Jutri je še eno leto. Včasih je zaznal brlizge skalnega plezalčka, nekoč so pred zasneženim tepejem zafrfotala njegova rdeča krila in v tistem trenutku je bilo zares tihotno. Ko so ga lovci spraševali za nasvet, jim je odgovoril: Divjega petelina lahko zadenete le, ko poje, kajti divji petelin takrat ne zaznava ničesar drugega kot svoje petje. Lovci so mrko odmahnilo z roko, to že vemo, pusti košuto, je ob večerih pel oče, raje pogleduj za dekleti. Lovci so se vzpenjali vse više v svojih okovanih čevljih, katerih odtisi so žigosali zemljo, jezil se je in gledal proč, dokler se niso pojavili neznanci, ki so brez pozdrava zvrtili luknje v tepe, opazoval jih je z razgledne vzpetine. Tujci so parkirali svoja vozila, kjer se jim je zahotelo, zvečer je sedel z drugimi moškimi iz vasi, razpravljaj o dobri novici, o slabi novici. Rudnik nas bo uničil, je rekel stari Koljo, saj imamo vendar vse, kar rabimo. Nekateri so se mu posmehovali. Da imamo vse? Kako malo imamo, boš dojel šele, ko bomo kmalu imeli veliko več. Prepirali so se, kakor da je odločitev odvisna od njih. Saj je jutri še eno leto, se je spravljivo oglasil njegov oče. Tepe so razparali, raztrgali, izvotlili, v gori brez drobovja ni več prepoznal svojega tepeja. Stal je ob robu velike luknje, ki so jo vse bolj poglobljali. Vodnjaki so se izsušili, tovornjak je pripeljal kanistre z vodo, le kaj se pritožujete, je prišlo z uradne strani, poletje je bilo vroče, premalo je deževalo. Voda je bila kalna, smrdela je. Se še spomnite, je rekel Koljo, voda je bila nekoč

¹ Tepe je bolgarska beseda za grič, vzpetino ali goro.

naše bogastvo. Reka je bila zdaj le še gola struga, kače so se plazile po prodju, v spominu pa so noge čofotale po vodi. Okrog tepeja ni bilo nič več tiho, rohnelo je in ropotalo, garal je kot del tekočega traku, spiral si je umazanijo s telesa, izkašljeval prah iz pljuč, ob koncu meseca v plačilni pisarni dvignil denar, ki ga je potem porabil, za poroko, za otroka, za televizor, za sedežno, za kočo na majhnem griču sredi gozda, daleč od cest, daleč od tepeja. Vpisal se je na čakalni seznam in vplačal avto. Enkrat letno ga je pregledal zdravnik, bolj mimogrede, kot je sam nekdanj pretipal svoje ovce. Leta so bila siva, kdor je umrl, je za seboj pustil žalujoče starše, vse so si natančno beležili računovodje za zaprtimi okni, pojma ni imel, koliko skalovja so odkopali, ni mogel oceniti, koliko gradbenih odpadkov in grušča, koliko ton odpadnega materiala so nagrmadili v umetni tepe, na pobočjih katerega ni raslo niti eno drevo, se ni pasla niti ena žival. Nosil je rokavice, čelado, zaščitno masko, nihče jih ni posvaril, do tistega dne, ko se je ubesedilo prikrito. Sedel je v pustem prostoru in čakal zdravnika, skoraj gol je bil, na steni ena sama poševno viseča slika, slika veljaka, čigar ime je hotel pozabiti, mrazilo ga je, z rokami se je objel okrog ramen in potrpežljivo čakal, pred očmi se mu je prikazoval gosto obraščeni tepe, zelen in nezaščiten. Zdravnik mu je v skupih besedah povedal, kar mu je imel povedati. Čutil se je krivega. Zastrupil sem naše življenje, je rekel ženi. Odseliti se mora. Kam, je vprašala. V kočo, je rekel. Za koliko časa, je vprašala. Ne za dolgo, je rekel, največ eno leto, je zakašljaj in kašlju ni bilo konca.

Zdaj pase krave, ne ovac, pokašljeva mnogo manj kot prej, že več mesecev ni videl žive duše razen svoje žene in pred nekaj tedni živinskega tatu skozi vizir lovske puške, medtem ko je Neda poleg njega odkočila pištolo Makarov, ni bila pripravljena sprejeti izgube še ene krave. Prvega leta še ni konec, tudi po dveh desetletjih še ne, zbite deske držijo, na vsaki izmed njih je živež za zimo, orehi, jabolka, paprika in vložena zelenjava, udomačila sta se v provizoriju, s toplim mlekom, jogurtom in mehkim belim sirom, obdana z gostim listnatim gozdom, ne poznata več drugačnega življenja, ko se njegova žena nasmehne, se v njenem obrazu nadaljuje pokrajina. Ko se prebujata, včasih pomisli na tepe, na rdeča krilca skalnega plezalčka, na preroško osamljenost starega Kolja. Vstane, da bi pomolzel krave, listnati gozd je tihoten na drugačen način kot tepe. Vse, kar doživljava skupaj, je blagoslov, pravi Neda, je priložnost, pravi on. Nazdravita temu blagoslovu, tej priložnosti, on se vzravna, zadnje

čase previdno, bolečina se mu je naselila v vse ude, privzdigne plastično uro s kvačkanega prtiča in izpod nje potegne listek papirja, ki ga previdno razgrne, časopisna novička na orumenelem papirju, dolga le nekaj vrstic. Poišče debela roževinasta očala, priduša se, saj nikdar niso tam, kjer bi pričakoval, uporabi jih le za to, da ženi prebere novico, z osuplostjo v glasu, kakor da bi šele pravkar izvedel, da je najstarejši moški na svetu umrl v starosti 124 let, slišiš, Neda, me poslušajš?, celih 124 let je živel, toliko kot midva skupaj, samo predstavljaš si. Če je uspelo temu kerlcu, bo pa tudi nama, kljub kurjim očesom in udrtim pljučem, spet zakašlja, kot vedno, ko ga ob branju novice o najstarejšem izmed starih popade smeh, vsak njun dan enkrat. Neda se namuzne, vzame časopisni izrezek in ga ponovno položi pod plastično uro, spoštljivo kot majhno ikono, ki hrani vero v preživetje, on pa seže pod stol, zatipa dva pravokotno zapognjena konca žice, krajši konec je v njegovih rokah, trikrat daljši kaže proti tlom, stopi ven in zastane, s potrpljenjem človeka, ki se pogaja neposredno s časom. Nekaj metrov od barake, poleg krompirjeve njive, poravna oba žična konca, naredi korak in nato še enega, na duši mu ležijo veliki klinkači in hribski škrjanci, padajo sence, ki jih pozna le on, čaka, da se konca žice zganeta, da se prekrížata, nenadoma obstane, postoji nekaj trenutkov, preden pokliče Nedo, našel sem vodno žilo, tukaj moraš zasaditi zelenjavo. Neda stopi čez prag, na obrazu se ji zariše sveža osuplost nad možem. Ta se zadovoljno nasmehe, za hip pozabi na tepe, kašelj, živinske tatove in prekleti čas.

Prevedla Amalija Maček

Požrti ZOO

Ni lahko ustanoviti živalskega vrta. Še posebej v provincialnem mestecu. Sploh pa ne v današnjih časih. Prispevati moramo k izgradnji socializma, pravi partijski sekretar, ne pa živalskega vrta! Ni ga mogoče pregovoriti, niti če bi šlo za majhno, skromno ogrado z nekaj srnami in nekaj jeleni, pavi, pegatkami, gamsi in morda še kakšno šepavo lisico. Še toliko manj pa je možnosti za pravi živalski vrt, kakršnega si predstavljam, ko dan za dnem brišem lesene gostilniške mize in težko čakam pomladi, medtem ko pometam tla in sanjarim o zebrah in žirafah, celo o slonu, medtem ko čistim žleb. Ko se prvi gostje usedejo zunaj k jezeru, naročijo pivo, občudujejo skalnate vrhove in pretegnejo ude v zgodnje poletje, skozi moje misli huščne lev.

Moje sanje so potrpežljive. Gostišče bodo obnovili, teraso razširili, travnik pred gozdom se bo bujno zarasel in nekega dne bo partijski komite ugodno rešil mojo vlogo ter na severnem bregu jezera dovolil živalsko ogrado. Kakšna sreča, da to nalogo zaupajo prav meni. Nekje mi uspe stakniti nekaj srn in jelena, malo zatem še pet gamsov. Od cigana, ki trpi za hudo putiko, kupim še starega, obnemolega plešočega medveda. Kako lepa mala ograda z lokalno divjadjo. Zasadim grmičevje in drevesa, napolnim korita z vodo, narišem nekaj smerokazov, in ko povrže prva košuta, pokličem veterinarja iz bližnjega okrajnega središča. Tako se v sanjah vsak dan sprehajam vzdolž jezera, ne da bi izgubil izpred oči vse, kar tej ogradi še manjka, da bi postala pravi živalski vrt, nekaj tujega namreč, nekaj daljnega, nekaj takšnega kot ... no ... na primer ... žirafa.

— Žirafa? Ni problema, striček.

Tako pravi nečak Grozdan, ki je prilezel presenetljivo daleč, v prestolnico, kjer dela na nekem ministrstvu in nas enkrat letno obiše s službenim avtomobilom.

— Kako to misliš?

— Srečo imaš, striček, in tvoji sreči je ime Sekou Touré.

— Zeku Ture?

— Ne, Se-kou Tou-ré. Ne bereš časopisov? *Pavijan, ki kljubuje leopardu. Pajek, ki je prelisicil hijeno.*

— Kakšno hijeno?

— De Gaulle, striček. General Charles de Gaulle. Ne razbijaj si glave s tem, saj gre za zapleteno geopolitiko. Zapomni si le to – v Afriki imamo novega prijatelja, morda pa kmalu tudi dobavitelja.

— Kaj pa bo dobavljal?

— Žirafe, gazele ali gnuje. Kaj pa vem. Mogoče se bo nekega dne prikazal celo tvoj lev.

— Lev!

— Ni izključeno.

Ni mi treba več brisati lesenih miz. Odgovoren sem za ogrado in tako imam na voljo več časa za razmišljanje. O hijeni, o generalu in nečaku. Kakšno srečno naključje, da ima nekdo iz moje družine zvezde v Afriki. Drugod namreč ni žiraf. Vendar me čudi, da želi Grozdan kot protiuslugo za žirafe v Afriko dobavljati straniščne pokrove. Morda pa se je šalil. Ne razumem ga vedno najbolje. Po navadi pokliče kot strela z jasnega in me preseneti ...

— Dobre novice imam, striček. Žirafa je prispela in, raje se usedi, celo lev!

Povezava je slaba, a vendarle nekako razberem, da me nečak vabi v prestolnico, kjer naj bi prevzel živali in jih pospremil v novo domovanje. Presenečen sem, kako navdušen je nenadoma partijski sekretar. Potreplja me po rami in mi zaželi veliko uspeha. Z avtobusom se odpeljem v glavno mesto in ko zagledam prelepe živali, se mi ulijejo solze. Naslednjega dne mi veterinar pove, da je lev slep in žirafa hroma. Vendar mi to ne skali veselja, ker mi prijazni kolegi iz velikega živalskega vrta v prestolnici podarijo še nekaj zeber ... Zahvalim se. Pa čeprav so se zebre v naslednjih letih vse po vrsti izkazale za neplodne.

Zvezde so mi naklonjene, telefon zazvoni in prijazen glas mi veselo pravi:

— Dar-es-Salaam.

— Grozdan?

— Dar-es-Sa-laaaaaaam.

— Si to ti, Grozdan?

— Kako ti to zveni, striček? Ny-e-re-re, U-ja-maaaaa.

— Govoriš o živalih?

— Kolikor jih hočeš. Le ugani, s kom smo se pobratili ...

— Kako naj pa jaz to vem, Grozdan?

— S Tanzanijo.

— Serengeti!

— Natančno tako, striček, živalska zakladnica Afrike ti na široko odpira svoje duri.

Grozdan je vse spretnejši. Zdaj izvaža breskov kompot in vloženo papriko. Tanzanijci pa se oddolžijo z mladimi, zdravimi gazelami.

Grozdan napravi velik požirek piva. Spet enkrat je na obisku v domovini.

— Sploh nisem vedel, da je toliko različnih gazel. Vprašali so me, katere bi radi, Grantove ali Thomsonove, impale ali skokonoge gazele, morda raje dik-dik ... Zaprlo mi je sapo. Mislil sem, da so gazele kot srne. Odločil sem se za impale, upam, da se strinjaš, pa še nekaj zeber sem naročil, takšnih plodnih. Drugače ti bodo kmalu izumrle.

— Pravilno si se odločil, Grozdan. Zebre imajo otroci najraje.

— To pa samo zato, ker še nimaš opic. Kar meni prepusti.

Odkar vem, kako pomembna je geopolitika za moj živalski vrt, pozorno prebiram časopis. Predvsem peto stran, na kateri občasno piše tudi kaj o Afriki. Jesen je izgubila svoje zlato, ampak meni ni več treba grabiti listja. Naprtili so mi sicer nekega izkušenega upravitelja živalskega vrta, a delam z ramo ob rami z njim, kot direktorjev namestnik. Časopis poroča o državnem obisku našega dobrega prijatelja, človeka po imenu Agostinho Neto. Predsednik socialistične republike Angole nam prinese nenavadno darilo – trop pavijanov. Zelo prav nam bodo prišli, časopisi povzemajo besede Grozdana H., visokega uradnika na Ministrstvu za zunanje zadeve. Čez nekaj tednov, ravno ob začetku zime, pavijani prispejo v naše mestece. Opice se hitro privadijo na življenje med jezerom in gorami. Celo kepanja jih naučim.

Vrhunec mojega življenja pa se napove v nepričakovanem telegramu:

HAILE SELASSIE PADEL STOP LJUDSKA VSTAJA STOP LEVI NA VOLJO STOP GROZDAN

Po toliko desetletjih, po toliko upih in sanjah je nekega dne v živalski vrt naposled vstopil ponosen, zdrav lev – slepi je poginil avgusta v času praške pomladi. V gostišču ob jezeru zdaj torej praznujemo: direktor živalskega vrta, partijski sekretar, Grozdan in jaz. Po številnih zdravicah na čast levu, pavijanom, impalam in žirafam se jezik partijskega sekretarja primaje k mojemu ušesu: Socializem nam ni uspel; tvoj živalski vrt, iz tega pa je le nekaj nastalo. Zmedeno pogledam proti skalnim vrhovom.

In še kar gledam predse, ko mi radio potrди opito priznanje partijskega sekretarja. Kar malo me zmrazi ob misli, kaj bo zdaj z mojim živalskim vrtom.

Najprej izgineta dve pegatki. Preverim vse ograje in vrata. Potolažim se, da gre za osamljen primer. Vendar je izgub vse več in postane mi jasno, da moram ukrepati. Pokličem policijo.

— V zadnjem času so mi ukradli osem pavov, deset zlatih pegatk in šest gamsov.

— So živali tvoja lastnina?

— Ne, sem pa odgovoren zanje, pazim nanje.

— Potem pa očitno nisi dovolj dobro pazil nanje.

— Ponoči so prišli.

— Kdo?

— Ne vem.

— Striček, se ti sploh sanja, koliko zločinov je v našem mestu, odkar se igramo demokracijo? Pa prideš ti in pričakuješ, da se bomo ukvarjali s pobeglimi kozami.

— Gamsi, črnimi gamsi, zelo redki so.

Sklenem, da bom ponoči bedel. Samo enkrat zakinkam. Naslednjega jutra imam glavobol in buško na glavi. Manjkajo štiri srne. Roparji so žičnata vrata ponovno zaprli z žico. Morda so še v gozdu. Stečem v gozd, vsak njegov kotic poznam. A precenil sem svoje moči. Na neki jasi se zgrudim, tla so mokra od stopljenega snega. Zagledam pepel, nato pa še gamsova rebra. Srce mi oklene neznan hlad. Vse okrog mene so kosti, smrad, poleg štora leži odrta koža. Niti Grozdan mi ne more pomagati. Poslali so ga v Južno Afriko. Tam naj bi kot veleposlanik sklepal nova prijateljstva.

Ko izginejo še impale, dojamem, da moram nujno ukrepati. Pokličem živalski vrt v prestolnici.

— Le kaj nam bo še več živali.

— Pa saj ste jih takrat hoteli imeti. Pavijane.

— Kdorkoli jih je že hotel imeti, je od takrat preteklo že veliko vode. Poslušajte, razumem, da vam je težko, ampak tudi mi tukaj težko nahranimo živali. Mislite, da lahko od delavcev zahtevam, naj dajo meso leopardom, ko pa so sami pozabili, kakšnega okusa je? Samo pojasnite mi, kako naj nahranim leoparde brez mesa. Naše divje mačke že spominjajo na Somalijce.

— Tukaj je pa ravno obratno. Tu živali jedo.

— Gotovo ne leopardov.

— Nimam leopardov.

— Imate pa še srečo.

Kličem in kličem, prepričujem direktorje vseh živalskih vrtov v tej državi. Zaman. Gazele izginjajo, ena za drugo. Skromno pokojnino delim z abesinskim levom. Nekega jutra, ko trikrat preštejem zebre in vsakokrat ena manjka, odprem vrata. Poslovim se od vsake živali

in ključ vržem v jezero. Potem se še zadnjič sprehodim po gozdu. Svojega živalskega vrta ne morem obvarovati. Naposled se ustavim. Jokam brez solza in v ušesih mi jok zveni kot nemočno zavijanje starega volka. Zgrudim se na kolena in še kar jokam, na vseh štirih.

Prevedla Amalija Maček

The Tepe

As a child, he grew up towards the tepe, tufts of grass behind the fields, in springtime the rivulets ran wild, his tepe, by night a silhouette, by full moon a sheep arching its back. Every day began before sunrise, he'd shake the cold out of his limbs, hold his nose against the fog, lead the animals up the slopes, chew on stalks, doze off in a familiar shady spot, come home at sundown to mother cooking and to her rough hands. Butterflies and dragonflies glimmered through his daydreams, falcons fell from the heavens like greedy angels, and he, not even fifteen years old, would roll himself a cigarette, look up at the rising falcons, prey in their claws, then light the cigarette. It was quiet on the tepe, the people claimed. Rare were the days when he did not hear the screams of the greater spotted eagles and the woodlarks, rare the days when his father, sitting at the notched and nicked dining table, did not curtly mumble: Tomorrow is another year. From time to time he made out the trilling of the wallcreeper, once he caught sight of those red wings fluttering against the snow-capped tepe, and at that moment it was indeed peaceful. Whenever hunters asked him for tips, he would answer: You can only find a wood grouse when it's singing, when the wood grouse is caught up in its own song. The hunters would wave him off brusquely, we know that already, leave the hinds alone, sang his father in the evenings, go hunting for girls instead. The hunters climbed forth in their heavy boots, their treads stamping the earth, he would look the other way, annoyed, until the strangers showed up who, without even greeting, drilled holes in the tepe; he watched them from a ledge where he could observe everything. Strangers parked their vehicles wherever they pleased, and in the evening he sat with the other men of the village, discussing the good news, the bad news. The mine will destroy us, old Koljo said, and we already have everything we need. A few of them laughed at him. We have everything? Soon, when we have much, much more, you'll see how little we have. They argued as if the decision depended on them. Tomorrow is another year, his father weighed in calmly. The tepe was slit open, slashed apart, gouged out and in the gutted mountain he could not recognise his tepe. He stood at the edge of a large hole that was dug deeper and deeper. The wells dried up, a truck brought canisters of water, what are you complaining about, the authorities pronounced,

it was a hot summer, there was too little rain. The water was cloudy and it stank. Remember, said Koljo, water used to be our wealth. In summer the river was a naked bed, snakes crept through the scree, in memory they dangled their feet in the water. It was no longer quiet on the tepe, there was clanging and clashing, he drudged away in rank and file, he washed away the filth from his body, he coughed away the dust from his lungs, at the end of the month he collected money from the pay-office, he spent it, on a wedding, on a child, on a television, on a living room set, on a hut in a little pasture in the middle of the woods, far away from all the streets, far away from the tepe. He put his name down on the list and made payments towards a car. Once a year he was examined by the doctor, more fleetingly than when he used to feel the sheep for lumps. The years were grey, whoever died left behind grieving parents, everything was meticulously noted by accountants behind closed windows, he had no idea how much rock they had hauled away, he couldn't say how much rubble and debris, how many tonnes of waste rock they had towered up into an artificial tepe on whose slopes no tree grew, no animal grazed. He wore gloves, a helmet, a protective mask, no one warned them until the day what had been concealed came to light. He sat in the bleak room and waited for the doctor, it was almost bare, a single picture hung crooked on the wall, a picture of a mighty man whose name he wanted to forget, he shivered, he hugged his shoulders, hanging on, before his eyes, the thickly-grown tepe, green and unguarded. The doctor told him sparsely what it was he had to tell him. He felt a sense of guilt. I have poisoned our lives, he said to his wife. We have to move away. Where, she asked. To the hut, he said. For how long, she asked. Not for long, he said, a year at most, and he started coughing and there was no end to the coughing.

He now keeps watch over cows instead of sheep, coughs much less than before, hasn't seen a soul in months except for his wife and a few weeks ago the cattle thieves through the sight of his hunting rifle, while beside him Neda undid the safety on the Makarov pistol, she wasn't ready to put up with the loss of yet another cow. A year hasn't passed yet, not even after two decades, the cobbled-together boards are still holding up, on every board, provisions for the winter, walnuts, apples, peppers and preserves, it's provisional but it's home, with warm milk, yogurt and salty white cheese, surrounded by dense broadleaf forest, they're no longer used to living

any other way, when his wife laughs, the landscape spreads over her face. When he wakes up he sometimes thinks about the tepe, about the red wings of the wallcreeper, the prophetic solitude of old Koljo. He gets up to milk the cows, there is a different silence in the forest than at the tepe. What we are sharing is a blessing, says Neda, it's an opportunity, he says. They drink to this blessing, to this opportunity, and he straightens up, slowly, these days, pain dwelling in his every limb, he tips back the plastic clock on the crocheted doily and pulls out a piece of paper that he carefully unfolds, a newspaper article on a few lines of yellowed paper. He searches for his thick horn-rimmed glasses, he curses those glasses, which are never where he expects them to be, he only uses them to read this message to his wife, astonishment in his voice, as if he had just learned that the oldest man on earth had died at the age of 124, do you hear me, Neda, are you listening, a whole 124 years he lived, that's how old the two of us are together, imagine. If that guy managed it, we can also manage it, in spite of corns and sunken lungs, he coughs again, like always, he has to laugh as he reads aloud this news about the oldest of the old, once upon their every day. Smiling, Neda takes the newspaper clipping and places it back under the plastic clock, reverently, like it's a little icon that nurtures belief in survival, and he reaches under the chair for two pieces of stiff wire, both folded into right angles, the shorter end in his hands, the one that's three times longer pointed at the floor, he goes out and comes to a stop, with the patience of a man who deals directly with time. A few meters away from the hut, beside the potato field, he holds the two L-rods parallel, takes a step and then another, and in his thoughts are the greater spotted eagles and the woodlarks, the shady spot that he alone knows, he waits for the two rods to twitch and move, until they intersect, and he stays still, pauses, then summons Neda, I found the water vein, this is where you must plant your vegetables. Neda comes out, a fresh look of wonder at her husband. He smiles contentedly and for a while forgets the tepe, the coughing, the cattle thieves and all this accursed time.

Translated by Jason Blake

Game for a Zoo

Building a zoo is no easy task. Not for a small town out in the province. Especially not these days. What we have to help build is socialism, says the party secretary—not a zoo! There’s no arguing with the man, even if all we’re talking about is a modest little pen with a few roe deer and a couple red stags, a few peacocks, some guinea fowl, mountain goats, and maybe a limping fox. So what are the odds of getting a real zoo, the kind I imagine day after day as I wipe down the wooden tables in the restaurant, eagerly waiting for spring to arrive, or as I sweep the floor dreaming of zebras and giraffes—and even an elephant when I’m cleaning out the gutter on the roof? When the first guests sit down on the patio overlooking the lake, order a beer, gaze at the craggy knolls and stretch their limbs out into the early summer, a lion scampers through my mind.

My dreams are patient. The restaurant gets renovated, the terrace expanded, the meadow in front of the forest keeps growing wild and one day, for no reason at all and not due to any pressure, the party committee decides to comply with my proposal and approves an animal pen on the north side of the lake. And what a joy that they entrusted the task to me. I’m quite familiar with our country’s wildlife. Right away I manage to get hold of a few roe deer and one red stag, and five mountain goats a little later on. I buy a frail old dancing bear off a Roma man with a bad case of gout. By now it’s pretty impressive, the little pen with the native fauna. I plant bushes and trees, fill the water troughs, paint a few signs and call the vet from the provincial capital when the first roe deer gives birth. And every day I take my dream walk by the lake, never losing sight of what’s still missing, of what could transform this pen into a genuine zoo, something different, from very far away, something like... well... for example... a giraffe.

—A giraffe? No problem, Uncle.

That’s my nephew Grozdan, who’s done amazingly well for himself. He works in a ministry in the capital and comes to visit us once a year in his official car.

— What do you mean, no problem?

— You’re in luck, Uncle, and you’re luck has a name: Sekou Touré.

— Seeku Ture?

— No, Se-kou Tou-ré. Don’t you listen to the news? *The baboon that stood up to the leopard. The spider that outwitted the hyena.*

— What hyena?

— De Gaulle, Uncle. General Charles de Gaulle. Don't rack your brains, it's complicated. Geopolitics. I'll tell you what you need to know. For now just remember—we have a new friend in Africa, and pretty soon we might even have a...

— In Africa?

— supplier.

— What does he supply?

— Giraffes, for example. Giraffes or gnus or gazelles. What do I know? Maybe there'll be a lion in it for you some day.

— A lion!

— I wouldn't count it out.

— Now that would be a zoo, with a lion there it would be a real zoo.

— Let's see, Uncle. Leave all the rest to me.

I no longer have to wipe tabletops. I'm in charge of the pen and have more time for thinking. About the hyena, the general, and my nephew. A happy coincidence. Someone from our family with connections to Africa. Serendipitous. Because the fact is there aren't giraffes anywhere else. Except I'm a little surprised that Grozdan wants to supply toilet bowls in return for the animals. Maybe he was just joking. I don't always understand him. Most of the time he calls out of the blue and catches me completely off guard...

— Good news, Uncle. We have a giraffe, and now hang on to your seat, you won't believe it, there's also a lion!

It's a bad connection, but I gather he expects me to go the capital to fetch the animals and accompany them to their new home. I'm amazed at the party secretary's sudden enthusiasm. He claps me on the shoulder and wishes me good luck. I take the bus to the capital and start tearing up the minute I lay eyes on these beautiful creatures. The next day the vet informs me that the lion is blind and the giraffe is lame. But that doesn't dampen my joy, especially since the friendly colleagues from the big zoo in the capital throw in a few zebras... a zoo has to look like a zoo, right, even if it is somewhere in the province. I thank them and remain grateful, even though as the years go by the zebras turn out to be barren.

The stars are aligned, the phone rings and a happy voice says:

— Dar es Salaam.

— Grozdan?

- Dar es Sa-laaaaaaam.
- Is that you, Grozdan?
- How does that sound for you, Uncle? Dar es Salaam. Sounds pretty nice, doesn't it?
- I'm not sure...
- And that's not the half of it. Ny-e-re-re, U-ja-maaaaa.
- Are you talking about animals?
- As many as you like. Guess with whom we've just declared fraternity...
- How am I supposed to know, Grozdan?
- Tanzania.
- Serengeti!
- Precisely. Uncle, the animal treasury of Africa is yours for the taking.

Grozdan has added to his repertoire. He's shipping peach compote and pickled peppers. The Tanzanians reciprocate with young, healthy, frisky gazelles.

Grozdan gulps down his beer. He's back on home leave.

— I had no idea how many different types there are. They asked me which kind we wanted, Grant's or Thomson's or impalas or kongoni or dik-diks... I was flabbergasted. And I thought that a gazelle's a gazelle just like a deer's a deer. I went for the impala, I hope that's fine with you, the name sounded great and I also ordered some more zebras, fertile ones this time. Otherwise they'll soon die out on you.

— You did well, Grozdan. The zebras are the children's favourite.

— That's only because you still don't have any monkeys. Just let me see to that.

Ever since I know how important geopolitics is for my zoo, I read the newspaper carefully. Page five, where there's occasionally a snippet about Africa. The autumn has lost its gold, though I no longer have to sweep up the leaves. They've foisted an experienced zoo administrator on me, but I work alongside him, as deputy director. The newspaper reports on a state visit by one of our country's good friends, a man by the name of Agostinho Neto. The President of the People's Republic of Angola has brought us an unusual present, a horde of baboons. These are of great use to us, according to Grozdan H., a high-ranking official in the foreign service, the article relates. The baboons arrive a few weeks later, just in time for the onset of winter, accompanied by a snippy letter from the director of

the big zoo in the capital, who is baffled as to why an insignificant provincial zoo requires the whole horde when the capital is suffering from an acute baboon shortage. The monkeys soon get used to life here between the lake and the mountains. I even teach them how to throw snowballs.

But the high point of my life comes in the form of an unexpected telegram:

HAILE SELASSIE TOPPLED IN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION
STOP LIONS AVAILABLE STOP GROZDAN

After so many decades and so many hopes and dreams, the day arrives when a proud, healthy lion steps into the zoo—the blind one having died in the August of the Prague Spring. We all celebrate in the restaurant by the lake, the zoo director and the party secretary and Grozdan and myself. After many toasts to lions, baboons, impalas and giraffes, the party secretary practically spits into my ear: we didn't construct socialism but at least your zoo. Confused, I stare out at the cliffs.

And I'm still staring at them the next day when the party secretary's drunken confession is confirmed on the radio. Thinking about what might happen with my zoo gives me the shivers.

Two guinea hens are the first to disappear. I check all the fences and all the gates and console myself that it must be an isolated case. But the losses mount and it's clear I have to do something. But what? I go to the police.

— I'd like to report the theft of eight peacocks, ten golden guinea fowl, and six mountain goats.

— Do the animals belong to you?

— No, they're my responsibility, I look after them.

— Apparently not well enough.

— They came in the night.

— And who are they?

— I don't know.

— Old man do you have the faintest idea the number of crimes being committed in this town ever since we've started playing at democracy? And you show up here and expect me to bother about a few runaway goats.

— Mountain goats, black mountain goats, they're exceptional.

I decide to stand guard throughout the night. I only nod off once. The next morning I have a headache and a bruise on my head. Four

roe deer are missing. The thieves closed the gate back with a wire. They must be in the forest, so I spend all day traipsing through the woods—I know every nook and cranny. But I overestimate my strength and collapse in a clearing. The ground is wet from melted snow. First I see ashes, then the ribcage of a goat. My heart freezes like never before. Bones all around. A flayed hide is lying next to a tree, it stinks. Not even Grozdan can help me. He's been delegated to South Africa, where his task is to make new friends, as ambassador.

When the impalas disappear, I realize I have to take urgent action. I call the zoo in the capital.

— What are we supposed to do with more animals?

— Back then you wanted them, the baboons.

— Whoever that was it must have been a long time ago. Listen, I can imagine how difficult things are for you, but it's also hard for us to keep the animals fed. Do you think I can ask my workers to give meat to the leopards when they've forgotten what it tastes like? And who's supposed to pay for the meat anyway? Tell me, how am I supposed to feed leopards without meat? All our beasts of prey look like Somalis as it is.

— We have a different problem. Here people are eating the animals.

— Surely not the leopards.

— I don't have any leopards.

— So consider yourself lucky.

I make one phone call after the other, trying to reason with every director of every zoo in the country. All in vain. The gazelles vanish, one by one. I share my meagre pension with the old Abyssinian lion. One morning I count the zebras three times, and each time one is missing. That's when I open all the gates and say good-bye to every last animal and then toss the keys into the lake. Then I take off through the forest one last time. I can no longer protect my zoo. Somewhere I come to a stop. I start to howl, without shedding tears, and in my ears it sounds like the feeble yapping of an old wolf. I sink to the ground and continue to howl, now on all fours.

Translated by Philip Boehm

**Slovenska avtorica
v središču 2018**

*Slovenian Author
in Focus 2018*



Foto © Jože Suhadolnik

Mojca Kumerdej

Mojca Kumerdej se je rodila leta 1964 v Ljubljani, kjer je na Filozofski fakulteti diplomirala iz filozofije in sociologije kulture. Poleg pisanja literature od konca 80. let 20. st. kot publicistka in umetnostna kritičarka spremlja sodobni ples, gledališče, performans in intermedijsko umetnost ter občasno kot dramaturginja sodeluje pri sodobnoplesnih in gledaliških predstavah. Kot zunanja sodelavka *Sobotne priloge* časopisa *Delo* piše o umetnosti, znanosti in kulturi.

Avtorica, ki velja za eno najvidnejših peres slovenske literarne postmoderne, je svojo pisateljsko pot začela leta 2001 s kratkim romanom *Krst nad Triglavom*, v katerem se z ironijo loteva slovenskih kulturnih in narodnih mitov. Romanu sta sledili dve kratkoprozni zbirki: *Fragma* (2003) in *Temna snov* (2011) z drugačnim avtorskim pristopom. Zgodbe, vsaj na prvi pogled povsem običajnih posameznikov, postopoma razkrivajo razpoke, iz katerih prodrejo človeška ranljivost, strahovi ali takšna in drugačna patologija. K sreči se avtorica ne odreče ironiji in črnemu humorju, s katerima ponekod vsaj malo ublaži srhljivo napetost in tesnobno ozračje, vzdušji, značilni za njene zgodbe. To ji gre celo tako dobro od rok, da se ji za razliko od večine piscev ni treba »zatekati« v nazorno opisovanje krutosti. Tej paradigmi sledi tudi v kratki zgodbi *Angel varuh* iz zbirke *Fragma*, objavljeni v zborniku. Celotna zbirka bo jeseni izšla pri ameriški založbi Dalkey Archive Press v prevodu Rawleyja Graua.

Zadnje delo Mojce Kumerdej, sodobni filozofsko-zgodovinski roman *Kronosova žetev* (2016), se odvija na prehodu iz 16. v 17. st., ko je na ozemlju današnje Slovenije potekal srdit verski in politični boj med protestanti in katoličani. Gre za vračanje v preteklost, da bi bolje razumeli sedanost in prihodnost. Roman je bil odlično sprejet tako pri literarnih kritikih kot bralcih. Zanj je prejela nagrado Prešernovega sklada, nagrado Kritiško sito ter bila med petimi nominiranci za Kresnika.

Proza Mojce Kumerdej je uvrščena v številne domače in tuje antologije ter prevedena v več jezikov. Poleg prej omenjenih nagrad je leta 2006 prejela nagrado Kristal Vilenice za zgodbo *Pod gladino* (iz zbirke *Fragma*), za zbirko *Temna snov*, ki je v srbsčini izšla z naslovom *Tamna materija* v prevodu Ane Ristović, pa je leta 2016 kot prva tuja avtorica oz. avtor prejela srbsko in bosansko-hercegovsko nagrado Kočičevo pero. Je redna gostja literarnih festivalov in knjižnih sejmov doma in v tujini (Nemčija, Avstrija, Srbija, Mehika).

Razumljivo je, da proza, ki se tako brezkompromisno loteva anomalij našega in preteklega časa, zbuja različna, pogosto boleča čustva. Tega se zaveda tudi avtorica, ki pravi: »Umetnost v nasprotju s kulturo kot širokim poljem preverjenih vsebin in pristopov vsebuje tveganje in pomeni vstop v nepreverjeno in neznano. Z literaturo želim z različnih zornih kotov razpirati intimne in univerzalne svetove ter osvetliti zlasti zasenčene, manj vidne podobe in ozvočiti naše lastne, nelagodje vzbujajoče glasove.«

Izbrane nagrade in priznanja

- 2017 Nagrada Prešernovega sklada za roman *Kronosova žetev*.
2017 Nagrada Kritiško sito Društva slovenskih literarnih kritikov za roman *Kronosova žetev*.
2017 Nominacija za nagrado Kresnik za roman *Kronosova žetev*.
2016 Srbska in bosansko-hercegovska nagrada Kočićevo pero za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Temna snov* v srbskem prevodu.
2016 Borštnikova nagrada za dramaturško obdelavo tekstovne predloge uprizoritve *Projektator* v izvedbi Zavoda Delak. Soavtorja besedila: režiser Dragan Živadinov in igralec Lotos Vincenc Šparovec.
2012 Nominacija za nagrado Kritiško sito Društva slovenskih literarnih kritikov za zbirko kratke proze *Temna snov*.
2006 Nagrada Kristal Vilenice za kratko zgodbo *Pod gladino* iz zbirke *Fragma*.

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¹ Študentska založba se je leta 2014 preimenovala v založbo Beletrina.

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Под гладью (Pod gladino), v ruščino prevedla Aleksandra Krasovec, v: *Утро в России*, ur. Mitja Čander. Ljubljana: Beletrina, 2004.

Mojca Kumerdej was born in 1964 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where she also studied and received a degree in Philosophy and Sociology of Culture from the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts. In addition to literary writing, she is occasionally involved with contemporary dance, theatre, performance and intermedia arts as a publicist and an art critic since the 1980s. As a dramaturge, she occasionally works on contemporary dance and drama. As a freelance contributor to the *Sobotna priloga* supplement of the *Delo* newspaper, she writes about art, science, and culture.

Considered one of the most visible voices of Slovenian postmodern literature today, Kumerdej started her literary career in 2001 with the short novel *Krst nad Triglavom* (The Baptism Over Mount Triglav), in which she addresses Slovenian cultural and national myths, with irony. Two short story collections marked by a different authorial approach followed: *Fragma* (2003) and *Temna snov* (Dark Matter, 2011). The stories, depicting what seem at first sight to be quite ordinary individuals, gradually reveal a crack that makes way for human vulnerability, fears, or other sorts of pathology. Fortunately, the author does not renounce irony and black humor, which in places slightly tone down the dreadful tension and the anxious atmosphere that are characteristic of her stories. Being very skilled in doing so, she, unlike other writers, does not need to "resort" to explicit

descriptions of cruelty. She also follows this paradigm in her short story "Angel varuh" (*Guardian Angel*) from the collection *Fragma*, published in this anthology. The entire collection will be published in English this autumn by the American publishing house Dalkey Archive Press in Rawley Grau's translation.

Mojca Kumerdej's latest work, the contemporary philosophical-historical novel *Kronosova žetev* (*The Harvest of Chronos*, 2016), takes place during the transition from the 16th to the 17th century, when the territory of today's Slovenia saw a wrathful religious and political battle between Protestants and Catholics. The novel turns to the past for a better understanding of the present and the future. Well received among critics and readers alike, *Kronosova žetev* was awarded the Prešeren Foundation Award, Slovenia's highest award for artistic achievement, the Kriteško sito Award, awarded by the Slovene Literary Critics' Association, and the author was among the five writers shortlisted for the Kresnik Award for the best novel of the year 2017.

Mojca Kumerdej's fiction is included in several Slovenian and foreign anthologies and has been translated into many languages. Besides the already-mentioned awards, she also received the Crystal Vilenica Award in 2006 for her short story "Pod gladino" (*Under the Surface*, from the collection *Fragma*), and she was the first foreign author to receive the Serbian

and Bosnian-Herzegovinian Kočić's Pen Award for the short story collection *Dark Matter* (in Serbian *Temna materija*, transl. Ana Ristović). She is a regular guest of literary festivals and book fairs in Slovenia as well as abroad (Germany, Austria, Serbia, Mexico). It is understood that fiction that deals so uncompromisingly with the anomalies of our time can evoke diverse, often painful emotions. The author

herself is well aware of that, claiming: "Art, in contrast with culture as a wide field of verified content and approaches, involves risk and means entering the unverified and the unknown. With literature, I wish to open intimate and universal worlds from different angles, to shed light especially on the shaded, less visible images, and to give utterance to our own voices, stirring unease."

Selected Prizes and Awards

- 2017 The Prešeren Foundation Award (Slovenia), for the novel *Kronosova žetev* (*The Harvest of Chronos*).
- 2017 Kritiško sito Award (Slovenia), conferred for the novel *Kronosova žetev* (*The Harvest of Chronos*).
- 2017 Nomination for the Kresnik Prize (Slovenia), conferred for the best Slovenian novel of the previous year, for the novel *Kronosova žetev* (*The Harvest of Chronos*).
- 2016 Kočić's Pen Award (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina), conferred for the short story collection *Temna snov* (Dark Matter) in Serbian translation.
- 2016 Borštnik Award (Slovenia) for Dramaturgical Adaptation for dramaturgical concept of text adaptation for the production *Projektator* performed by the Delak Institute. Coauthors: director Dragan Živadinov, performer Lotos Vincenc Šparovec.
- 2012 Nomination for the Kritiško sito Award (Slovenia) for the short story collection *Temna snov* (Dark Matter).
- 2006 Crystal Vilenica Award (Slovenia) for the short story *Pod gladino* (*Under the Surface*) from the short story collection *Fragma*.

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¹ Študentska založba publishing house was renamed Beletrina publishing house in 2014.

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Temna snov (*Dark Matter*). Ljubljana: Študentska založba, 2011.

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Pismo (*A Letter*), v: *Poletje v zgodbi III* (*Summer Stories III*), ed. Zdravko Duša. Ljubljana: Delo/Cankarjeva založba, 2004.

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The Harvest of Chronos, translated into English by Rawley Grau. London: Istros Books, 2017.

Short Fiction

Fragma, translated into English by Rawley Grau. Victoria: Dalkey Archive Press, Ljubljana: Slovene Writers' Association, 2018.

Тъмна материя (*Dark Matter*), translated into Bulgarian by Gančo Savov. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 2017.

Темна материја (*Dark Matter*), translated into Macedonian by Ivanka Apostolova Baskar. Skopje: Goten, 2017.

The Woman with the Wolf, translated into English by Rawley Grau. Ljubljana: Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Art, 2016.

Tamna materija (Dark Matter), translated into Serbian by Ana Ristović. Beograd: Geopoetika, 2015.

Materia oscura (Dark Matter), translated into Spanish by Maria Florencia Ferre. Guadalajara: Arlequin, 2012.

Vic než žena (*Fragma*), translated into Czech by Kristina Pellarová. Prague: Dauphin, 2008.

Fragma, translated into Hungarian by Orsolya Gállos. Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó, 2008.

Selected Anthologies

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A víz alá (*Under the Surface*), translated into Hungarian by Orsolya Gállos, in: *Szlóven irodalmi antológia IV*. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2010.

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Unter der Oberfläche, Die Föhre (Under the Surface, The Pines), translated into German by Peter Scherber, in: *Zu zweit nirgendwo: Neue Erzählungen aus Slowenien*, ed. Aleš Šteger and Mitja Čander. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006.

Под гладью воды (Under the Surface), translated into Russian by Aleksandra Krasovec, in: *Утро в России*, ed. Mitja Čander. Ljubljana: Beletrina, 2004.

Subverzija, aktualnost in kritična uzaveščenost literature Mojce Kumerdej

Blanka Bošnjak

Namesto uvoda

Avtorica Mojca Kumerdej se izjemno artikulirano, s strastno zavzetostjo in eruditskim zamahom posveča nastajanju svoje literature, ki zajema predvsem daljšo in krajšo prozo, uspešno pa ustvarja tudi na drugih področjih, med drugim je dramaturginja ter soavtorica besedila predstave *Projektator*,¹ ki je na osrednjem slovenskem gledališkem festivalu Borštnikovo srečanje prejela Borštnikovo nagrado 2016 za najboljšo dramaturgijo. Njen bogati ter raznorodni ustvarjalni opus kaže na temeljito študijsko pripravo na pisanje, zlasti o različnih zgodovinskih ali znanstvenih temah. Najbolj dragocena pa je avtoričina avtentična ter izvirna avtopoetika, ki nagovarja predvsem zahtevnejše bralke in bralce, kar bo skušala prikazati nadaljnja analitična interpretacija njenih temeljnih literarnih del.

Subverzija subjekta v *Krstu nad Triglavom*

Geneza prvenca, generičnega teksta Mojce Kumerdej *Krst nad Triglavom* (2001), krajšega romana, ki je sicer zvrstno-vrstno težko določljiv, se v prvi vrsti medbesedilno navezuje na Prešernovo pesnitev nacionalnega pomena *Krst pri Savici* (1836). Gre za prevrten tekst, ki predvsem z ironično distanco avktorialnega pripovedovalca metafikcijsko spodkopava vero v velike zgodbe, hkrati pa gre za vseskozi prisoten dvom o obstoju ene resničnosti, ki pomembno izgrajuje ta ironično-alegorični tekst s poudarjenimi filozofskimi prvinami. Tudi način govora glavnega lika Janka Pretnarja postane po daljšem izginotju (do konca zgodbe ostane nerazjasnjeno, pripisuje se srečanju z Nezemljani) ter kasnejši vrnitvi v vsakdanje življenje (v habitat ob Bohinjskem jezeru) verzna forma – enajsterec, s katero izraža

¹ Režiser predstave je Dragan Živadinov; avtorji besedila so naslednji: Dragan Živadinov, Lotos Vincenc Šparovec in Mojca Kumerdej.

svoja videnja izven naše civilizacije in globoke uvide v eksistencialna vprašanja, kar je poglaviten odmik od subjektive prejšnje podredljivosti osebnosti; pri tem gre morda tudi za stik z nezavednim, kar je (po Lacanu) prepoznati s spremenjeno strukturo govornice glavnega lika. Ta sicer zarisuje subjekt izjavljanja, »vendar ga ne pomeni. Navsezadnje je očitno, da sleherni označevalec subjekta izjavljanja lahko umanjka v izjavi, če sploh ne omenjamo vseh tistih, ki so drugačni od Jaza – in to ne le tisti, ki jih nezadostno imenujejo primeri prve osebe ednine, temveč tudi primeri, kadar se kdo udobno namesti v množinsko omembo ali celo v *Sebstvo* avto-sugestije« in »[t]a rez označevalne verige lahko edini preveri strukturo subjekta kot diskontinuitete v realnem« (Lacan 1994: 277–278).

Glavni protagonist je prav zaradi svoje hermetične govornice in trmastega vztrajanja pri svojih videnjih ter stališčih podvržen represijam različnih oseb, ki predstavljajo pomembne družbene entitete, vendar so vse bolj ali manj moralno sporne (zlasti v smislu verskega fanatizma, homofobije, seksizma in nasilništva vseh vrst): v imenu vere duhovniku Vinku Ogrizku, v imenu policije policijskemu inšpektorju in kriminalistu Ernestu Gorjancu, v imenu psihiatrije zdravniku dr. Marjanu Kukcu. Val institucionalnega nasilja pa sproži Jankova žena Malči, ki s svojim oblastno-ponižujočim vedenjem svojega moža ves čas nezno degradira; intimna sfera posameznika se (z Jankovim nepojasnjanim izginotjem in nenadno vrnitvijo s spremenjeno percepcijo) tako odpre za javnost, tudi na ozadju vaške skupnosti, ki po svoje mrcvari »resnico« posameznikove usode. Drugi pol subjektov v tem subverzivnem tekstu se uresničuje npr. v podobi »eterično krhke« doktorice psihiatrije Lili, ki je naklonjena alternativnim teorijam nezemeljskih civilizacij, inšpektorjevega pomočnika Mirka ali Taobrisanega Frančka, vaškega posebneža, ki prav tako verjame v obstoj drugih civilizacij.

Text je izšel deset let po slovenski osamosvojitvi, kar kaže na nekakšen namen – morda v sopostavitvi dveh temeljnih prelomnih nacionalnih diskurzov v kontekstu političnih dejanj, tako pomembnih za Slovence: prvi s prevlado krščanstva nad poganstvom (oz. vero v slovanska mitološka bitja) preko matičnega teksta *Krst pri Savici*, ki upesnjuje to ključno zgodovinsko obdobje – tako v poljih zasebnega (ljubezen med Bogomilo in Črtomirom) kot javnega s pokristjanjevanjem (tudi sprejemom krščanstva obeh akterjev, ki ju tuzemeljsko loči in prestavi njuno skupno srečo v onostranstvo);

drugi pa je povezan s pridobitvijo samostojne države – ta morda ob svoji desetletnici državljanom ne zagotavlja pričakovanega, kot se je v intertekstualnem kontekstu subverzivnega obrata subjekta izrazil protagonist Janko v verzih:

»Iz jajca samostojno se razvije
 kokoš – simbol slovenske domovine:
 po zrnih kljune brž demokracije,
 dojema kura bolj slabo zakone:
 slovenskim mestom vladajo despotje –
 njih kri norost vsebuje in toksine« (Kumerdej 2001: 65).

Besedilo med drugim odpira možnosti interpretacije v smer teorij konspiracije, (o čemer ob koncu pripovedi razmišlja za nove ideje odprta Lili: npr. dojemanje desetih božjih zapovedi, danih Mojzesu, in starojudovske skrinje zaveze kot računalniške programske opreme, ki je morda pomotoma prišla v roke Judom (isto: 101).

Predpostavlja se lahko tudi morebitna recepcijska povezava s predstavo Dragana Živadinova *Krst pod Triglavom* Gledališča sester Scipion Nasice (GSSN) in drugih skupin Neue Slowenische Kunst (Irwin, Laibach), ki je bila na sporedu 6. februarja 1986. Gre za eno izmed predstav, ki so močno zaznamovale slovenski teater in imele odmev tudi širše, pri čemer je ob petindvajseti obletnici predstave Živadinov poudaril, da se je v njej bil boj za abstrakcijo oz. za iztrganje gledališča iz mimezisa v Duchampovi maniri (Krečič 2011), kar je v tesni filozofski povezavi s subverzijo glavnega protagonista oz. subjekta v delu Mojce Kumerdej, vendar s krstom *nad* Triglavom (z impliciranim pomenom, da je srečanje z Nezemljani krst *nad*). Ta tekst je torej izredno aktualen na različnih nivojih: na političnem v kontekstu transformacij pomembnih zgodovinskih resnic, zatem z vidika sovpadanja javnega in zasebnega kot tudi želje po begu subjekta iz profanosti v iskanje transcendentalne presežnosti.²

² V analiziranem tekstu z »bližnjimi srečanji tretje vrste«, ki lahko udejanijo zamenjavo vere v boga – z vero v druge civilizacije, kar med drugim briše občutke krivde pri subjektu in ga osvobaja (Kumerdej 2001: 81).

Aktualnost in apokaliptičnost romana *Kronosova žetev*³

Že naslov avtoričinega drugega romana *Kronosova žetev* (2016), tokrat dokaj obsežnega, je pomenljiv: gre za izpostavitvev in združitvev dveh pojmov v enotno besedno zvezo – poimenovanja grškega boga časa Kronosa ter pojma žetve iz odlomka *Žetev zemlje svetopisemskega Razodetja (Apokalipse)*; s tem so vzpostavljene pomenske povezave med različnimi idejnimi diskurzi, med grško mitologijo in krščanstvom. Gre za premik v kritično motrenje političnega kolesja religije, ki v imenu ideologije pod seboj pokopava nedolžne žrtve. Ta večplastni zgodovinski roman z zanj značilno polifonijo različnih pripovedovalcev s filozofskimi poudarki tematizira dogajanje v notranjeavstrijskih deželah osrednjega slovenskega etničnega ozemlja ob prehodu s konca 16. st. na začetek 17. st., ko je boj za prevlado med protestantskimi deželnimi stanovi in katoliško habsburško monarhijo dosegel vrhunec. Delo je napisano z izjemno študijsko poglobljenostjo, izhajajoč iz bogate arhivsko zbrane zunajliterarne snovi (mdr. iz poročila knezoškofa Tomaža Hrena), ki jo avtorica mojstrsko pregnete z literarnostjo in fikcijo, tako da s posebnim občutkom za detajl upoveduje katoliško invazivno politiko proti luterancem, pri čemer so prisotni dodatni metafikcijski časovni preskoki v prihodnost – z namenom prikazati vzorec ponovitve preteklosti, skozi katero pronica prihodnost v navidezni sočasnosti dogajanja. V romanu sta torej preteklost in sedanjost v različnih segmentih povezani, predvsem na način že kar apokaliptičnega podajanja posledic zaradi vseskozi poudarjenih vezi med ideologijo, politiko ter ekonomijo v preteklosti in sedanjosti.

Čas viharnega ter prelomnega 16. st., ko v srednjeveško monolitno zaprtost vdira svobodna volja in z njo večglasje, je upovedan s kritično avtorsko distanco. Zaradi premišljeno vzpostavljenega mnogoglasja perspektiv, diskusij, uvidov, mnenj in dejanj številnih romanesknh likov predstavlja roman tudi subtilno kritiko današnjosti. Izrazito je poudarjena različnost gledanja na eksistencialna vprašanja, vero, oblast najbolj izpostavljenih likov v romanu: knezoškofa Wolfganga, predstavnika klera, grofa Friderika in pisarja Nikolaja.

³ Roman *Kronosova žetev* je bil v letu 2017 izredno odmeven: bil je nominiran za nagrado Kresnik, prejel je nagrado Kritičsko sito ter nagrado Prešernovega sklada.

Glasovi ljudstva niso posebej diferencirani, kot so pri predstavnikih višjih slojev, le tu in tam izpostavi posameznega pastirja ali bistroumno dekle; gre torej za inovativno vpeljavo *kolektivnega subjekta ljudstva*, tako da npr. pogromi, sežiganje knjig, čarovnic in podobno potekajo v njegovem imenu (s tem je odgovornost iniciatorjev tega dogajanja prikrita). Po drugi strani pa je predstavljeno pestro renesančno duhovnozgodovinsko obnebje s takratnim obujanjem antike, znanstvenih odkritij ter drugih geografskih prostorov, živahnih filozofskih in teoloških razprav, vpletanjem mitoloških likov, npr. judovskih golemov, ki v romanu lahko prevzamejo tudi obliko grozečega ženskega lika, zlasti v kontekstu t. i. familiarizacije sveta ter karnevalske kulture v bahtinovskem smislu.

Skozi postopke kritične ironije, ostrega razkrivajočega humorja in z elementi potujitve se med drugim kaže dejstvo, da bogaboječnost katolikov v romanu pojema, višje kot je lik na družbeni lestvici. Takšen je vsekakor poudarjeno negativen ter v bizarnost pogreznjen lik knezoškofa Wolfganga, ki ob koncu romana prizna, da je imel »vse življenje polna usta Boga«, takšen je bil namreč njegov poklic, pri čemer je vanj verjel le v mladosti, pozneje vse manj (Kumerdej 2016: 388). Prav ta lik poseiblja utelešenje zla s svojo peklenko brezčutnostjo, promiskuitetnostjo, uživanjem v okrutnosti, ubijanju, pedofiliji in kar je še podobnega, kar bi znotraj krščanskega imaginarija lahko pripisali Antikristu, ne pa pomembnemu cerkvenemu dostojanstveniku, kot se je izrazil sam v monologu tik pred smrtjo: »Kajti naj sem počel karkoli, nisem bil nikdar kaznovan, medtem ko sem opazoval ljudi, ki so nedolžni trpeli in jih ni uslišal ne Bog ne kako drugo božanstvo ne ljudje. Z Bogom se ne bi želel srečati« (isto: 388).

Pod kritični drobnogled ironične perspektive avtorica postavi tudi različne prevladujoče patriarhalne silnice v času uspešne protireformacije na Slovenskem, npr. z likom Agnes Hypatio, hčerke grofa Friderika; ta nenadoma v cvetu mladosti umre, pri čemer se skozi pripovedovalčev komentar krivi za njeno smrt preveč svobodna vzgoja njene matere, ki je dopuščala hčeri pretirano razmišljanje, branje knjig, izobraževanje tudi v moških vedah, ne samo v tem, kar pritiče ženski vlogi znotraj družine; posledica vsega tega pa so bili prav gotovo preobremenjeni ženski možgani (isto: 87). V romanu je na več mestih močno izpostavljena, sicer zgodovinsko prikrita, vendar pomembna vloga določenih žensk v preteklosti, praviloma

žrtev čarovniških procesov v kontekstu patriarhalnega diskurza. Posebej so s kritične avtorske distance, vendar s sočutjem do žrtev, prikazani brezštevilni pogromi, čarovniški procesi, umori, seksizem, rasizem, homofobija ipd. v pravem apokaliptičnem razmahu, a v razkriti programiranosti iz ozadja centrov moči – vodenih interesov verske ideologije v povezavi s politično-ekonomsko nadvlado vladajočih struktur. Kako aktualno!

Splet norosti in bolečine v kratki prozi Mojce Kumerdej

Že prva zbirka kratke proze *Fragma* (2003) je pokazala vso intenzivnost avtoričinega pisanja in zmožnost upovedovanja različnih ravni: zasebno-intimnih odnosov in družbenokritične ravni, kjer se razkrivajo slabosti subjektov, njihove medsebojne intrige, različne obsesije, sebičnost, nasilje ipd., kar je prikazano inteligentno, pikro-humorno, ironično, vendar z občutkom za bolečino bivajočih subjektov (bodi si ljudi ali živali). Tematizacija individualnega nasilja v tej avtoričini zbirki se pojavlja v naslednjih oblikah: destruktivna posesivnost v partnerskih in prijateljskih odnosih, ki se sprevača v parazitsko polaščevalskost – v pripovedih *Pod gladino*,⁴ *Maščevalec*, *Angel varuh* in *Mernik sreče*. Druga smer tematizacije individualnega nasilja se kaže v izrazito sadistično-mazohističnih odnosih znotraj partnerskih zvez (v zgodbah *Ponovitev*, *V roju kresnic* in *Nekakšen sindrom*) ali v nezdravem soodvisniškem odnosu (zgodba *Roka*). Širok spekter nasilnih dejanj v odnosu do sebe ter drugih (psihičnega, fizičnega nasilja matere nad hčerko in čustvenega zanemarjanja, pedofilije, alkoholizma, zlorabe drog, bulimije, samomora) nam ponuja prav zgodba z naslovom *Roka*. Kratka pripoved *Moj najdražji* pa na prvi pogled tematizira individualno nasilje nad dekletom zaradi pretirane obsedenosti glavnega moškega akterja z novim vozilom BMW, vendar je skozi celotno pripoved zaznati predvsem kritiko kolektivnega nasilja v sodobnem sistemu neoliberalizma (Bošnjak 2015: 80), kar sovпада tudi s Foucaultevim pojmom t. i. »konstitutivnega subjekta«; ta sicer ustreza poznemu kapitalizmu, toda na njem temelji družba nadzorovanja in kaznovanja (Foucault 2008: 118).

⁴ Zgodba *Pod gladino* iz te zbirke je bila l. 2006 na mednarodnem literarnem festivalu Vilenica nagrajena s Kristalom Vilenice.

Druga avtoričina zbirka kratke proze *Temna snov* (2011)⁵ nadaljuje z rušenjem najrazličnejših stereotipov in tabujev: brezpogojno ljubeče matere, dobrih in nenasilnih otrok, družinske sreče, dobrobiti institucij (cerkvenih, zdravstvenih, izobraževalnih, socialnih), npr. v zgodbi *Včasih Mihael molči*,⁶ kjer gre za zelo senzibilno večplastno upovedovanje pedofilskega ter incestnega razmerja med očetom in mladoletno hčerko z vsemi psihološkimi posledicami predvsem za hčerko. V zbirki so problematizirani tudi različni človekovi ideali: od večnega življenja oz. mladosti (*Jetrnik*), moči bogastva (*Siromaki*) do moči znanosti (*Kaca*); vzpostavljajo pa se nove ravni odnosov s sožitjem med človekom in robotom (*Božič s Hirošijem*) ter človekom in živaljo (konkretno z mačkom v zgodbi *Vsiljivec*).⁷ Prisotna je še distopična zgodba s prikazanim vdorom ideologije v človekovo zasebno sfero, ki vodi do kolektivnega nasilja v zgodbi *Program nacionalne obnove*. Tematizacija individualnega nasilja (tudi v smislu smrti in različnih zlorab) je v tej zbirki relativno pogosta, in sicer v naslednjih besedilih: *Vanda*, *Čas potem*, *Na terasi Marija*, *Včasih Mihael molči*, *Zdaj spita*.

Zgodbe obeh zbirk se dogajajo v sodobnem času, večinoma so postavljene v urbano, mestno okolje; kratki stiki v komunikaciji med akterji povzročajo najrazličnejše frustracije protagonistov skozi avtoričin celotni kratkoprozni opus, kar se lahko stopnjuje v skrajno psihološko ter fizično nasilje, ki izbruhne zaradi nakopičenega sovraštva, samoljubja in sadistično-mazohističnih karakternih potez bodisi moških bodisi ženskih akterjev. Ob tem je (po Frommu) moč opaziti simptomatiko t. i. *maligne agresije*, ki izvira iz nezadovoljenih eksistencialnih potreb akterjev in je značilna predvsem za človeka (Fromm 1980: 13–31).

⁵ Zbirka je l. 2015 izšla pri srbski založbi Geopoetika v prevodu Ane Ristović, l. 2016 pa je avtorica zanj prejela nagrado Kočićevo pero (nagrado za pomembne dosežke v sodobni književnosti).

⁶ V zgodbi gre za otroškega fokalizatorja, majhno deklico, ki opazuje dogajanje in ga komentira s svoje perspektive; podobno se otroški fokalizator, tokrat deček, pojavi v avtoričini zgodbi *Bela brada*.

⁷ Zgodba je uvrščena v izbor krajše proze slovenskih avtoric z naslovom *Klič me po imenu: izbor iz krajše proze slovenskih avtoric*, ki jo je uredila in spremno študijo napisala Silvija Borovnik (2013: 350–354).

V to kategorijo zelo dobro sodi tudi avtoričina zgodba *Pauli*, ki je objavljena v korporativni zbirki kratke proze *Moč lažnega* (2015), v kateri naslovni lik – maček Pauli – prevzame mesto prvoosebnega pripovedovalca (Kumerdej 2015: 77–97).

Kot zaključek: poskus orisa avtoričine poetike »resnice«

Po Foucaultu je vprašanje resnice vezano predvsem na politično ekonomijo in izhaja iz znanstvenega diskurza, ki jo proizvaja; podvržena je tako ekonomski kot politični presoji, kar pomeni resnico za potrebe ekonomske produkcije in politične oblasti, tudi kot predmet družbenih konfrontacij v obliki ideoloških bojev; resnica je prav tako predmet potrošnje, ki kroži skozi izobraževalne in informacijske kanale; ne nazadnje se resnica proizvaja in posreduje pod kontrolo velikih političnih in ekonomskih sistemov (Foucault 2008: 118–119), kar morda še najbolj ustreza širšemu orisu poetike avtorice Mojce Kumerdej, zlasti v sočasnem prepletu preteklosti in sedanjosti v obeh njenih obravnavanih romanih. Njena kratka proza pa skozi prevladujočo intimistično paradigmo še dodatno podčrtuje prevrednoten pogled na družbene in spolne stereotipe, v čemer lahko zaznamo odkrito ekofeministično (Zimmerman 1994: 233–235) usmerjeno kritiko različnih oblik prevladujočih struktur v družbi, od ideoloških, patriarhalnih do političnih.

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Subversion, Topicality, and Critical Consciousness in the Writings of Mojca Kumerdej

Blanka Bošnjak

By Way of Introduction

Highly articulate, passionately involved, and sweepingly erudite – such is the approach of Mojca Kumerdej to crafting her writings, which focus on longer and shorter prose. She is successful in a number of other fields as well: the performance *Projektator*,¹ for example, where she collaborated as dramaturge and as one of the authors of the text, received at ‘Borštnikovo srečanje’, the central Slovenian theatre festival, the Borštnik Prize 2016 for Best Dramaturgy. Her rich and heterogeneous oeuvre testifies to her meticulous research prior to writing, especially on historical or scientific themes. The most precious aspect of her work, however, is her authentic and original poetics appealing to a more demanding readership, as the following analytical interpretation of her seminal literary work shall attempt to show.

The Subversion of the Subject in *Baptism over Mount Triglav*

Mojca Kumerdej’s début, *Krst nad Triglavom* (Baptism over Mount Triglav, 2001), a short novel of elusive genre, took shape primarily as an intertextual reference to France Prešeren’s long poem of national significance, *Krst pri Savici* (*Baptism on the Savica*, 1836). This subversive text metafictionally undermines faith in grand and great narratives, particularly through the ironic distance of the authorial narrator. Ironic, allegorical and imbued with pronounced philosophical elements, the text is crucially marked by all-pervasive doubt about the existence of a single reality. After the long disappearance of the protagonist Janko Pretnar (which is never explained but attributed to an encounter with extraterrestrials) and his subsequent return to everyday life by Lake Bohinj, his discourse assumes a verse form: the hendecasyllable. The verse form expresses visions transcending our

¹ The performance was directed by Dragan Živadinov. The text was co-authored by Dragan Živadinov, Lotos Vincenc Šparovec, and Mojca Kumerdej.

civilisation, as well as deep insights into existential issues. This trait, the main departure from the subject's formerly tractable personality, may well be related to a contact with the unconscious, which is (in Lacanian terms) suggested by the changed structure of the protagonist's discourse. Lacan does designate the enunciating subject, 'but does not signify him. This is obvious from the fact that there may be no signifier of the enunciating subject in the statement – not to mention that there are signifiers that differ from *I*, and not only those that are inadequately called cases of the first person singular, even if we add that it can be lodged in the plural invocation or even in the Self [*Soi*] of auto-suggestion', and '[t]his cut in the signifying chain alone verifies the structure of the subject as discontinuity in the real' (Lacan 2006: 677–678).

Because of his hermetic discourse and obstinate adherence to his visions and principles, the protagonist is subjected to repression by various characters. These represent important social entities but are morally dubious, especially because of religious fanaticism, homophobia, sexism, and aggression: priest Vinko Ogrizek acts in the name of religion, police inspector and criminalist Ernest Gorjanc in the name of the police, and Dr Marjan Kukec in the name of psychiatry. The wave of institutional violence is raised by Janko's wife, Malči, whose domineering behaviour is intolerably degrading for her husband. With Janko's unexplained disappearance and his sudden return, with changed perceptions, the individual's intimate sphere opens to the public against the backdrop of the village community, which mangles the 'truth' of the individual's destiny in its own way. The opposite pole in this subversive text is realised in such subjects as the 'aethereally fragile' Lili, a doctor of psychiatry who regards alternative theories of extraterrestrial civilisations with favour, the inspector's assistant Mirko, or Daft Franček, the village idiot, who likewise believes in the existence of other civilisations.

The work was published ten years after Slovenia's declaration of independence, which suggests a deliberate choice on the author's part. It may be perceived in her juxtaposition of two watershed national discourses, both set in the context of political actions which were of crucial importance to the Slovenians. The first discourse refers to the victory of Christianity over pagan beliefs (or belief in Slavic mythological creatures) through the seminal text *Krst pri Savici*, which thematises this seminal historical epoch in both private (the love of Bogomila and Črtomir) and public spheres (by

Christianisation, including the acceptance of Christianity by both protagonists, which separates them in this world and postpones the happiness of their union beyond the grave). The second discourse is linked to the acquisition of an independent state, which had perhaps failed to meet its citizens' expectations by its tenth anniversary. Or, as phrased in rhymes by Janko, the protagonist, in the intertextual context of the subversion of the subject:

‘There hatches, independent, as is proper,
a hen – the symbol of Slovene expanses,
and starts to peck at democratic fodder,
but hens are not at home in legal science:
Slovenia’s towns are overrun by tyrants –
whose blood runs thick with toxins and with madness’ (Kumerdej 2001: 65).

In addition to other possibilities, the text invites interpretation along the lines of conspiracy theories: this is what Lili, open to new ideas, mulls over in the end. An example is the notion that the Ten Commandments given to Moses and the ancient Jewish Arc of the Covenant were computer software, which may have strayed into Jewish hands by accident (ibid. 101).

There may be a further association with Dragan Živadinov’s performance *Krst pod Triglavom*, staged by Gledališče sester Scipion Nasice (GSSN) and other groups of Neue Slowenische Kunst (Irwin, Laibach) on February 6, 1986. This performance left a deep mark on the Slovenian theatre and resonated abroad as well. On its 25th anniversary, Živadinov emphasised that it had struggled to achieve abstraction, that is, to separate theatre from *mimesis* in the manner of Marcel Duchamp (Krečič 2011). Philosophically, this is closely linked to the subversion of the protagonist or subject in Mojca Kumerdej’s work, but in her version the baptism takes place *over* Mount Triglav, implying that the encounter with extra-terrestrials is a baptism *above*. The text is thus highly topical at various levels: politics, transformation of important historical truths, convergence of public and private, and the subject’s desire to flee from profanity to a quest for transcendence.²

²In the text analysed, this happens through ‘close encounters of the third kind’, which may replace belief in God with belief in other civilisations. This change washes away the subject’s guilty feelings, liberating him (Kumerdej 2001: 81).

The Topical and Apocalyptic Qualities of the Novel *Kronosova žetev*³

The very title of Kumerdej's (long) second novel, *Kronosova žetev* (2016; *The Harvest of Chronos*, 2017), is significant: two concepts – the name of Chronos, the Greek god of time, and the notion of harvest from the Biblical passage 'The Harvest of the Earth' in the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse) – are singled out and joined in a tightly knit phrase. This establishes semantic links between different ideational discourses: Greek mythology and Christianity. The author's stance shifts to a critical contemplation of the political apparatus of religion, which destroys innocent victims in the name of ideology. This multi-layered historical novel with a characteristic polyphony of narrators treats and philosophically accentuates the events in Inner Austrian lands, the heart of the Slovenian ethnic territory, at the close of the 16th century, when the struggle for supremacy between Protestant *Landstände* and the Catholic Habsburg monarchy peaked. The work is buttressed by exceptionally thorough studies, starting from a bulk of extraliterary archive sources (including a report by Prince-Bishop Thomas Chrön), which is masterfully leavened with literary quality and fiction. With a particular feeling for detail, the author depicts the invasive Catholic policy against Lutherans, adding metafictional time leaps into the future in order to show the pattern of the past repeating itself: the future trickles through the past in seemingly simultaneous action. The novel links the past and present in various segments, mainly in a well-nigh apocalyptic portrayal of the consequences brought on by the emphatic ties between ideology, politics, and economy in the past and present.

The time of the tempestuous and groundbreaking 16th century, when medieval monolithic seclusion is invaded by free will and the accompanying polyphony, is portrayed with a critical distance. With its carefully orchestrated polyphony of perspectives, discussions, insights, opinions and actions of its numerous characters, the novel is a subtle criticism of our time as well. There is an emphasis on the

³ The novel *Kronosova žetev* was hailed in 2017 with a nomination for the Kresnik Prize (for the best novel of the previous year) and with the Kriški sito Award (presented by the Slovenian Literary Critics' Association for the best book of the previous year) as well as the Prešeren Foundation Prize.

different views on existential questions, religion, and power which are held by the most prominent characters: Prince-Bishop Wolfgang as a representative of the clergy, Count Friedrich, and Nikolai the scrivener. In contrast to the upper class representatives, the voices of the populace are not differentiated, with the occasional exception of an individual shepherd or a clever girl. The author introduces an innovation, *the collective subject of the populace*, presenting the pogroms, book-burning, witch-burning, etc., as happening in its name and thus obscuring the responsibility of the initiators. On the other hand, the book presents the colourful Renaissance spiritual and historical climate with its revival of classical antiquity, scientific discoveries and new geographical spaces, lively philosophical and theological discussions, and introduction of such mythological creatures as the Jewish *golems*. These may even assume the form of a threatening female figure, especially in the context of the so-called familiarisation of the world and carnival culture in a Bakhtinian sense.

Through the processes of critical irony, a pungent, revealing humour, and elements of alienation, the faith of Catholics is shown to weaken the higher they climb on the social ladder. Such is the emphatically negative and bizarre character of Prince-Bishop Wolfgang, who admits at the end that ‘my entire life, my mouth was full of God’ because of his vocation, but he had only believed in God when he was young, and later less and less (Kumerdej 2017: 359). With his devilish lack of feeling, promiscuity, and delight in cruelty, killing, paedophilia, etc., which seem more appropriate for the Antichrist in the Christian imaginary than for a Church dignitary, his character is evil incarnate. As he puts it in his deathbed monologue: ‘After all, no matter what I did I was never punished, and meanwhile I watched innocent people suffering and nobody heard them – neither God nor any other divinity, and not people either. God is not someone I’d like to meet’ (ibid. 359).

The critical gaze of ironic perspective likewise falls on patriarchal lines of force, which dominated during the successful Counter-Reformation in the Slovenian lands, for example, through the character of Agnes Hypatia, Count Friedrich’s daughter. She suddenly dies in the flower of her youth, which the narrator’s comment blames on her mother’s too-liberal upbringing: she had allowed her daughter to engage not only in what befits a woman’s role inside the family, but also in excessive reflection, book-reading, men’s studies, and all

this must have overburdened her female brain (ibid. 85). The novel repeatedly stresses the historically suppressed but important role of certain women in the past, mostly the victims of witch trials in the context of patriarchal discourse. From a critical distance but with sympathy for the victims, there are depictions of countless pogroms, witch trials, murders, sexism, racism, homophobia, etc., in apocalyptic dimensions. They turn out to be orchestrated from the background of the power centres – by the guided interests of religious ideology allied with the political and economic supremacy of the ruling structures. How topical!

The Snarl of Madness and Pain in Mojca Kumerdej's Short Fiction

The author's very first collection of short fiction, *Fragma* (2003), revealed the full intensity of her writing and her ability to express several levels: private and intimate relationships as well as social criticism, unmasking the subjects' weaknesses, intrigues, obsessions, selfishness, aggression. All this is depicted with intelligence and a sardonic humour, but also with a feeling for the pain of the subjects, be it people or animals. In this collection, individual violence may take the form of destructive possessiveness in partnerships and friendships, which degenerates into parasitic appropriation, in the narratives 'Pod gladino' (*Under the Surface*),⁴ 'Maščevalec' (*Avenger*), 'Angel varuh' (*Guardian Angel*), and 'Mernik sreče' (*Measure of Luck*). Another line of individual violence emerges in sadistic and masochistic relations within partnerships – in the stories 'Ponovitev' (*Repetition*), 'V roju kresnic' (*In a Swarm of Fireflies*), and 'Nekakšen sindrom' (*A Kind of Syndrome*) – or in the unwholesome relation of mutual addiction in the tale 'Roka' (*Hand*). It is precisely 'Roka' that provides a broad range of violent acts perpetrated against oneself and others (the psychological or physical violence of mother against daughter, emotional neglect, paedophilia, alcoholism, drug abuse, bulimia, suicide). Finally, the short narrative 'Moj najdražji' (*My Dearest*) seems at first glance to depict an individual's violence

⁴ The story *Pod gladino* from this collection received the Crystal Vilenica Award at the International Literary Festival Vilenica in 2006.

against a girl because of the male protagonist's obsession with a new BMW, but the whole narrative actually implies a criticism of collective violence in the contemporary neoliberal system (Bošnjak 2015: 80). This converges with Foucault's concept of the 'constitutive subject', which belongs to late capitalism but nevertheless underpins the society of control and punishment (Foucault 2008: 118).

Kumerdej's second short fiction collection, *Temna snov* (Dark Matter, 2011),⁵ continues to break down a variety of stereotypes and taboos: the unconditionally loving mother, good and non-violent children, family happiness, the wholesomeness of institutions (ecclesiastical, medical, educational, social). A case in point is the story 'Včasih Mihael molči' (Sometimes Mihael Is Silent),⁶ a highly sensitive, multi-layered rendering of a paedophilic and incestuous relationship between father and underage daughter, with all psychological consequences (especially for the daughter). In addition, the collection tackles various human ideals, from eternal life or youth in 'Jetrnik' (*Hepatica*) to the power of wealth in 'Siromaki' (The Poor) and the power of science in 'Kaca'. New levels of relationship are established: coexistence between man and robot in 'Božič s Hirošijem' (Christmas with Hiroshi), or between man and animal – or, more particularly, a cat – in 'Vsiljivec' (Intruder).⁷ One dystopian story, 'Program nacionalne obnove' (The Programme of National Reformation), depicts the intrusion of ideology into the private human sphere, which leads to collective violence. Individual violence (including death and various forms of abuse) features relatively fre-

⁵ The collection, translated by Ana Ristović, was published in 2015 by Geopoetika, a Serbian publishing house. In 2016 it won the Kočić's Pen Award (bestowed for important achievements in contemporary literature).

⁶ The story has a child focaliser, a little girl observing the events and commenting on them from her own perspective. A child focaliser, this time a boy, likewise appears in Kumerdej's story 'Bela brada' (White Beard).

⁷ This story is included in a selection of short fiction written by Slovenian women writers, *Kličič me po imenu: izbor iz krajshe proze slovenskih avtoric* (Call Me by My Name: A Selection of Short Prose by Slovenian Women Writers). The book was edited and furnished with an accompanying study by Silvija Borovnik (2013: 350–354).

The same category is a perfect fit for Kumerdej's story 'Pauli', published in a corporative collection of short fiction, *Moč lažnega* (The Power of Deception, 2015), where the title character, Pauli the cat, assumes the position of the first-person narrator (Kumerdej 2015: 77–97).

quently in this collection, in the stories 'Vanda', 'Čas potem' (Aftermath), 'Na terasi Marija' (On the Terrace, Marija), 'Včasih Mihael molči', and 'Zdaj spita' (Now the Two Are Asleep).

The stories of both collections are set in the present time, usually in an urban environment. Throughout Kumerdej's short fiction, misunderstandings between protagonists cause frustrations, and with these the accumulated hate, self-love and sadistic or masochistic character traits of both men and women may escalate into extreme psychological and physical violence. In Fromm's terms, we can detect symptoms of the so-called *malign aggression*, which stems from the agents' unsatisfied existential needs and is a predominantly human trait (Fromm 1980: 13–31).

By Way of Conclusion: An Attempt at Outlining the Author's Poetics of 'Truth'

According to Foucault, the question of truth is linked mainly to political economy and stems from the scientific discourse by which truth is produced. Truth is subject to both economic and political evaluation, which means truth for the purposes of economic production and political power. Moreover, it is an object of social confrontations in the form of ideological struggles, as well as an object of consumption, circulating through educational and informational channels; last but not least, it is produced and mediated under the control of large political and economic systems (Foucault 2008: 118–119). This synopsis is perhaps the best general characterisation of Mojca Kumerdej's poetics, especially with regard to the simultaneous intertwining of past and present in both novels discussed above. The intimist paradigm prevalent in her short fiction, on the other hand, additionally underlines a re-valued view of social and gender stereotypes, which displays an open eco-feminist-oriented (Zimmerman 1994: 233–235) criticism of various forms of structures prevailing in society, from ideological to patriarchal and political ones.

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Translated by Nada Grošelj

Angel varuh

Prepričan sem, da me nikoli nisi opazila. Da nimaš pojma, da sploh obstajam. Ker preziraš moške drobcenih telesc, kot si v gromkem smehu izbruhnila pri sosednjem omizju, ko sem te opazil prvič. Videti si cenena in vulgarna. Neokusno naličena, razmršenih rdečkastih las, ki si jih popravljaš s široko dvignjenimi rokami, da se ti razgalijo na pol obrite pazduhe in se po okolici razleze vonj rezko sladkobnega potu.

Ko si tisto popoldne zapustila omizje in se s ključem v roki odpravila proti dvigalu, sem neopazno stopil za tabo in počakal, da se je dvigalo ustavilo. V sedmem nadstropju. Ime in priimek sem razbral z nabiralnika. Pri priči mi je bilo jasno, da živiš sama. Moški glas na telefonskem odzivniku je morda znak, da le nisi tako zelo prepričana, da je svet, v katerem živiš, varen.

Miza v moji pisarni je obrnjena proti vhodu v tvoj blok. Ko ob osmih zjutraj sedem za računalnik, ti še trdno spiš. Brez občutka za spodobnost in čas, brez odgovornosti do življenja, do začetka dneva, ki se zate začne, ko se pač zbudiš in se ti zahoče, da vstaneš. Ko dopoldne izstopiš iz dvigala, se giblješ počasi in brezbrizno. Ne mudi se ti, ker živiš sama. Iz sebičnosti, da se ti ni treba nikomur prilagajati, z nikomer usklajevati časa in obveznosti. Zate so ure enake minutam in minute dnevom. Vseeno ti je, ali se v stanovanje vrneš ob šestih popoldne ali opolnoči. Sam se neredko vrnem v pisarno zvečer, ker to od mene zahteva delo. Vselej prepoznam zvok tvojega rdečega avtomobila, tudi po načinu, kako brez občutka grobo zaloputneš z vrati. In četudi ne bi znal tvoje registrske številke na pamet, bi med vsemi opli zagotovo prepoznal tvojega: pepelnato lisastega od postanega, zlepljenega prahu, z neopranimi stekli.

Zaradi tvojega neurejenega delovnika – če se ti zahoče, lahko delaš doma, ne tako kot drugi, v pisarnah, kot to počne večina, kot to počnem jaz – sem pazljiv. Ker si malomarna in pozabljaš stvari in se, ko že izstopiš iz dvigala, nemalokrat vrneš v stanovanje, vsakič počakam pol ure, da se prepričam, da te vsaj nekaj ur ne bo nazaj. Verjetno niti ne veš, da imate na vrhu bloka, tik pod streho, sušilnico perila, iz katere se je mogoče izmuzniti na streho. In od tam je stvar spretnosti, ki jo obvladamo moški drobcenih postav, kako se s strehe spustiti na tvoj balkon. Ne morem razumeti tvoje naivnosti, kako si lahko tako neprevidna, da puščaš balkonska vrata odprta ...

S svojo malomarno sproščenostjo si do okolice neizmerno žaljiva. Ko si nekoč v trgovini stala pred blagajno, sem za tabo poškilil v tvojo odprto, z neuporabnimi rečmi nabito torbo. Medtem ko si iskala denarnico in v njej plačilno kartico, si na pult polagala pomečkane liste papirja, pisala, majhno toaletno torbico in nato, pred očmi vseh – tampone. Vedeš se, kot da je ves svet tvoj in se ti v njem ne more prav nič zgoditi.

Ob prvem vstopu v tvoje stanovanje sem osupel. Kljub temu, da sem vedel za tvojo nemarnost, sem bil zgrožen ob pogledu na umazano perilo, razstlano po kavču dnevne sobe, na brisače in obleke, viseče po stolih, na zasušeno posodo v pomivalnem koritu, na s knjigami in kupi papirjev nastlano mizo in na spalnico z ogromno, razmetano posteljo ter okensko polico nad njo, obloženo s kondomi. Ne opaziš, kadar v stanovanju karkoli premaknem, prestavim rožo recimo, odgrnem zavese, premešam papirje ... Nekoč sem ti celo pomil posodo, ti pa naslednjega dne, ko si izstopila iz dvigala in v roki brezbrizno vrtela obesek z avtomobilskimi ključi, nisi bila videti prav nič vznemirjena, kaj šele prestrašena. Včasih pregledujem tvoje predale, za nekaj mesecev nazaj neplačane račune in opomine, ob telefonu na mizo prilepljene nečitljivo napisane zabeležke, zaradi česar približno vem vnaprej, kdaj te ne bo doma. Včasih prebiram tvojo elektronsko pošto. Način, kako se pogovarjaš z moškimi, je direkten in umazan. Gnusiš se mi, vse na tebi me sili na bruhanje. Tvoja koža na obrazu se sveti od pudra, s katerim zakrivaš izsušenost po neprespanih nočeh. Verjetno tudi od alkohola, sedemkrat sem v tvojem kuhinjskem smetnjaku odkril prazne steklenice vina. In na pultu dva nepomita kozarca. Nekoč celo tri, od katerih na dveh ni bilo sledi rdečila.

Pred dnevi sem skozi balkonska vrata vstopil v trenutku, ko si počela to, kar počneš sicer – brez odgovornosti, brez čustev, z enim od njih. Tiho sem se približal odprtim vratom spalnice in poškilil na posteljo. Nista me slišala, kako bi tudi me, ko pa sta tisto počela, kot to počno počestni psi. Kadar se k tebi priplazim ponoči, kar je seveda redkeje kot podnevi, sem v trenirki in športnih copatih. Ker jaz skrbim za svoje zdravje, ker vem, da brez zdravega telesa ni zdravega duha. Ni duše. Ti pa si povsem brez duše. Ena sama predrzna gmota mesa si, v kateri utripajo organi, pod kožo katere se pretaka kužna kri, klokočejo urin, limfne tekočine, se proti zadnjiku premika blato ...

Težko razumem, kako moški ne opazijo gnusobe, ki jo prekriva tvoja koža, kako lahko zdržijo besede, ki jih brez vsake odgovornosti razmetavaš, kadar posedaš v lokalu pod blokom. Ali kadar izstopajo iz tvojega avtomobila oziroma ti iz njihovega. Način, kako govoriš z njimi, je prostaški. Brez sramu, ko s katerim od njih odhajaš iz stanovanja, tvoja roka opleta okoli njegove zadnjice, in ko se z njim poslavljaš, desno nogo zarineš globoko med njegova stegna. Opazujem njihove obraze, berem iz njihovih pogledov: karcinom si, ki se širi v okolico. In prav osreči me, kadar kdo od njih odide, ne da bi te skorajda pogledal. In si želim, da te je prizadel. Da te boli, da te zelo boli ...

V zadnjem času metastaziraš celo v moj dom. V moje sanje in mi načenjaš spanec. Ko sem pred štirimi dnevi spal z ženo, si se mi tik pred vrhuncem prikradla pred oči. Zamizal sem in vsepovsod si bila ti. Ko pa sem oči ponovno odprl, sem na ženinem obrazu zagledal tvoje razmazano opečnato rdečilo, da se mi je zatresel želodec in sem z roko na ustih stekel v kopalnico, se nagnil nad školjko in bruhal. Zaradi težke večerje, sem rekel ženi, ki je drugačna od tebe. Čista, brez sluzastih misli, ki se moškimi, še preden se zavejo, lepljivo ovijejo okoli glave in telesa in nato kot z ostrimi, koničastimi lovskami prodirajo v njihovo notranjost.

Kadar te zagledam pred blokom, se mi pogled izostri in vidim v tvoje drobovje. Od nekdanj me zanima, kakšen je organizem videti od znotraj. Kot usnjene rokavice, ki jih od znotraj obrneš navzven. In ki si jih nadenem vsakič, preden vstopim v tvoje stanovanje. In pregledam teren, na katerem se počutiš najbolj varno. Nekoč bom s tabo storil to, kar počnem doma. Že leta. V kleti. Česar ne ve nihče. Med tekom, oblečen v trenirko, v mestnem parku nastavljam pasti in pobiram živalska trupelca, jih na skrivaj prinašam domov in zamrzem v kleti. Kadar sem doma sam, z dna skrinje vzamem zmrznjeno siničko, žabo, veverico in na kovinski mizi žival s skalpelom seciram. Zelo natančno in počasi odpiram njeno telo, na mizo polagam njene organčke, si jih precizno ogledujem, tehtam, merim in preučujem ...

Neke noči, ko boš ležala sama v tisti ogromni, nepospravljeni, razmetani, s spermo prepojeni postelji, bom skozi odprta balkonska vrata stopil v tvoje stanovanje in nato skozi kuhinjo v spalnico. Zagledala me boš, a tebi se tudi sanjalo ne bo, da si me kdaj srečala. Da sploh obstajam. Pa sem ves čas ob tebi. Zelo blizu. Mnogo bližje,

kot si lahko predstavljaš, kot te je sploh mogoče lahko strah. Tvoj temni angel sem, v čigar krila si se lepljivo sluzasta zapletla in te za zdaj varuje, da se ti ne bi kaj zgodilo. Nevidni angel, ki se z ostrim skalpelom neopazno dotika tvojega telesa in čaka na pravi trenutek, da ga odpre in te obrne od znotraj navzven. Ne vem še, kaj naj storim s tistim, kar drugim ni vidno, jaz pa ugledam vsakič, ko se pojaviš v oprijeti obleki barve odrtega, surovega mesa. Verjetno te bom tako, obrnjeno navzven, pustil na postelji, še prej pa tvoje organe očistil in umil in te po delih po njej razpostlal. Vsaj enkrat v tvojem življenju bodo stvari na pravem mestu in čiste. Ti boš ležala na postelji in ne boš mogla več reči ničesar. Izginila boš s sveta, kmalu tudi iz mojih sanj in mojih najbolj intimnih trenutkov. Nihče ne bo nikoli zvedel, da sem bil to jaz. Le kdo bi moškega drobcene postave povezal s tabo. Ne nazadnje se sploh ne pozna. Vsaj ti ne poznaš mene. A dotlej je še čas. Potrpežljiv človek sem. Nikamor se mi ne mudi. In medtem ko čakam, čutim neizmerno zadovoljstvo. Ker vem, česar ne veš ti – da te imam nenehno in povsod pod kontrolo. Vsak tvoj korak. Odhod in prihod. Vsako tvojo, tudi najbolj drobno in drugim neopazno navado in razvado.

V dnevih, kadar te niti za hip ne morem iztisniti iz glave, grem v klet. Zaklenem vrata in si oblečem čisto belo haljo. Umijem si roke, odprem zamrzovalno skrinjo, potisnem roko proti dnu in vzamem goloba, kosa, miš ali vrabčka. Trupelce porinem v mikrovalovno pečico in počakam, da se malo odtali. Nato si nadenem kirurške rokavice ... vzamem skalpel ... zarežem ... in mislim nate ...

Guardian Angel

I am sure you have never noticed me. And have no idea I exist. Because you despise men with puny bodies, as you once exclaimed in a burst of noisy laughter at the next table over, which is when I first noticed you. Your appearance is cheap and vulgar. With tacky makeup and messy red hair, which you adjust with your arms raised so high and wide that your half-shaven armpits are exposed and the sickly-sweet odor of your sweat permeates the entire area around you.

When you left the table that afternoon and went, key in hand, to the elevator, I followed you, unnoticed, and waited to see where it stopped. Seventh floor. I worked your name out from the mailbox. It was clear to me at once that you live alone. The male voice on your answering machine is, perhaps, a sign that you are not quite sure that the world you live in is safe.

The desk in my office faces the entrance to your apartment building. At eight in the morning, when I sit down at my computer, you are still fast asleep. With no sense of decency or time, no sense of responsibility to life, to the start of the day, which for you begins whenever you wake up and feel like getting out of bed. When sometime before noon you step out of the elevator, you move slowly, nonchalantly. You're in no hurry. That's because you live alone. Out of selfishness—so you don't have to accommodate anyone, don't have to coordinate your time and obligations with anyone. For you, hours are the same as minutes, and minutes the same as days. It makes no difference to you if you return to the apartment at six in the evening or midnight. I myself frequently go back to the office at night because my work demands it. I always recognize the sound of your red car, the way you slam the door—brusquely, with no sensitivity. And even if I didn't know your license plate by heart, I'm sure I'd be able to pick your car out from all the other Opels: it's the one with the ashy blotches of stale, cemented dust and the filthy windows.

Because of your disorderly work week—if you feel like it, you can work at home, not in an office like others do, like most people do, like I do—I have to be careful. You are negligent and forget things, and when you step out of the elevator you often have to go back to the apartment, so I always wait thirty minutes until I'm sure you

won't be returning for at least a few hours. You probably don't know there's a drying room on the top floor of your building, and from there a person can slip out onto the roof. And then it's just a matter of agility—the kind we puny men have—to climb down from the roof onto your balcony. I don't understand your naïveté, how you can be so careless as to leave the balcony door open.

Your blithe disregard is profoundly offensive to the people around you. Once when I was standing behind you at the checkout in a store, I glanced into your open shoulder bag; it was crammed with all sorts of useless things. As you searched for your wallet, and the debit card inside it, you loaded the counter with crumpled scraps of paper, pens, a small toiletry bag, and then, for everyone to see—your tampons! You act like the world is your oyster and nothing can ever happen to you.

The first time I stepped into your apartment, I was shocked. I knew you were sloppy, but I was horrified to see your dirty underwear strewn across the living room sofa, the towels and dresses hanging off the chairs, the dishes in the sink with bits of food stuck to them, the table covered in books and piles of paper, and the bedroom, with your enormous unmade bed and the windowsill above it lined with condoms. You never notice when I make some alteration in your apartment—when I move a plant, for instance, or open the curtains, or mix up your papers. Once I even washed a dish for you, and the next day, when you stepped out of the elevator breezily twirling your car keys, you didn't seem the least bit upset, let alone alarmed. Sometimes I go through your drawers, the months-overdue bills and reminders, the illegible post-it notes stuck to the table by the phone—that's how I learn in advance when you probably won't be home. Sometimes I read your email. The way you talk to men is direct and dirty. You disgust me; everything about you makes me want to vomit. Your face shines from the powder you use to cover your dried-out skin after nights of not sleeping. And probably from alcohol too: seven times I found empty wine bottles in the trash can in your kitchen. And two unwashed wineglasses on the counter. Once even three, two of which had no trace of lipstick on them.

A few days ago I came in through the balcony door right when you were doing the thing you normally do—irresponsibly and unemotionally—with one of your men. I crept up to the open bedroom door and glanced at the bed. Neither of you heard me. How could

you? You were going at it like street dogs. When I steal into your apartment at night (which is less often, of course, than during the day), I always wear my track suit and sneakers. Because I take care of my health. I know that without a healthy body there's no healthy mind. No soul. And you are completely soulless. You are nothing but an impudent mass of flesh, inside of which organs are pulsating, beneath the skin of which infected blood is circulating, urine and lymphatic fluids gurgling, excrement moving towards the rectum...

How is it possible that men don't notice the vileness veiled by your skin? How do they put up with the words you throw around, with no responsibility at all, when you're sitting in the bar beneath your building? Or when they're getting out of your car, or you're getting out of theirs? It's vulgar the way you speak to them. And when you leave the apartment with one of them, it's shameless how your arm weaves around his butt and how, when you're saying goodbye, you shove your right leg deep between his thighs. I watch their faces, I read it in their eyes: you are a spreading carcinoma. And when one of these men walks away with barely a glance at you, it really makes my day. I want him to wound you. To make you hurt. To make you hurt bad.

Lately you've been metastasizing into my home. Into my dreams. You're affecting my sleep. Four days ago, when I was sleeping with my wife, you slinked into my field of vision just before I climaxed. I shut my eyes and you were everywhere. When I opened them again, I saw your smeary brick-red lipstick on my wife's face, and my stomach started twitching; with my hand over my mouth I ran to the bathroom, bent over the commode, and threw up. I ate too much at supper, I told my wife, who is not at all like you. She is pure, with no slimy thoughts that wrap themselves glutinously around the head and body of a man, without him even knowing it, and then with sharp-pointed tentacles pierce deep inside him.

Whenever I see you in front of your building, my vision sharpens and I can peer into your viscera. All my life I've been fascinated by the way an organism looks on the inside. Like leather gloves when you turn them inside out. Like the gloves I always put on before I enter your apartment. Before I examine the place where you feel safest. One day I will do to you what I do at home. What I have been doing for years. In the basement. Something nobody knows about. When I go running in my track suit, I set traps in the park and

collect the animals' little cadavers, which I secretly bring home and stick in the basement freezer. And when I'm at home alone, I reach down to the bottom of the freezer and take out a little wren, a frog, or a squirrel, and dissect the animal with a scalpel on the metal table. Slowly and very carefully, I open its body, place the little organs on the table, and meticulously examine them, weigh them, measure them, study them.

One night when you are lying alone in that enormous, unmade, messy, semen-soaked bed of yours, I will step into your apartment through the open balcony door, go through the kitchen, and enter the bedroom. You will look at me and won't have the faintest idea that you've ever met me. That I even exist. But I have been by your side the whole time. Right next to you. Much closer than you can imagine, closer than you could ever fear. I am your dark angel, in whose wings you have glutinously, slimily entangled yourself and who, for now, watches over you, so that nothing happens to you. An invisible angel, who, unobserved, touches your body with his sharp scalpel and waits for the right moment to open it and turn you inside out. I don't know yet what I will do with that which remains unseen by others, but I notice every time you appear in a tight dress the color of raw, flayed meat. Most likely, I will leave you like that on the bed, turned inside out, but first I will clean your organs, wash them, and spread you out piece by piece. For once in your life, things will be in their proper place, pristine. You will lie there on the bed, unable to say anything ever again. You will disappear from the world, and soon from my dreams too, and from my most intimate moments. No one will ever find out it was me. Who would imagine that such a puny man could have any connection to you? After all, we don't know each other. At least you don't know me. But there is still time before that happens. I am a patient man. I'm in no hurry. And as I wait, I feel immense satisfaction. Because I know something that you don't know: I know that you are constantly and completely under my surveillance. Every step you take. Your comings and goings. Your every routine, every bad habit, even the tiniest things that go unnoticed by others.

On days when I can't get you out of my head, not for a single moment, I go down to the basement. I lock the door and put on a clean white lab coat. I wash my hands, open the freezer, and reach towards the bottom. I pull out a pigeon, a blackbird, a mouse, or a

sparrow. I stick the little corpse in the microwave and wait for it to thaw a bit. Then I put on my surgical gloves, pick up the scalpel, make an incision—and think of you.

Translated by Rawley Grau

**Literarna branja
Vilenice 2018**

*Vilenica Literary
Readings 2018*



Foto © MMB

David Bandelj

Pesnik in glasbenik David Bandelj se je rodil leta 1978 v Gorici, kjer tudi živi. Po doktoratu iz primerjalne književnosti na Univerzi v Ljubljani je bil nekaj let univerzitetni predavatelj in raziskovalec, danes pa poučuje literarne predmete na šolah s slovenskim učnim jezikom v Gorici. Je tudi zborovodja Mešanega pevskega zbora Lojze Bratuž in Mešanega mladinskega pevskega zbora Emil Komel. Bandelj je doslej izdal štiri pesniške zbirke: *Klic iz nadzemlja* (2000), *Razprti svetovi* (2006), *Odhod* (2012) in dvojezično *Gorica – Gorizia* (2014), v katerih upesnjuje svoje doživljanje sveta, odstira delčke intimnega življenja in razmišlja o svoji duhovni poti, osvobojeni vsakršnih ideoloških spon. Je tudi avtor knjige esejev *Razbiranja žarišča* (2008), v kateri razmišlja o literaturi in meji, ter dveh literarnovednih monografij: *V iskanju jaza* (2013) z osrednjo temo teorije in prakse dnevniške književnosti in *Obrazi slovenske literature* (2014) o naši literaturi v zamejstvu. Uredil je še antologijo sodobne poezije Slovencev v Italiji z naslovom *Rod lepe Vide* (2009). Pesmi objavlja v osrednjih slovenskih literarnih revijah in piše literarnoteoretske članke in kritike. Za svoje delo je prejel več nagrad.

Poet and musician David Bandelj was born in 1978 in Gorizia by the Slovene-Italian border, where he lives to this day. After obtaining a PhD in comparative literature at the University of Ljubljana, he worked as a university professor and researcher, while today he teaches literary classes at schools with Slovene language classes in Gorizia. He is the leader of the Mixed choir Lojze Bratuš and the Mixed Youth Choir Emil Komel. Bandelj has published four poetry collections so far: *Klic iz nadzemlja* (The Call from the Upperground, 2000), *Razprti svetovi* (Worlds Wide Open, 2006), *Odhod* (Departure, 2012) and the bilingual *Gorica – Gorizia* (2014), in which he puts into verse his view of the world, reveals pieces of intimate life, and thinks of a spiritual path free of ideological bonds. He is also the author of the book of essays *Razbiranja žarišča* (Readings of the Epicentre, 2008), in which he ponders literature and the border, and of two literary monographs: *V iskanju jaza* (In Search of the Self, 2013), the central theme of which is the theory and practice of journal literature, and *Obrazi slovenske literature* (Faces of Slovene Literature, 2014), focusing on Slovene literature abroad. He is also the editor of the anthology of Slovene poetry of Slovenes in Italy *Rod lepe Vide* (Lovely Vida's Lineage, 2009). He publishes his poems in leading Slovene literary magazines, and he also writes literary theory and criticism. He has received many awards for his work.

Lost in Translation

Na mojem hrbtu raste metulj
počasi se mu odpirajo krila
okrasto peščena so

ne vem kaj dela tam
morda polni mojo zavest
z vrvicami nemoči
in se hrani z nečim
kar imam v sebi

ko mi koža poka
se pripravlja da vzleti
a nikoli ne
uklešččen je v moje gube in
bolj se napreza da bi odšel
bolj ostaja del mene

ne vem kdaj je prišel
morda je tu že od zmeraj
ne oglašča se
tako da včasih nanj kar pozabim

ko se spet ovedem da je tam
malo zaboli
kot bi med rebra kdo zasajal tanko ostro rezilo

iz dneva v dan se privajam nanj
in ko nama je lepo zapleševa skupaj

najbolj hudo je takrat
ko hoče kričati
glasu ne da od sebe
a je rjojenje neznosno
da me oglušuje
takrat se zvijem v klobčič in čakam da mine

za trenutek je bolje
potem se zgodba spet začne

nekega dne bova vzletela skupaj
prišla do vrha gore in tam me bo spustil na tla

kdo od naju bo preživel je stvar izbire

On the Road (Again)

New York je že daleč in
Boston se počasi približuje
ves dan posedam tam kjer
se gnetejo filtri ki omogočajo
zavest

nekje gori ogenj
ampak ne tukaj
vse ceste izgledajo prazne
po njih se razlegajo bližine

ničesar ne znam
vse gre iz mene
in se nekam usede
koliko velja žerjavica ki sije nemir

bojim se svojih pesmi
ker se uresničujejo
odpirajo brezno kamor padamo
eden za drugim
na dnu pa čakamo
da nas kdo pobere
osmisli
ali v najboljšem primeru
sežge

vožnja skozi
obzorje traja za dve večnosti
in samo kdor se ne ozira nazaj
je v njej posvečen

Milano Mehika Ohio Massachusetts
ni pomembno da veš
ampak da se zavedaš
krožnica se bo razprla in pljunila
vate svetlobo v avgustu
to si zapomnim da bom pripravljen
ker nikoli nisem

hoteti ni dovolj
obstajajo zidovi ki niso od tod
čeznje prideš gol in pust
izropan in pozabljen
v meni je angel ki
se noče razpočiti
in ko se on osvobaja
razpadam na koščke

spet in spet se sestavljam
da mu onemogočim izhod
ime mu je Jack in/ali Allen
ali kakor hočeš
njegova stiska
je moja zmaga
lebdim nekje&nekoč
nebo ni več modro
uhaja mi

Upravljanje z metafiziko

To moram ustaviti
da se ne zgodi kot
takrat ko sem nekje na Livadi
ujel misel in je potem zbežala
eni temu pravijo navdih

od tedaj hodim tja
kjer sem izgubil dober verz
morda celo več dobrih verzov

to moram ustaviti
in Veronika se igra s plišastim kitom
odkriva svet z usti
jaz ga z nečim kar ne vem kaj je
eni temu pravijo poezija

v resnici besede kapljajo od nekod
in predirajo kožo
usedejo se ti v naročje
ali pa brizgajo kot se dogaja Petru
potem jih nekdo uredi
v bolj ali manj smiselne celote
in ko jih prebiramo niso več naše

to moram ustaviti
moji otroci zgublajo kredo
jaz pa hodim v cerkev
kjer mi pijan duhovnik razlaga evangelij
nekaj podobno večnosti me zagrabi za vrat
da postajam bolj vodljiv
eni temu pravijo notranji mir

to moram ustaviti
zavedanje nas pripravlja
a za to nismo najbolje poučeni
vedno se sprašujem zakaj
sem svoj najboljši literarnovedni tekst
pisal o Tomažu
ko bom nekoč napisal pesem
po kateri me bodo vsi prepoznali
bo odmevalo in pokalo
in tega se bojim

to moram ustaviti
nekatero noči so bolj dolge kot druge
takrat se trudim da bi obračal strani
ni pomembno
ali so to knjige
ali življenje

Tukaj in zdaj

Noč se postopoma krajša in še enkrat
smetim s slabo poezijo

drug drugega pitamo z upanjem
da je vse kar se dogaja del načrta

gledam žensko ki piše svojo zgodbo
prek hčerk
pravi da naj pridem do nje
a ko se je želim dotakniti
odleti

literatura je le ena izmed opcij umiranja
ne vem če me je z vsako pesmijo manj
zagotovo je v vsaki del moje kože

kaplje se vijejo po hrbtu in legam na oči
brez veselja
službe se me otepajo
kmalu se me bodo tudi ljudje

pozoren postajam na število kvadrantov
v vsakem vesolju
moje je neskončno le do takrat
ko se bo sesulo

nagnem svoj kozarec in čakam
da vse kar sem napisal
mine enkrat za vselej

Lost in Translation

A butterfly is growing on my back
slowly its wings are opening
they are ochreously sandy

I don't know what it is doing there
perhaps filling my conscience
with strings of weakness
and feeding on something
I have inside me

when my skin breaks
it prepares to fly off
but it never does
it is wedged in my wrinkles and
the more it strains to leave
the more it stays a part of me

I don't know when it came
perhaps it's been here since always
it does not make sounds
so I sometimes just forget about it

when I realise again that it is there
it hurts a bit
as if someone were stabbing a thin sharp blade between my ribs

from day to day I am getting used to it
and when we are good we dance together

it's the hardest when
it wants to scream
it does not make a sound
but the roaring is unbearable
and it deafens me
then I curl up and wait for it to pass

it is better for a moment
then the story starts again

some day we will rise together
we will come to the top of the mountain and there it will drop me
down

who of us two will survive is a matter of choice

On the Road (Again)

New York is already far and
Boston is approaching slowly
I've been sitting the whole day where
filters knead which enable
consciousness

a fire is burning somewhere
but not here
all the roads look empty
proximities resounding along them

I don't know anything
everything goes out of me
and sits down somewhere
what's the worth of embers shining unrest

I'm afraid of my own poems
because they're becoming true
they open the abyss in which we fall
one after another
and wait on the bottom
for someone to pick us up
give meaning
or in the best case
burn us

the drive through
the horizon lasts for two eternities
and only he who does not look back
is consecrated in it

Milan Mexico Ohio Massachusetts
it is not important to know
but to be aware
the circular will open and spit
the light into you in August
I remember that so I'll be ready
because I never am

to want is not enough
there are walls that are not from here
having climbed them you are naked and desolate
robbed and forgotten
there's an angel inside me that
will not burst
and while setting himself free
I am falling to pieces

I am constructing myself again and again
to prevent him to exit
his name is Jack and/or Allen
or whatever you want
his distress
is my victory
I hover somewhere&some day
the sky isn't blue anymore
it's slipping away from me

Managing Metaphysics

I have to stop this
so it doesn't happen like
that time when somewhere at Livada
I caught a thought and then it escaped
some call it inspiration

I've been going there since
where I lost a good verse
perhaps even several good verses

I have to stop this
and Veronika is playing with a plush whale
discovering the world with her mouth
I do it with something for which I don't know what it is
some call it poetry

the truth is words drip from somewhere
and pierce the skin
they sit in your lap
or gush out as it happens to Peter
then someone arranges them
into more or less logical wholes
and when we read them they are not ours anymore

I have to stop this
my children are losing their chalk
and I am going to church
where a drunk priest explains gospel to me
something similar to eternity grabs me by the neck
to become more docile
some call it inner peace

I have to stop this
awareness prepares us
but we are not best informed for that
I always ask myself why
I wrote my best literary theory text
on Tomaž
some day when I will write a poem
by which everyone will identify me
it will resound and detonate
and that is what I am afraid of

I have to stop this
some nights are longer than the others
then I make the effort to turn the pages
it does not matter
whether it is books
or life

Here and Now

The night shortens gradually and once again
I am littering with bad poetry

we feed each other with hope
that all that is going on is a part of a plan

I look at a woman writing her story
through her daughters
she says I should come to her
but when I want to touch her
she flies away

literature is just one of the options of dying
I don't know if there is less of me with every poem
certainly it is in every part of my skin

drops are winding over my back and I lay on my eyes
without joy
jobs are dodging me
soon people will too

I am starting to pay attention to the number of quadrants
in every universe
mine is infinite only until
it will collapse

I tip my glass and wait
for everything that I have written
to pass once and for all

Translated by Petra Meterc



Foto © osebni arhiv

Petre Barbu

Petre Barbu se je rodil leta 1962 v Galații v Romuniji, na literarno prizorišče pa je stopil leta 1993 z zbirko kratkih zgodb *Tricoul portocaliu fără număr de concurs* (Oranžna majica brez tekmovalne številke), ki so ji sledili romani, novele, kratke zgodbe in drame. Leta 2003 je za dramo *Tatăl nostru care ești în supermarket* (Oče naš, ki si v supermarketu) prejel nagrado UNITER Romunskega gledališkega združenja za najboljšo romunsko gledališko igro leta. Njegovo zadnje delo je roman *Marea petrecere* (Velika zabava) iz 2014, ki bo v slovenskem prevodu Aleša Musterja izšel predvidoma prihodnje leto pri Cankarjevi založbi. Barbu, ki je v vsakodnevem življenju odgovorni urednik revije *Forbes România*, o svojih delih nerad pripoveduje, saj raje vidi, da govorijo sama zase.

Petre Barbu was born in 1962 in Galați, Romania. He arrived on the literary scene in 1993 with the short story collection *Tricoul portocaliu fără număr de concurs* (Orange Jersey with No Competition Number), which was followed by novels, novellas, short fiction, and drama. In 2003 his play *Tatăl nostru care ești în supermarket* (Our Father Who Art in Supermarket) received the UNITER Award for the best theatre drama of the year, given by the Theatre Union of Romania. His latest work, *Marea petrecere* (Grand party), an excerpt of which is published in this almanac, came out in 2014, and it will most probably be published in Slovene next year in translation by Aleš Mustar. Barbu, who is also the editor in chief of *Forbes România*, finds it difficult to talk about his writing and prefers to let his work speak for itself.

Marea petrecere

(fragment de roman)

Ai murit, draga mea surioară, dar coșmarul nu s-a sfârșit. Luni seara ai murit. Mă întorceam acasă cu metrourl. Eram cu Manuela. În stația Piața Romană m-a sunat tanti Vera. Mi-a spus că de abia mai respiri. Avea o voce gătuită de frică. I-am răspuns că semnalul telefonului se va pierde în tunel și că am s-o sun în cinci minute. Manuela mi-a urmărit mâna care a ascuns mobilul în buzunarul paltonului. Câteva clipe n-am putut să vorbesc. Apoi, am rugat-o să ne vedem a doua zi, spre seară, tot la *Vintage*. Ea mi-a răspuns fără ezitare: „Da, Leonid, ne vedem”. Și Manuela știa că ai să mori, iar eu știam că n-am s-o mai văd niciodată. Metrourl se apropia de Piața Universității și telefonul a sunat din nou. L-am scos din buzunar și am răspuns fără să mă uit cine mă apelează. Am auzit hohotele de plâns ale mătușii noastre. Garnitura intra scrâșnind în stație și călătorii se înghesuiau la uși. „Vin cu primul tren!”, am strigat cât am putut de tare și am închis telefonul. Trupurile agitate m-au împins pe peron. Manuela se retrăsese în mijlocul vagonului. M-am uitat la ora înscrisă pe ecranul mobilului - 20:24. Un val de furie mi-a tulburat mintea. Rămăsesem singur.

Nu știu ce-am făcut în stație: poate am așteptat să-mi treacă furia, poate am început să tremur, înspăimântat că te voi vedea întinsă în patul din prima cameră, în care s-a prăpădit și mama, poate că m-am rugat la Dumnezeu pentru sufletul tău sau poate că l-am apostrofat, da, da, puțin îmi pasă dacă l-am înjurat, asta nu era voia Lui!, să mi te ia de pe pământ, pentru că așa ți-a fost scris!, dar m-am trezit cu ochii pe același ecran albastru luminos, cu nori albi, și m-am gândit că tu deja te-ai înălțat dincolo de nori și m-ai lăsat aici, sub pământ, în stația Piața Universității, uitându-mă la imaginea de fundal a *display*-ului de pe telefonul meu *Nokia*, care arăta ora 20:41. Cred că atunci am plâns.

Mi-am suflat nasul cu două degete, direct într-un coș de gunoi, pentru că nu avem șervețele, și mi-am amintit de *e-mail*-ul tău, pe care mi l-ai trimis în noiembrie, după a doua operație. Avea atașat un document *Word*, pe care l-ai intitulat DECES. Mi-ai scris în *e-mail*: „Printează și citește!”. Acest semn al exclamării mi-a răsunat ca o poruncă. Singura ta poruncă. Dar l-am citit în diagonală, cu privirea împăienjenită de lacrimi și l-am închis speriat, lăsându-l acolo,

în *Yahoo*, timp de două luni. Speram să nu mori atât de repede. M-am gândit să-mi continui drumul cu metroul până acasă, să-l scot la imprimantă. Trebuia să-i spun Simonei că ai murit, s-o rog să-mi pună în valiză două cămăși și un pulover, să aprind o lumânare la icoana din camera Mirunei, s-o sărut pe creștet pe Miruna care de-abia adormise, să beau o cafea în bucătărie și să fumez vreo trei țigări, timp în care să printez textul tău și apoi să plec la gară. Asta ar fi însemnat să trăiesc din nou sentimentul de vinovăție, uitându-mă la fața Simonei, apăsată de reproșuri, care m-ar fi urmărit până la lift. Ea ar fi închis ușa apartamentului, întorcând yala până la capăt, eu aș fi tras ușa liftului, apăsând cu degetul tremurând butonul de la parter. Nu mai aveam chef să mă simt crispat, pentru că o lăsam singură să aibă grijă de Miruna, tocmai acum, când luam trenul spre tine, ca să te îngrop. Nu puteam nici să mă întorc la serviciu, ca să printez mesajul tău, pentru că la acea oră redacția era închisă. Mi-a trecut prin minte s-o sun pe Manuela, să-i spun că vin la ea în 20 de minute, să-mi scoată la imprimantă paginile tale, dar ea s-ar fi gândit că mă folosesc de moartea ta, ca să intru pentru prima dată în apartamentul ei, poate în dormitorul ei, poate aș fi trântit-o în patul părăsit de soțul ei, plecat pentru șase luni în Franța, la o specializare, și până s-ar fi făcut ora de plecare a trenului aș fi dus-o de două ori pe culmile orgasmului, iartă-mă, draga mea surioara! Imprimanta ar fi vărsat o sută de exemplare identice din documentul DECES. Dar Manuela se ascunsese în vagonul metroului.

Am ieșit în Piața Universității și am luat un taxi până la Gara de Nord. Mi-am luat bilet la acceleratul de 21:25, pe care o singură dată ai încercat să-l iei din București, după ședința aia blestemată de chimioterapie cu noul citostatic prescris de doctorița Stănculeanu, dar eu nu te-am lăsat să te urci în tren după ce ți-ai revenit din paralizie, internată la IOB. Și bine am făcut! E un tren nenorocit. Am avut timp să scot 2.000 de lei de la un bancomat din gară. Cu două zile în urmă îmi intrase leafa în cont. Mi-am cumpărat cinci pachete de *Kent Nanotek* de la supermarketul gării și o sticlă de apă plată la un litru. Am fugit la tren și m-am așezat într-un compartiment gol și întunecos, la geam, cu câteva clipe înainte ca trenul să plece. Mai erau vreo zece-cincisprezece oameni în tot vagonul care puțea a urină, dar eu eram singurul care se grăbea să ajungă la un mort.

Am băut apa dintr-o răsuflare până la jumătatea sticlei. Îmi simțeam în continuare gâtul uscat. Pentru o clipă am fost tentat

să trag semnalul de alarmă, să sar din tren (nu trecuse încă pe sub Pasajul Basarab), să mă întorc la supermarket și să cumpăr o *Stalinskaya*. Mi-am imaginat cum mi-ar fi stat mie, bărbat la cincizeci de ani împliniți, fără chelie, fără riduri și fără burtă, mare lucru, nu-i așa?, îmbrăcat cu un pulover vechi de cinci-șase ani, peste o cămașă albă, și pantaloni de velură neagră, să stau cu ochii cășcați pe fereastra vagonului, fără să văd nimic în bezna de afară, și să trag câte o dușcă de votcă, așteptând ca nenorocitul ăsta de tren să străbată cei 230 de kilometri în trei ore și douăzeci de minute, așa cum scrie în „Mersul trenurilor”. Să beau de frică. Mi s-a părut că imaginea asta este de-a dreptul stupidă. Nu aveam nevoie de aburi de alcool în creier chiar dacă îmi ardea gâtul. În plus, aș fi fost complice la decădere mea: să beau singur votcă într-un tren de noapte. Manuela mi-a spus odată că bărbații români trecuți de 40 de ani sunt niște căzături. Și eu am râs. Și ea a râs, mușcându-și buzele. Dar nu teama de „căzătura” care sălășuiește în mine m-a descurajat să trag semnalul de alarmă (aveam bani să plătesc amenda, dă-i dracului de bani!), ci amintirea acelei zile răvășite de viscol, din februarie 2010. Atunci am avut de ales, tot în supermarketul Gării de Nord, între o *Stalinskaya* și o sticlă de apă plată.

Viscolul se pornise la prânz, când așteptam taxiul în față la IOB. De sub gluga canadianei îți străluceau ochii de oboseală. Mi-ai spus că vrei să te întorci la Galați. N-am insistat să rămâi la noi. Simona ar fi putut să mai îndure încă o noapte cu tine în casă, mi-am făcut socoteala, uitându-mă descurajat la vitezometrul taxiului care arăta doar opt kilometri la oră. Am făcut un ceas până la Gara de Nord, printr-un București răvășit de viscol. Gara era plină de oameni și traficul feroviar blocat. Când ai găsit un scaun liber în sala de așteptare, m-am gândit îngrozit că, din cauza încăpățânării tale, căzusem într-o capcană. În prima oră de așteptare, am sperat că garnitura va fi trasă la peron. În a doua oră, am intrat în panică văzându-te cum te-ai ghemuit deasupra genții maro, în care îți țineai dosarul cu analize și borseta cu medicamente și cosmetice, și ți-ai rezemat capul de umărul unui navetist slăbănog, cu o căciulă de iepure trasă pe frunte, înfolfolit într-o șubă de lână. Semăna cu șuba de șantierist a tatălui nostru. Panica m-a împins să te văd cum ai să te prăbușești de pe scaun și eu am să strig: ajutor, ajutor, sora mea moare!, a făcut chimoterapie și moare!, ajutor!, ajutor!, și nicio mașină a Salvării de pe lumea asta n-ar fi fost în stare să ajungă la tine pe acel viscol!

Dar tu ai dormit și în a treia oră, cu fruntea pe umărul navetistului. Eu am înțepenit în picioare, lângă tine. Te-ai trezit în a patra oră de așteptare și m-ai rugat să-ți cumpăr o pungă de covrigi fără sare și o sticlă de apă plată. Când am intrat în supermarketul gării, iarăși m-a cuprins panica. Oamenii alungați de viscol goleau rafturile cu o furie care îmi amintea de cozile la carne și ouă la care se îngrămădisese mama noastră, în anii '80. Și m-am îngrămădit și eu. Am apucat o pungă de covrigi fără sare și o sticlă de apă plată la un litru, ultima sticlă de pe raft! Când m-am dus la casa de marcat, am zărit raftul aproape golit cu băuturi spirtoase. Am înșfăcat o *Stalinskaya*. Îmi venea s-o deschid și să trag două-trei-patru înghițituri zdrăvene. Dar m-am uitat la preț și mi-am dat seama, fără să mai calculez, că n-or să-mi ajungă banii din portofel și pentru sticla de apă plată și pentru sticla de votcă. Iar cardul meu era gol. Am lăsat *Stalinskaya* lângă o cutie de bulion și m-am așezat la rând, la casa de marcat. În sala de așteptare, altă panică mi-a pus ghera în gât: scaunul tău era gol. „Au tras trenul la linia cinci!”, m-a anunțat amabil navetistul și am țâșnit spre peron. N-am putut să urc în tren, să-ți dau covrigii fără sare și sticla cu apă plată, de parcă ar fi fost ultima sticlă din lume!, pentru că oamenii stăteau ciorchine pe scările vagoanelor. Când am vrut să te sun pe mobil, să te întreb unde ești, am constatat că bateria telefonului meu era descărcată. Dracu' să-l ia de tren! Și trenul s-a mișcat din gară și s-a pierdut în vijelie. M-am întors acasă cu metrourul. Miruna a mâncat covrigii și eu am băut apa. Toată noaptea am încercat să te sun. Și bateria ta căzuse. Abia a doua zi, la prânz, am citit *e-mail*-ul tău:

„Iartă-mă că te-am ținut în tensiune! Dar trebuia să ajung acasă. Trenul a fost plin de studenții veseli și atmosfera a fost plăcută. Am ajuns la miezul nopții și când m-am băgat în pat am fost foarte fericită. Azi-dimineață, când m-am trezit, soarele strălucea cu dinți. Am curățat zăpada din balcon și de la ferestre. Nu știi cum să-ți spun, dar sunt fericită pentru fiecare zi pe care o trăiesc.”

Velika zabava

(odlomek iz romana)

Umrla si, draga moja sestrica, toda nočne more še ni konec. V ponedeljek zvečer si umrla. S podzemno sem se vračal domov. Z Manuelo. Na postaji Piața Romana me je poklicala teta Vera. Rekla mi je, da komaj še dihaš. Njen glas je bil od strahu hripav. Rekel sem ji, da se bo v predoru telefonski signal izgubil, da jo čez pet minut pokličem nazaj. Manuela je opazovala mojo roko, ki je telefon skrila v žep plašča. Nekaj trenutkov nisem mogel reči niti besede. Potem sem ji predlagal, da se dobiva naslednji dan, proti večeru, spet v Vinteagu. Brez oklevanja mi je odgovorila: »Ja, Leonid, se vidiva.« Manuela je vedela, da boš umrla, in jaz sem vedel, da je nikoli več ne bom videl. Metro se je bližal postaji Piața Universității, ko je telefon znova zazvonil. Vzel sem ga iz žepa in se oglasil, ne da bi pogledal, kdo kliče. Zaslišal sem krčeviti jok najine tete. Kompozicija vagonov je cvileče pripeljala na postajo in potniki so se gnetli pri vratih. »Pridem s prvim vlakom!« sem zavpil na vso moč in ugasnil telefon. Razburjena množica me je potisnila na peron. Manuela se je umaknila na sredino vagona. Pogledal sem na uro, ki se je izpisala na zaslonu telefona – 20:24. Val besa je zameglil moj um. Ostal sem sam.

Ne vem, kaj sem takrat počel na postaji, morda sem čakal, da se moj bes poleže, morda sem se začel tresti od groze ob misli, da te bom videl ležati na postelji v prvi sobi, v kateri je šla na oni svet tudi mama, ali pa sem molil k Bogu za tvojo dušo ali se celo drl nanj. Ja, prav briga me, če sem ga preklinjal, saj ni bila Njegova volja, da te mi vzame z obličja zemlja, saj to ni bila tvoja usoda! A sem se vnovič zdramil z očmi na istem svetlečem modrem ekranu z belimi oblaki in pomislil, da si se že dvignila za oblake, mene pa pustila tu, pod zemljo, na postaji Piața Universității. Gledal sem ozadje na zaslonu svojega telefona Nokia, ki je kazal, da je ura 20:41. Mislim, da sem takrat jokal.

Z dvema prstoma sem si izpihal nos naravnost v koš za odpadke, ker nisem imel robčkov. Pomislil sem na tvoje elektronsko sporočilo, ki si mi ga poslala novembra, po drugi operaciji. V priponki si poslala Wordovo datoteko, ki si ji dala naslov SMRT. V elektronskem sporočilu si mi napisala: »Natisni in preberi!« Klicaj je zvenel kot ukaz. Tvoj edini ukaz. A besedilo sem prebral po diagonali, saj so mi pogled zastirale solze. Datoteko sem prestrašen zaprl in jo pustil dva meseca v Yahoojevem predalu. Upal sem, da ne boš

tako hitro umrla. Pomislil sem, da bi z metrojem nadaljeval pot do doma in besedilo natisnil. Simoni je bilo treba povedati, da si umrla, jo prositi, naj mi v kovček zloži dve srajci in pulover, prižgati svečo pred ikono v Mirunini sobi, in Miruno, ki je pravkar zaspala, poljubiti na tême in, medtem ko bi se tvoje besedilo tiskalo, popiti kavo v kuhinji, pokaditi dve ali tri cigarete in se potem odpraviti na železniško postajo. Vendar bi, medtem ko bi Simoni gledal v obraz, poln očitkov, ki mi sledi do dvigala, znova podoživel občutek krivde. Potem bi ona zaprla vrata stanovanja, do konca obrnila ključ v ključavnici in jaz bi odprl vrata dvigala in ves tresoč pritisnil na gumb za pritličje. Ni se mi zdelo vredno, da bi se žrl, ker sem jo pustil, da sama skrbi za Miruno, saj sem se z vlakom odpravljaj na pot k tebi, da bi te pokopal. V službo se tudi nisem mogel vrniti, da bi natisnil tvoje sporočilo, ker je bilo ob tisti uri uredništvo zaprto. Pomislil sem, da bi poklical Manuelo in ji rekel, da se čez dvajset minut oglašim pri njej, da bi ga natisnil pri njej, toda lahko bi si mislila, da tvojo smrt izrabljam, da bi prvič vstopil v njeno stanovanje, morda v njeno spalnico, kjer bi jo vrgel na posteljo, ki jo je njen mož zapustil, za šest mesecev je odšel na specializacijo v Francijo, in jo do odhoda vlaka dvakrat pripeljal do orgazma. Oprosti, draga moja sestra! Tiskalnik bi izvrgel sto enakih izvodov dokumenta SMRT. A Manuela se je skrila v vagonu metroja.

Izstopil sem na Piața Universității in se s taksijem odpeljal do železniške postaje Gara de Nord. Kupil sem vozovnico za hitri vlak ob 21:25, s katerim si se samo enkrat poskušala odpeljati iz Bukarešte, po kemoterapiji z novim citostatikom, ki ti ga je predpisala doktorica Stănculeanu, vendar ti, potem ko si po paralizi na Onkološkem inštitutu v Bukarešti spet prišla k sebi, nisem dovolil, da bi potovala z vlakom. Še dobro, da sem vztrajal! Vlak je namreč res beden. Imel sem dovolj časa, da sem na bankomatu na postaji dvignil 2000 lejev. Pred dvema dnevoma so mi na bančni račun nakazali plačo. V tamkajšnjem supermarketu sem kupil pet zavojčkov Kenta Nanontek in litrsko plastenko negazirane vode. Stekel sem na vlak in se usedel v prazen mračen kupe k oknu, samo nekaj trenutkov pred odhodom. V celem vagonu, ki je zaudarjal po urinu, je bilo kakšnih petnajst, morda dvajset ljudi in bil sem edini, ki se mu je mudilo k mrliču.

Na dušek sem izpraznil polovico plastenke. Še vedno sem čutil, da imam suho grlo. Za trenutek me je imelo, da bi potegnil zasilno

zavoro in skočil z vlaka (ki še vedno ni šel skozi predor Besarab), da bi se vrnil v supermarket in kupil vodko Stalinskaya. Pomislil sem, kako bi izgledal moški pri petdesetih, brez pleše in gub in trebuha, prava reč, kajne, oblečen v kakšnih pet let star pulover vrh bele srajce in v hlače iz črnega velurja, z očmi, ki buljijo skozi okno vagona, ne da bi kaj videle zunaj v črni temi, ki nagiba steklenico vodke, medtem ko poskuša bedni vlak v treh urah in dvajsetih minutah prevoziti 230 kilometrov, kakor piše v *Voznem redu vlakov*, moški, ki bi pil iz strahu. Takšen prizor se mi je zdel naravnost bedast. Nisem potreboval alkoholnih hlapov v možganih, čeprav me je v grlu žgalo. Še več, če bi na nočnem vlaku pil vodko, bi bil priča lastnemu propadu. Nekoč mi je Manuela rekla, da so romunski moški po štiridesetem vsi propadli. Jaz sem se zasmejal in tudi ona se je smejala in si grizla ustnice. Pa ni bil strah pred »propadlim« moškim, ki je vladal v meni, tisti, ki mi je jemal pogum, da bi potegnil ročico zasilne zavore (denar za kaznen sem imel, naj hudič vzame denar!), marveč je bil to spomin na ledeno mrzel dan februarja 2010. Tudi takrat sem v supermarketu Gare de Nord lahko izbiral med vodko Stalinskaya in plastenko negazirane vode.

Snežni metež se je začel v času kosila, ko sem pred Onkološkim inštitutom čakal na taksi. Izpod kapuce na bundi so se ti oči kar svetile od utrujenosti. Rekla si mi, da bi se rada vrnila v Galați. Nisem vztrajal, da ostaneš pri nas. Simona bi te lahko še eno noč prenašala pri nas doma. Ko sem preplašeno pogledoval na števec taksija, ki je kazal osem kilometrov na uro, sem začel delati izračune. Vožnja v snežnem metežu je trajala celo uro. Postaja je bila polna ljudi in železniški promet ohromljen. Ko si v čakalnici našla prosto mesto, sem pomislil, da sva se zaradi tvoje trme ujela v past. Prvo uro čakanja sem upal, da vlak pripelje na peron. Ko sem te videl, kako si se drugo uro čakanja zvijala v klobčič nad rjavo torbico, v kateri si imela mapo z izvidi in kozmetiko, in glavo naslanjala na rame slabotnega vozača z zajčjo kučmo, potegnjeno na čelo, oblečenega v volnen pastirski jopič, ki je bil podoben očetovemu gradbeniške-mu, me je zgrabila panika. Zaradi panike sem te kar videl, kako se zgrudiš s stola, in sebe, kako vpijem: »Na pomoč, na pomoč! Moja sestra umira. Imela je kemoterapijo in zdaj umira! Na pomoč! Na pomoč!« In v tistem metežu nobeno reševalno vozilo ne bi moglo priti do tebe! Ti pa si spala tudi tretjo uro s čelom na ramenu vozača. Četrto uro čakanja si se zbudila in me prosila, naj ti grem kupit

vrečko nesoljenih prest in plastenko negazirane vode. Ko sem vstopil v supermarket na železniški postaji, me je spet zgrabila panika. Ljudje, ki jih je pregnal metež, so besno praznili police, kar me je spomnilo na vrste za meso in jajca, v katerih se je v osemdesetih pre-
 rivala najina mama. Pograbil sem vrečko nesoljenih prest in zadnjo litrsko plastenko negazirane vode! Ko sem prišel do blagajne, sem opazil malodane izpraznjeno polico z žganimi pijačami. Pograbil sem Stalinskayo. Imelo me je, da bi jo odprl in naredil dva, tri ali štiri poštene požirke. Ko sem pogledal ceno, sem, ne da bi mi bilo treba računati, ugotovil, da za plastenko vode in steklenico vodke ne bo dovolj denarja. Stalinskayo sem odložil zraven tetrapaka s pretlačnim paradižnikom in se postavil v vrsto pred blagajno. V čakalnici me je spet za vrat zgrabila panika. Tvoj stol je bil prazen. »Vlak je pripeljal na peti tir,« me je prijazno obvestil vozač in stekel sem proti peronu. Nisem mogel gor, da bi ti dal nesoljene preste in plastenko vode, kot da bi bila zadnja na tem svetu, ker so se ljudje gnetli na stopnicah vagonov. Ko sem te hotel poklicati na mobilni telefon, da bi te vprašal, kje si, sem ugotovil, da je baterija mojega telefona prazna. Naj hudič vzame vlak! In odpeljal je s postaje in se izgubil v metežu. Domov sem se vrnil z metrojem. Miruna je pojedla preste, jaz pa sem popil vodo. Vso noč sem te poskušal priklicati. Tudi tvoja baterija je bila prazna. Šele naslednji dan sem v času kosila prebral tvoje elektronsko sporočilo:

Oprosti, da sem te držala v napetosti! Toda morala sem priti domov. Vlak je bil poln veselih študentov in vzdušje je bilo prijetno. Prispela sem ob polnoči, in ko sem se spravila v posteljo, sem bila zelo srečna. Ko sem se danes zjutraj zbudila, je zimsko sonce kazalo zobe. Z balkona in oken sem očistila sneg. Ne vem, kako naj ti to povem, toda hvaležna sem za vsak dan, ki ga preživim.

Prevedel Aleš Mustar

The Big Party

(excerpt from the novel)

You are dead, my dear sister, but the nightmare is not over. On Monday evening you died. I was going home on the metro. I was with Manuela. In the Piata Romana station Auntie Vera phoned me. She told me that you were barely breathing any more. Her voice was choked with fear. I told her that I would lose my phone signal when the train entered the tunnel and that I would call her in five minutes. Manuela looked at my hand as I put the mobile phone in my coat pocket. For a few moments I was unable to speak. Then, I asked her if we could see each other the next day, in the evening, at Vintage again. She answered without hesitation: “Yes, Leonid, we’ll meet tomorrow evening.” Manuela also knew that you were going to die, and I knew that I would never see you again. The train was approaching the Piata Universitatii metro station when the phone rang again. I took it out of my pocket and answered without looking to see who was calling. I heard our aunt sobbing. The screeching train entered the station and the passengers crowded to the doors. “I’ll come on the first train!” I shouted as loudly as I could and turned off the phone. The agitated bodies thrust me onto the platform. Manuela had retreated to the middle of the carriage. I looked at the time displayed on the screen of my mobile: 20:24. A wave of anger washed through my mind. I had been left alone.

I don’t know what I did in the station: maybe I waited for my anger to pass, maybe I started to tremble, terrified that I would see you stretched out on the bed in the room where Mother also passed away, maybe I prayed to God for your soul or maybe I railed at Him!, yes, yes, little do I care that I swore at Him, it wasn’t His will!, to take you from this earth, away from me, because it was written in your fate!, but I came around, my eyes still on the luminous blue screen with its white clouds, and I thought how you had already ascended above the clouds and left me here, on earth, in the Piata Universitatii metro station, looking at the background image of the display on a mobile phone, which showed the hour 20:41. I think it was then that I wept.

I gripped my nose between finger and thumb and blew straight into a rubbish bin, because I didn’t have any paper handkerchiefs, and I remembered your e-mail, the one you sent me in November,

after the second operation. It had a Word attachment, which you had titled DECEASE. You wrote to me in the e-mail: "Print it and read it!" That exclamation mark resounded like a commandment. Your only commandment. But I read it without seeing the words, my vision blurred by tears, and I closed it in fright, leaving it there, in Yahoo, for two months. I hoped that you would not die so soon. I thought of getting back on the metro, going home and printing it out. I had to tell Simona that you were dead, to ask her to put two shirts and a sweater in a suitcase for me, I had to light a candle at the icon in Miruna's room, to kiss Miruna, who had only just fallen asleep, to kiss her on the forehead, to drink a cup of coffee in the kitchen, to print your text and then go to the train station. That would have meant experiencing once again the feeling of guilt, looking at Simona's eyes, eyes filled with reproaches, which would have followed me all the way to the lift. She would have locked the door to the flat, turning the key all the way, I would have pulled open the door to the lift, pressed the button for the ground floor with a trembling finger. I had no mind to feel tense, because I was leaving her on her own to take care of Miruna, now of all times, when I was taking the train to be with you, to bury you. Nor could I go back to work to print your message, because the newspaper office was closed at that hour. It crossed my mind to phone Manuela, to tell her that I would be coming to her place in twenty minutes, so that she could print your pages, but she would have thought that I was taking advantage of your death to enter her flat for the first time, maybe even her bedroom, maybe I would have thrown her on the bed her husband abandoned, he had been away in France for six months, taking a training course, and by the time I had to leave to go to the train station I would have twice brought you to the heights of orgasm, forgive me, my dear sister! During which time the printer would have spewed a hundred identical copies of the documented titled DECEASE. But Manuela had hidden inside the carriage of the metro train.

I left the metro station and from Piata Universitatii I took a taxi to the Gara de Nord. I bought a ticket on the 21:25 express train, which once only had you tried to take from Bucharest, after that cursed chemotherapy session with the new cytostatic prescribed by Dr Stanculeanu, but I didn't let you board the train after you recovered from your paralysis, having been admitted to

the Bucharest Oncologic Institute. And a good thing I didn't! It's a wretched train. I had time to withdraw two thousand lei from a cash dispenser in the station. Two days previously my wages had been paid into my account. I bought five packets of Kent Nanotek from the station supermarket and a litre bottle of still water. I ran to the train and sat down in a dark, empty compartment, by the window, a few moments before the train left. In the whole of the carriage, which reeked of urine, there were around ten or fifteen people, but I was the only one who was hurrying to reach a dead person.

I drank half the bottle of water in a single gulp. My throat still felt dry. For an instant I was tempted to pull the alarm cord, to jump off the train (it hadn't passed the Basarab Underpass yet), to go back to the supermarket and buy a bottle of Stalinskaya vodka. I imagined how I would have looked, a man of fifty, without a bald patch, without wrinkles, without a belly, that's something, isn't it? wearing a six- or seven-year-old sweater over a white shirt and black velour trousers, I imagined how I would have looked sitting there, staring with unseeing eyes out of the carriage window into the darkness outside, now and then taking a slug of vodka, waiting for that wretched train to travel the 230 kilometres, which would take it three hours and twenty minutes, according to the timetable. To drink out of fear. That image seemed to me utterly stupid. I didn't need alcohol to cloud my brain, even if my throat was burning. And besides, I would have been complicit in my own decline: drinking vodka alone on a night train. Manuela once told me that Romanian men past the age of forty are wrecks. And I laughed. And she laughed, chewing her lip. But it was not the fear I nurtured of being a "wreck" that dissuaded me from pulling the alarm cord (I had the money to pay the fine, to hell with the money!), but the memory of that day ravaged by a snowstorm in February 2010. I had also had to choose then, also in the supermarket of the Gara de Nord, between Stalinskaya and a bottle of still water.

The snowstorm had started at lunchtime, when I was waiting for the taxi in front of the Oncologic Institute. Beneath the hood of your anorak your eyes glittered with tiredness. You told me that you wanted to go back to Galati. I didn't press you to stay at ours. Simona could have put up with you in the house for another night, I reckoned it up, looking in discouragement at the speed dial of the taxi, which showed just eight kilometres an hour. It took us

an hour to get to the Gara de Nord, through a Bucharest ravaged by the snowstorm. The station was full of people and rail traffic was at a standstill. When you found a vacant seat in the waiting room, I thought in horror that because of your stubbornness I had fallen into a trap. During the first hour's wait, I hoped that the train would be cancelled. In the second hour, I began to panic, seeing you huddled over your brown bag, in which you kept the file with your test results and your pouch of medicaments and cosmetics, and you rested your head on the shoulder of a scrawny commuter, who, wrapped up in a sheepskin coat, was wearing a rabbit-fur hat pulled down over his forehead. It looked like our father's builder's sheepskin coat. The panic made me see how you would collapse in your seat and I would shout: help, help, my sister is dying! She's had chemotherapy and she's dying! Help! Help! And no ambulance in the world would have been able to reach you in that snowstorm. But you slept in the third hour, too, with your forehead on the commuter's shoulder. I had grown stiff standing there next to you. You woke up in the fourth hour's wait and asked me to buy you a bag of unsalted pretzels and a bottle of still water. When I entered the station supermarket, the panic gripped me again. The people driven inside by the snowstorm were emptying the shelves with a fury that reminded me of the queues for meat and eggs in the 1980s, when our mother used to force us to wade into the *mêlée*. And I waded into the *mêlée*. I grabbed a bag of unsalted pretzels and a litre bottle of still water, the last bottle on the shelf! When I reached the till, I spotted the almost emptied hard liquor shelf. I grasped a bottle of *Stalinskaya*. I felt like opening it and taking two or three or four hefty slugs. But I looked at the price and I realised, without even having to tot it up, that the money in my wallet wouldn't be enough for the bottle of still water and the bottle of vodka. And there was no money on my debit card. I put the vodka down next to a box of tomato bullion and joined the queue at the till. In the waiting room, panic clawed at my throat again: your seat was empty. "The train has pulled up to platform five," the commuter informed me amiably, and I dashed to the platform. I couldn't climb aboard the train to give you your unsalted pretzels and bottle of still water, as if it were the last bottle in the world!, because there were knots of people on the carriage steps. When I tried to phone you on your mobile to ask where you were, I realised that the battery was dead. Damned train!

And the train pulled out of the station and was lost in the blizzard. I went home on the metro. Miruna ate the bagels and I drank the water. The whole night I tried to call you. Your battery was dead too. It wasn't until the next day, at lunchtime, that I read your e-mail: *"Forgive me for keeping you on tenterhooks! But I had to get home. The train was full of students, they were merry and the atmosphere was pleasant. I arrived at midnight and I was very happy when I climbed into bed. This morning, when I woke up, it was cold but the sun was shining. I cleared the snow from the balcony and the windows. I don't know how I can put it to you, but I'm happy for every day I'm still alive."*

Translated by Alistair Ian Blyth



Foto © Joanna Sidorowicz

Wioletta Grzegorzewska

Wioletta Grzegorzewska, s psevdonom Wioletta Greg, se je rodila leta 1974 v mestecu Koziegłowy na Poljskem in se leta 2006 preselila v Veliko Britanijo, kjer danes živi v Essexu. Poezijo in prozo piše v poljščini, pri bralcih in kritikih v domovini pa je zelo priljubljena. Redno objavlja tudi v angleških časnikih in revijah. Je avtorica osmih pesniških zbirk, zadnja z naslovom *Czasy zespolone* (Povezani časi) je izšla 2017. V mednarodnem prostoru je največ pozornosti pritegnil angleški prevod *Finite Formulae & Theories of Chance* (Končne formule in teorije naključja, 2014), ki se je uvrstil v ožji izbor za prestižno kanadsko pesniško nagrado Griffin. Roman *Guguly* (Golenci, 2014) je bil na Poljskem prodajna uspešnica, delo je bilo tudi v ožjem izboru za poljsko literarno nagrado Nike. Leta 2017 je izšel tudi v angleščini z naslovom *Swallowing Mercury* in prav tako požel priznanje. Med drugim se je znašel med nominiranci za mednarodno nagrado Man Booker in v ožjem izboru za švicarsko nagrado Jana Michalskega. Gre za pretežno avtobiografsko delo, dogajanje je predstavljeno skozi oči deklice Wiolę, ki odrasča na poljskem podeželju v času, ko je država še pripadala vzhodnemu bloku. Življenje, zaznamovano s pomanjkanjem, boni in državnimi restrikcijami, so krojili na eni strani »državna religija« in na drugi med kmečkim prebivalstvom še močno zakoreninjeno ljudsko vraževerje ter krščanska verovanja. Leta 2017 je avtorica v poljščini izdala nov roman *Stancje* (Študentske sobe), ki nadaljuje Wiolino zgodbo v njenih študentskih letih.

Wioletta Grzegorzewska, who also writes under the pen name Wioletta Greg, was born in 1974 in the small town of Koziegłowy in Poland and moved to Great Britain in 2006, where she now lives in Essex. She writes poetry and prose in Polish and is very popular among readers and critics in her motherland. She regularly publishes in English newspapers and magazines. She is the author of eight poetry collections. The last one, *Czasy zespolone* (Connected times), came out last year. Internationally, the collection *Finite Formulae & Theories of Chance* (transl. Marek Kazmierski, 2014) received the most attention and its English translation was shortlisted for the prestigious Canadian Griffin Poetry Prize. Her novel *Guguly* (2014) was a bestseller in Poland and the work was also shortlisted for the Nike Literary Award in Poland. In 2017, it came out in English translation under the title *Swallowing Mercury* (transl. Eliza Marciniak) and gained recognition as well. Among other prizes, it was nominated for the Man Booker International Prize and was shortlisted for the Jan Michalski Prize for Literature in Switzerland. It is primarily an autobiographical work, written through the eyes of a little girl named Wiola growing up in the Polish countryside in the time when the country still belonged to the Soviet bloc. Life, marked by deprivation, rationing, and state-imposed restrictions, was influenced by the "state religion" on the one hand and by the folk superstitions and Christian beliefs still very strongly rooted among the rural population on the other. Last year, she published a new novel in Polish under the title *Stancje* (Student rooms) that picks up Wiola's story in her student years.

Dziewczynka z farbami

(fragment powieści *Guguby*)

W połowie lipca ojciec wrócił wcześniej z pracy i podczas zmieniania lepów na muchy przy żyrandolach powiedział mamie, że w Polsce za parę dni skończy się stan wojenny. Ja miałam wtedy dziewięć lat i chociaż pamiętałam dzień bez Teleranka, to i tak nie rozumiałam, o czym tata mówi. Zastanawiam się, dlaczego o tym stanie nie wspominał dziadek, który był specjalistą od dwóch poprzednich wojen, znał wszystkie zakazane piosenki i jaskinie w Jurze Krakowsko-Częstochowskiej, gdzie się ukrywał po ucieczce z obozu. Zdawało mi się, że dziadek interesował się polityką, bo pewnego razu, kiedy nikogo nie było w domu, zawołał mnie i babcię do kuchni, ułożył dwa ziarna kawy na banknocie dziesięciozłotowym i gdy generał Bem zaczął przypominać Jaruzelskiego, dziadek tak się zaśmiał, że omal nie podpyłały mu się żabki w szelkach.

Tej nocy ojciec, który należał do straży przemysłowej, nie poszedł z opaską na ramieniu na dyżury pod remizę i budynki geesu. Rozłożył narzędzia na linoleum i zaczął wyplatać z miedzianego drutu pułapkę na piżmaki, które od wiosny prowadziły z nim wojnę podjazdową nad naszym stawem. Gdy pułapka zaczęła wyglądać jak złota klepsydra, odważyłam się zapytać tatę, kto był jego wrogiem w tym stanie wojennym, ale on spojrzał na mnie przestraszony i powiedział, że jak jeszcze raz zadam mu to pytanie, to mi spuści lanie.

Dziesiątego sierpnia poszliśmy pieszo cztery kilometry na odpust do kościoła Świętego Wawrzyńca w Cynkowie. W dwóch rzędach straganów ustawionych nieopodal drewnianego kościoła kupiłam góralski domek barometryczny przepowiadający pogodę: z góralką wyglądającą na deszcz i góralem na słońce, sznurek obwarzanków i los na loterię. Los ukryłam w kieszeni sukienki i schowałam się za strzelnicą, żeby nie pokazywać go innym dzieciom, tak na wszelki wypadek, gdybym wygrała na przykład emaliowy garnek albo figurkę buldoga z kiwającą się głową. Okazało się tymczasem, że mój numerek wskazywał na farby olejne marki Old Holland Classic Colours. Podekscytowana pobiegłam do rodziców, którzy wraz ze znajomymi grali przy karmniku dla saren w tysiąca, i pokazałam im swoją wygraną. Wujek Lolek poklepał ojca w plecy i powiedział rozbawionym głosem:

– No, Rysiu, artystka ci rośnie.

Przed północą wróciliśmy pieszo przez pola do domu. Tata położył się w garniturze na wersalce i wygrywał ustami na liściu lipy więzienne ballady. Mama i Misiek, spuszczone specjalnie na tę okazję z łańcucha, byli jego wierną publicznością. Ja zamknęłam się w stołowym, zrobiłam z firanki prowizoryczną moskitierę i z namaszczeniem rozłożyłam na pierzynie siedemnaście tubek farb. Siedemnaście, bo jednej brakowało. Angielskie nazwy kolorów kojarzyły mi się z odległymi planetami: cyclamen, ultramarine, umber. Próbowałam wycisnąć trochę farby na słomiankę, ale z tubek wypływały jedynie bezbarwne krople lepkiego płynu. Okazało się, że farby, które ksiądz z parafii Świętego Wawrzyńca przekazał na loterię, pochodziły z zachodnich paczek-darów i były przeterminowane.

Po wakacjach wróciłam do szkoły i zapomniałam o malowaniu. Do czasu, aż zauważyłam w gablocie w świetlicy ogłoszenie o konkursie plastycznym. Temat brzmiał „Moskwa twoimi oczami”; termin: koniec października 1983 roku. Oczywiście musiałam wziąć w nim udział. W styczniu tego samego roku wygrałam konkurs wojewódzki pod tytułem „Zagrożenia w twoim gospodarstwie”. Namalowałam stonkę, która wychodzi z butelki po coca-coli. Nikt mi nie uwierzył, ale naprawdę widziałam, jak dziadek zbierał stonkę do takiej butelki. Jurorzy na szczeblu wojewódzkim uznali, że mój rysunek „w sposób głęboko metaforyczny przedstawia krucjatę imperialistycznej stonki”. Gdyby nie to, że ojciec pochwalił się kolegom w fabryce, że jest dziesiąta woda po kisielu Cyganem Sinti, może moją pracę drukowaliby na znaczkach. Cała sprawa i tak zakończyła się dla mnie bardzo pomyślnie. Mama przestała prowadzić mnie wieczorami na lekcje religii do chaty pod las, a od organizatorów konkursu dostałam plecak i bombonierkę.

Po trzech tygodniach od ogłoszenia wyników konkursu „Zagrożenia w twoim gospodarstwie” przyszedł list do szkoły. Dyrektorka ogłosiła na apelu, że specjalna podkomisja komisji do spraw krzewienia kultury w województwie śląskim deleguje mnie w zimowe ferie na plener malarski do Lublińca. To była zupełna porażka. Cała szkoła naśmiewała się ze mnie, że jadę na tydzień do wariatkowa, bo w pobliskim Lublińcu znajdował się zakład psychiatryczny. Na dodatek ośrodek wypoczynkowy, w którym mieliśmy kwatery, położony był obok jednostki wojskowej, kiedy więc chodziliśmy po lesie w poszukiwaniu inspiracji, żołnierze strzelali na poligonie, a ślepaki świszczały mi nad głową i nie mogłam się skupić. Dwutygodniowy

plener malarski okazał się świetną przygodą, ponieważ mieliśmy w świetlicy satelitę i magnetowid. W czasie wolnym od oglądania filmów namalowałam cykl prac przedstawiających zrujnowaną lubliniecką gorzelnię, ale tym razem dostałam tylko wyróżnienie i zamiast wymarzonego zestawu farb olejnych przywiozłam do domu dyplom i album nieznanego mi wtedy rosyjskiego malarza Wasilija Surikowa.

Pomyślałam, że do trzech razy sztuka, i postanowiłam jeszcze raz wysłać pracę na konkurs pod tytułem „Moskwa twoimi oczami”. Nie wiedziałam, jak wygląda stolica Kraju Rad, a jej zdjęcia w czytankach z podręcznika do nauki rosyjskiego były dosyć niewyraźne. Na szczęście pani Walo, wychowawczyni i opiekunka koła plastycznego, przyniosła mi kolorowe pocztówki z Kremlem i cerkwią Wasyla Błogosławionego. Rozłożyłam gazety na stole i malowałam panoramę Moskwy do drugiej w nocy, aż nastąpiła przerwa w dostawie prądu.

W szkole na długiej przerwie zostawiłam tornister na podłodze. Usiadł na nim Wielki Witek i z zapasowych wkładów do pióra, które trzymałam w tej samej przegródce, co rysunek na konkurs, wylał się cały atrament. Zbladłam. Projekt trafił szlag. Poszłam do wychodka, rozmazałam chusteczką atrament na kartce. Wyglądało to tak, jakby stolicę Związku Socjalistycznych Republik Radzieckich pochłaniał lepki, indygowy ocean. Położyłam rysunek przy piecu kaflowym, żeby wysechł. Na następnej przerwie zapakowałam pracę do szarej koperty i oddałam pani Walo. Nauczycielka nawet nie zajrzała do środka, podstemplowała rysunek godłem wojsławickiej szkoły podstawowej i pobiegła na pocztę.

Po miesiącu zjawił się w szkole jakiś dziwny mężczyzna. Nic w nim do siebie nie pasowało: miał łagodne rysy twarzy i spiczaste uszy. Ubrany był w czarny golf i jasną marynarkę, spodnie zaprasowane w kant i zabłocone buty. Poszedł prosto do gabinetu dyrektorki.

– Rogalówna!

Zostałam wezwana na dywanik. Pobiegłam zadowolona, bo myślałam, że znowu dostałam jakąś nagrodę. W kłębach dymu papierosowego spostrzegłam zapłakaną twarz pani Walo. Na biurku leżała moja Moskwa. Dyrektorka wyprowadziła z pokoju roztrzęsioną nauczycielkę.

– Wiesz, drogie dziecko – powiedział nieznamy mężczyzna, kiedy wszyscy wyszli z gabinetu – przyjechałem tutaj specjalnie aż z województwa, żeby nagrodzić twoją pracę.

Wyobraziłam sobie, że wręczy mi nowe farby olejne i tabliczki wedlowskiej czekolady mlecznej z orzechami albo torebkę czekoladowych michałków. Przełknęłam ślinę, a on rzeczywiście wyjął z teczki czekoladę. Rozwijał powoli sreberko. Aksamitny zapach kakaო rozlał się po gabinecie.

– No, poczęstuj się. – Podsunął mi pod nos zbeczeszczoną tabliczkę. Wzięłam trzy kostki. Burczało mi w brzuchu. Byłam głodna, ponieważ rano nie zjadłam śniadania.

– Byłaś kiedyś w Moskwie, Wiolu?

– Nie.

Czekolada przyjemnie rozplýwała się w ustach.

– A więc kto ci podsunął ten... ciekawy pomysł? Może rodzice albo opiekunka koła plastycznego, ta, jak jej tam, pani Walo?

„Nie zaczyna się zdania od »a więc«” – pomyślałam.

– Sama sobie tak wyobraziłam Moskwę, psze pana. – Postanowiłam nie wspominać o przygodzie z Wielkim Witkiem, atramentem i tornistrem.

– A czemu tak katastroficznie?

– Jak?

– Czemu tak ponuro?

„Bo nie ma dżemu”. Westchnęłam i przypomniałam sobie zapłakaną twarz pani Walo. Nie ufałam temu mężczyźnie, ale sięgnęłam po kolejną kostkę czekolady.

– Jeśli powiesz, kto podsunął ci ten pomysł, organizatorzy konkursu zafundują ci wycieczkę do Moskwy. I co ty na to? Pomysł tylko, zobaczysz Kreml.

Spojrzał na mnie chytrze i uśmiechnął się, pokazując krzywe zęby. Męczyła mnie ta rozmowa. Zaczęłam przestępować z nogi na nogę. Mdliło mnie od czekolady, a na dodatek ten mężczyzna chodził w kółko i dalej coś mruczał. Kiedy podsunął mi rysunek pod nos, rozległo się pukanie. Do gabinetu zajrzała jakaś kudłata głowa.

– Szefie, mam złą wiadomość. Przysięgam, poszłem tylko na chwilę do kibelka, wracam, a tu dwie opony przebite.

– Nie przeszkadzaj mi teraz, przecież wiesz, co robić, zawsze przebijają, załóż zapasowe.

– Tak jest, się robi.

Kudłata głowa zniknęła, a mnie zrobiło się słabo. Usłyszałam pytania: „Kto?”, „No, kto?”, „Kiedy?”, „Po co?”.

Pochyliłam się nad biurkiem i zobaczyłam swoje blade odbicie w wypolerowanym blacie. Na rysunku w najciemniejszych zakątkach

placu Czerwonego usiadła mucha i chodziła swobodnie po zalanej atramentem Wieży Spasskiej. Poczułam skurcz w żołądku. Moje brunatne wymiociny pokryły jasną część miasta.

Nie pamiętam dokładnie, co się działo później. Zawołali higienistkę, posadzili mnie w fotelu i poili wodą wymieszaną z gorzkimi kroplami żołądkowymi. Spojrzałam na godło Polski zawieszona nad framugą drzwi. Orzełek bez korony rozmywał się na czerwonym tle. Kiedy doszłam do siebie, woźny odprowadził mnie do domu. Na podwórku odgoniłam tornistrem syczące gęsi, weszłam na ganek, a potem przez zalatującą mysimi odchodami sień do kuchni. Skinęłam głową matce na przywitanie, rzuciłam tornister obok kredensu, wdrapałam się po drabinie na strych, położyłam się na workach z pszenicą tuż przy klatce z gołębiami i pomyślałam, że w niedzielę pojedę do Olsztyna i tak jak dziadek znajdę tam swoją jaskinię.

W ciągu następnych tygodni dyrektorka zlikwidowała w szkole kółko plastyczne, a ja nie brałam już udziału w żadnych konkursach malarskich. Czasem w tajemnicy ozdabiałam pani Dorocie z sąsiedztwa listy do jej chłopaka, który stacjonował w jednostce wojskowej w Lublińcu. Wielkiemu Witkowi namalowałam plakatówkami czaszkę na suficie za trzy etykiety z pudełek po zapalkach, które wtedy zbierałam.

Dziesiątego grudnia Lech Wałęsa dostał Pokojową Nagrodę Nobla, a ja zostałam po lekcjach na próbę przedstawienia gwiazdkowego. Tata miał mnie odebrać o osiemnastej, ale autobus, którym zwykle wracał z papierni, nie nadjeżdżał. Stałam sama na przystanku i przestępowałam z nogi na nogę. Mróz zaczął tworzyć sopel z wody, która kapiała z kranu przy remizie. W kiosku naprzeciwko szyby zaszyły szronem. Uliczne lampy migotały, migotały, aż w końcu zgasły. Kioskarka uchyliła drzwiczki, wystawiła głowę opatuloną czapką z lisiego futra.

– Dziecko, co tu ślęczysz tak sama? Idźże do domu, bo zamrznieś na tym mrozie! – krzyknęła.

Byłam bardzo głodna i zziębnięta, postanowiłam więc posłuchać kioskarki, nie czekać dłużej na ojca i wrócić do domu na skrót przez pola. Nie pomyślałam jednak, że będę musiała przedzierać się w ciemności przez zasy. Tuż przed polami pegeeru poślizgnęłam się, uderzyłam tyłem głowy o kamień, na koniec wpadłam w wielką zaspę i nie mogłam się z niej wygrzebać. Podczas szamotaniny w śniegu jeden but zsunął mi się z nogi. Mróz zaczął ścinać przemoczone rajtuzy. Palce u stóp zdrętwiały. Zrobiło się mi słabo.

Raptem stanęłam na placu Czerwonym ubrana w kubrak i karmioną chustkę. Walonki miałam ubabrane błotem. W jesienny poranek cerkiew mieniła się w słońcu błękitem i złotem. Nie widziałam, po co tu przyszłam z dziadkami i stałam przestraszona w tłumie. Odór końskiego łajna i ludzkiego potu mieszał się z zapachem rozgrzanego wosku. Złapałam babcię za rękę. W oddali kołysał się ktoś na szubienicy jak strzęp mokrej płachty. Babcia tak strasznie płakała, ukryła twarz w dłoniach, ściskając w rękę świeczkę, i nawet nie czuła, że gorący wosk spływa po jej dłoni.

Kiedy się ocknęłam, zdałam sobie sprawę z tego, że jestem na Hektarach, a nie w Moskwie i tylko przyśnił mi się jeden z obrazów Wasilija Surikowa, ten o egzekucji strzelców. Wciąż leżałam w zaspie, ale nie było mi zimno i nie czułam bólu w palcach u stóp. Nagle dojrzałam błysk latarki.

– Szefie, wyratować, bo tu zamarnie?

Wydawało mi się, że usłyszałam głos kierowcy mężczyzny z województwa, tego, który kilka tygodni wcześniej wypytywał mnie w szkole o Moskwę. Poczułam zapach benzyny, wódki, papierosów. Ktoś wyciągnął mnie z zasy i przeniósł na drogę. Tam po kwadransie znalazł mnie ojciec wracający z pracy, natychmiast opatulił swoim prochowcem i zaniósł na barana do domu.

Po północy mama pobiegła do sąsiada, który w piwnicy pędził bimber, i przyniosła dwie butelki. Trzy setki doprawiła esencją z herbaty i cukrem i podała tacie, który od momentu znalezienia mnie półżywej na drodze nie mógł się uspokoić; resztą bimbrowa nacierała moje nogi. Po zastosowaniu wszystkich możliwych kuracji – okładaniu łydek liśćmi podgotowanej kapusty, smarowaniu baranem i psim łojem – wróciło mi czucie w palcach u stóp.

Deklica z barvami

(odlomek iz romana *Golenci*)

Nekega dne sredi julija se je oče prej vrnil iz službe, in medtem ko je zamenjeval muholovce na lestencih, rekel mami, da se bo vojno stanje na Poljskem končalo čez nekaj dni. Takrat sem bila stara devet let, in čeprav sem se spomnila dneva, ko po televiziji prvič niso predvajali otroške matineeje, vseeno nisem razumela, o čem očka govori. Spraševala sem se, zakaj tega stanja ni nikoli omenil dedek, ki je bil strokovnjak za obe prejšnji vojni, poznal je vse prepovedane pesmi in votline v Krakovsko-Čenstohovskem višavju, kjer se je skrival, potem ko je pobegnil iz taborišča. Zdelo se mi je, da se dedek zanima za politiko, kajti nekoč, ko ni bilo doma nikogar drugega, je mene in babico poklical v kuhinjo, položil dve kavni zrni na bankovec za deset zlotov, in ko je general Bem začel spominjati na Jaruzelskega, se je dedek tako zakrohotal, da bi se mu skoraj odpele zaponke na naramnicah.

Tisto noč oče, ki je pripadal tovarniški straži, ni šel s trakom na roki dežurat pred gasilski dom in združna poslopja. Razpostavil je orodje po linoleju in začel iz bakrene žice plesti past za pižmovke, ki so od pomladi vodile z njim zvijačno vojno pri našem ribniku. Ko je past vse bolj spominjala na zlato peščeno uro, sem si predrznila očka vprašati, kdo je v tem vojnem stanju njegov sovražnik, on pa me je prestrašeno pogledal in rekel, da me bo prebunkal, če ga še kdaj vprašam kaj takega.

Desetega avgusta smo šli peš štiri kilometre daleč na proščenje k cerkvi svetega Lovrenca v Cynkowu. Na stojnicah, ki so v dveh vrstah stale v bližini lesene cerkve, sem si kupila gorjansko vremensko hišico, ki je napovedovala vreme: z gorjanko, ki je pogledala ven za dež, in z gorjancem za sonce, venec prest in srečko za loterijo. Srečko sem skrila v žep na obleki, da je ne bi videli drugi otroci, čisto za vsak slučaj, če bi zadela na primer emajlirani lonec ali igračko buldoga, ki kima z glavo. Toda izkazalo se je, da mi je srečka prinesla oljne barve znamke Old Holland Classic Colours. Vznemirjena sem stekla k staršem, ki so skupaj z znanci kartali pri krmilnici za srne, in jim pokazala svoj zadetek. Stric Lolek je očeta potrepljal po hrbtu in s posmehljivim glasom dejal:

»No, Rysiek, umetnico boš imel pri hiši.«

Pred polnočjo smo se peš vrnili domov čez polja. Očka se je kar v obleki ulegel na kavč in z usti igral na lipovem listu jetniške

balade. Mama in Medo, nalašč za to priložnost spuščeni z verige, sta bila njegova zvesta publika. Jaz sem se zaprla v jedilnico, si iz zavese naredila zasilno mrežo proti komarjem in pobožno razpostavila po pernici sedemnajst tub z barvami. Sedemnajst, ker je ena manjkala. Angleška poimenovanja barv so se mi povezovala z daljnimi planeti: *cyclamen*, *ultramarine*, *umber*. Poskusila sem iztisniti nekaj barve na slamnati predpražnik, toda iz tub so tekle samo brezbarvne kaplje lepljive tekočine. Izkazalo se je, da so bile barve, ki jih je za loterijo prispeval duhovnik iz župnije svetega Lovrenca, iz zahodnih darilnih paketov in jim je že potekel rok trajanja.

Po počitnicah sem se vrnila v šolo in pozabila na slikanje. Do takrat, ko sem na oglasni deski v družabnem prostoru opazila razpis za likovni natečaj. Tema je bila »Moskva skozi tvoje oči«, rok konec oktobra 1983. Seveda sem se ga morala udeležiti. Januarja istega leta sem že zmagala na okrožnem natečaju z naslovom »Grožnje na tvoji kmetiji«. Naslikala sem koloradskega hrošča, ki leze iz steklenice od kokakole. Nihče mi ni verjel, toda zares sem videla, kako je dedek nabiral koloradske hrošče v takšno steklenico. Žirija na okrožni ravni je ugotovila, da moja risba »na globoko metaforični način predstavlja križarski pohod imperialističnega koloradskega hrošča«. Če se ne bi oče sodelavcem v tovarni pohvalil, da je v daljni sorodstveni zvezi s Cigani Sinti, bi mogoče mojo risbo še natisnili na znamkah. Toda tudi tako se je vsa zadeva zame končala zelo dobro. Mama me je ob večerih nehala voditi k verouku v bajto poleg gozda, od organizatorjev natečaja pa sem dobila nahrbtnik in bonboniero.

Tri tedne po razglasitvi rezultatov natečaja »Grožnje na tvoji kmetiji« je prišlo v šolo pismo. Ravnateljica je na zboru razglasila, da me posebna podkomisija pri komisiji za spodbujanje kulture v šlezijemskem okrožju med zimskimi počitnicami pošilja na pleneristično slikarsko kolonijo v Lubliniec. To je bila huda smola. Cela šola se mi je posmehovala, češ da grem za teden dni v norišnico, ker je bila v tem bližnjem kraju psihiatrična bolnišnica. Poleg tega je počitniški dom, v katerem smo bili nastanjeni, stal poleg vojašnice, in ko smo hodili po gozdu ter iskali navdih, so na poligonu streljali vojaki, nad glavo pa so mi žvižgali slepi naboji, tako da se nisem mogla zbrati. Dvotedenska pleneristična slikarska kolonija se je izkazala za čudovito prigodo, ker smo imeli v družabnem prostoru satelitsko televizijo in videorekorder. V času, ki sem si ga utrgala od gledanja filmov, sem naslikala cikel slik, ki so predstavljale razpadajočo lubljinško žganjarno, toda tokrat sem dobila samo pohvalo in sem

namesto škatle oljnih barv, o katerih sem sanjala, prinesla domov potrdilo o udeležbi in album ruskega slikarja Vasilija Surikova, za katerega do takrat še nisem slišala.

Pomislila sem, da gre v tretje rado, in sklenila, da bom poslala izdelek še na natečaj z naslovom »Moskva skozi tvoje oči«. Nisem vedela, kakšna je videti prestolnica Dežele sovjetov, njene slike poleg beril v učbeniku ruščine pa so bile dokaj nerazločne. Na srečo mi je gospa Walo, vzgojiteljica in voditeljica likovnega krožka, prinesla barvne razglednice s Kremljem in cerkvijo Vasilija Blaženega. Pogrnila sem mizo s časopisi in do dveh ponoči, ko je zmanjkalo elektrike, slikala panoramo Moskve.

V šoli sem med glavnim odmorom pustila šolsko torbo na tleh. Nanjo se je usedel Veliki Witek in iz rezervnih bombic za nalivno pero, ki sem jih imela spravljene v istem predelku kot sliko, je steklo vse črnilo. Prebledela sem. Slika je šla po gobe. Šla sem na stranišče in s papirnati robčkom razmazala črnilo po papirju. Izgledalo je tako, kot da bi prestolnico Zveze sovjetskih socialističnih republik požiral lepljivi ocean indigo barve. Sliko sem odložila k lončeni peči, da bi se posušila. Med naslednjim odmorom sem delo vtaknila v sivo kuverto in ga oddala gospe Walo. Učiteljica ni niti pogledala vanjo, pritisnila je pečat wojslawiške osnovne šole in stekla na pošto.

Čez mesec dni se je na šoli oglasil neki čuden moški. Nič na njem se ni ujemalo z ničimer drugim: imel je blage poteze obraza in špičasta ušesa. Oblečen je bil v črn pulover in svetel suknjič, hlače je imel zalikane na rob, na nogah pa blatne čevlje. Šel je naravnost v ravnateljščino pisarno.

»Rogalova!«

Poklicali so me na zagovor.

Zadovoljna sem stekla, ker sem mislila, da sem spet dobila kakšno nagrado. V oblakih cigaretnega dima sem zagledala objokani obraz gospe Walo. Na pisalni mizi je ležala moja *Moskva*. Ravnateljica je razrvano učiteljico odpeljala iz sobe.

»Veš, ljubi otrok,« je rekel neznanec, potem ko sva v pisarni ostala sama, »naravnost z okrožnega urada sem se pripeljal sem, da bi nagradil tvoje delo.«

Predstavljala sem si, da mi bo izročil nove oljne barve in tablice Wedlove mlečne čokolade z lešniki ali vrečko čokoladnih bonbonov z arašidi. Pogoltnila sem slino, on pa je res vzel iz aktovke čokolado. Počasi je odvijal srebrni papir. Po pisarni se je razlil žametni vonj po kakavu.

»Na, izvoli.« Pomolil mi je pod nos oskrunjeno tablico čokolade. Vzela sem tri koščke. Krulilo mi je v želodcu. Bila sem lačna, ker zjutraj nisem zajtrkovala.

»Si bila kdaj v Moskvi, Wiola?«

»Ne.«

Čokolada se je prijetno topila v ustih.

»Torej, kdo ti je dal to ... zanimivo zamisel? Mogoče starši ali voditeljica likovnega krožka, tale, kako se že piše, gospa Walo?«

»Stavka se ne začenja s 'torej',« sem pomislila.

»Sama sem si tako predstavljala Moskvo, gospod.« Sklenila sem, da ne bom omenjala prigode z Velikim Witkom, črnilom in šolsko torbo.

»Zakaj pa tako katastrofično?«

»Kako?«

»Zakaj tako mračno?«

»Ker ima mačka rep nazaj.« Zavzdihnila sem in se spomnila objokanega obraza gospe Walo. Temu moškemu nisem zaupala, vendar sem segla po še enem koščku čokolade.

»Če poveš, kdo ti je dal to zamisel, ti bodo organizatorji natečaja plačali izlet v Moskvo. Kaj praviš na to? Samo pomisli, videla boš Kremelj.«

Prevejano me je pogledal in se nasmehnil, pri tem pa pokazal krive zobe. Naveličala sem se tega pogovora. Začela sem se prestopati z ene noge na drugo. Slabo mi je bilo od čokolade, poleg tega pa je ta moški hodil v krogu in še naprej nekaj momljajal. Ko mi je pomolil risbo pod nos, se je zaslišalo trkanje. V pisarno je pogledala neka kodrasta glava.

»Šef, slabo novico imam. Prisegam, samo za hip sem skočil na stranišče, in ko sem se vrnil, sta bili predrti dve gumi.«

»Ne moti me zdaj, saj veš, kaj je treba narediti, vedno jih predirajo, daj gor rezervne.«

»Razumem, takoj bom.«

Kodrasta glava je izginila, meni pa se je dvigal želodec. Zasišla sem vprašanja: »Kdo?«, »No, kdo?«, »Kdaj?«, »Čemu?«

Sklonila sem se nad pisalno mizo in zagledala svoj blede odsev na zloščeni mizni plošči. Na risbi se je v najtemnejši kotiček Rdečega trga usedla muha in svobodno lezla po Spaskem stolpu. Začutila sem krč v želodcu. Moji rjavi izbljuvki so prekrili svetli del mesta.

Ne spominjam se natančno, kaj se je dogajalo zatem. Poklicali so šolsko medicinsko sestro, posadili so me v naslonjač in mi dajali

piti vodo, pomešano z grenkimi kapljicami za želodec. Pogledala sem na grb Poljske, obešen nad vrati. Orel brez krone se je razblinjal na rdečem ozadju. Ko sem prišla k sebi, me je šolski sluga pospremil domov. Na dvorišču sem s šolsko torbo spodila sikajoče gosi, vstopila sem na verando, potem pa skozi vežo, zaudarjajočo po mišjih bobkih, v kuhinjo. Pokimala sem materi v pozdrav, odvrгла torbo poleg kredence, splezala po lestvi na podstrežje, se ulegla na žaklje s pšenico tik poleg kletke z golobi in pomislila, da bom v nedeljo šla v Olsztyn in si tam poiskala svojo votlino tako kot dedek.

V naslednjih tednih je ravnateljica razpustila likovni krožek, jaz pa nisem sodelovala na nobenem likovnem natečaju več. Včasih sem gospodični Doroti iz sosesčine skrivaj okrasila pisma za njenega fanta, ki je bil razporejen v vojašnico v Lublincu. Velikemu Witku sem s temperami naslikala na strop lobanjo v zameno za tri etikete z vžigalčnih škatlic, ki sem jih takrat zbirala.

Desetega decembra je Lech Wałęsa dobil Nobelovo nagrado za mir, jaz pa sem po pouku ostala na vaji za božično predstavo. Očka naj bi me prišel iskat ob šestih, toda avtobusa, s katerim se je po navadi vračal iz papirnice, ni bilo. Sama sem stala na postajališču in se prestopala z ene noge na drugo. Od mraza se je začela voda, ki je kapljala iz pipe pri gasilskem domu, strjevati v ledeno svečo. V kiosku nasproti je šipe prekrilo ivje. Ulične svetilke so brlele in brlele, dokler niso nazadnje ugasnile. Prodajalka iz kioska je odškrnila vratca in pomolila ven glavo, ovito v kapo iz lisičjega krzna.

»Otrok, kaj ždiš tu tako sama? Pojdi že domov, saj boš še zmrznila na tem mrazu!«

Bila sem zelo lačna in premražena, zato sem sklenila, da bom poslušala prodajalko, ne bom več čakala na očeta in se bom vrnila domov po bližnjici čez polja. Vendar nisem pomislila, da bom morala v temi gaziti skozi snežne zamete. Tik pred polji državne kmetijske zadruga mi je spodrsnilo, s tilnikom sem udarila ob kamen, nazadnje pa padla v velik snežni zmet, iz katerega se nisem več mogla izkoptati. Med premetavanjem po snegu se mi je sezul čevelj. Premočene žabe so začele otrdevati od mraza. Prsti na nogah so mi odreveneli. Postalo mi je slabo.

Nenadoma sem stala na Rdečem trgu, oblečena v vatirano bundo in karminasto ruto. Valjance sem imela zapacane z blatom. V jesenskem jutru se je pravoslavna cerkev sinje in zlato spreminjala v soncu. Nisem vedela, čemu sem prišla sem s starimi starši, in sem

prestrašena stala v množici. Smrad po konjskih figah in človeškem potu se je mešal z vonjem po vročem vosku. Zgrabila sem babico za roko. V daljavi se je nekdo pozibaval na vešalih kot kos mokre plahte. Babica je krčevito jokala, skrila je obraz v dlani, v roki pa je tiščala svečko in ni niti začutila, da se ji vroči vosek cedi po dlani.

Ko sem se zavedela, sem ugotovila, da sem v Hektarih, ne pa v Moskvi, in da se mi je samo sanjalo o eni izmed slik Vasilija Surikova, tisti o eksekuciji strelcev. Še vedno sem ležala v snežnem zametu, toda ni me zeblo in nisem čutila bolečine v prstih na nogah. Na lepem sem zagledala soj baterijske svetilke.

»Šef, jo rešiva, da ne bo tu zmrznila?«

Zdelo se mi je, da sem zaslišala glas šoferja moškega z okrožnega urada, tistega, ki me je nekaj tednov prej v šoli zasliševal o *Moskvi*. Zavohala sem duh po bencinu, vodki in cigaretah. Nekdo me je potegnil iz snežnega zameta in me prenesel na cesto. Tam me je čez četrto ure našel oče, ki se je vračal z dela, pri priči me je zavil v svoj plašč in me štiporamo odnesel domov.

Po polnoči je mama stekla k sosedu, ki je v kleti kuhal žganje, in prinesla dve steklenici. V tri deci je vmešala gost pravi čaj in sladkor in to dala popiti očku, ki se ni mogel pomiriti od trenutka, ko me je napol živo našel na cesti; s preostankom žganja je natirala moje noge. Po vseh mogočih zdravljenjih – oblaganju meč s pokuhanimi zeljnimi listi, mazanju z ovčjim in pasjim lojem – sem spet začela čutiti prste na nogah.

Prevedla Jana Unuk

The Little Paint Girl

(excerpt from the novel *Swallowing Mercury*)

One day in the middle of July, my father got back from work early, and as he replaced the flypaper around the chandeliers, he said to my mother that martial law in Poland would end in a couple of days. I was nine, and even though I could remember the day when the children's show Telemorning had failed to appear on the telly, I still had no idea what he was talking about. I wondered why my grandfather, who was an expert when it came to the previous two wars and who knew all the Resistance songs and all the caves in the Jurassic Uplands where he had hidden after his escape from a camp, never mentioned this martial law. I thought that he was interested in politics because one day, when no one was home, he called my grandmother and me into the kitchen, put two coffee beans on top of a ten-złoty banknote, so that General Bem was transformed into General Jaruzelski, with his dark glasses, and he burst out laughing so hard that the clips of his braces nearly popped open.

That night, my father, who belonged to the work security force, did not put on his armband and go to take up his post by the fire station and the co-op. Instead, he spread out his tools on the lino and started weaving a trap out of copper wire for the muskrats, who since the spring had been waging a hit-and-run campaign against him near our pond. When the trap started to look like a golden hourglass, I mustered the courage to ask him who his enemy was, under martial law. He gave me a frightened look and said that if I ever asked that question again, I would get a proper spanking.

On the tenth of August, we walked two and a half miles to the parish fair at St Lawrence's in Cynków. At the market stalls, arranged in two rows near the wooden church, I bought a barometer in the shape of a Tatra mountain cabin, with a highland woman looking out to indicate rain and a man emerging to forecast sunshine, as well as a string of little bagels and a raffle ticket. I slipped the raffle ticket into the pocket of my dress and hid behind the shooting gallery, so as not to have to show it to the other children, just in case I won, say, an enamelled pot or a bobble-head bulldog. As it happened, my number turned out to correspond to a set of Old Holland Classic Colours oil paints. I raced to tell my parents, who were playing cards with some friends near the wooden deer feeder. I showed them my prize. Uncle Lolek gave my father an

amused pat on the back and said, 'Well, Rysiek, you have an artist on your hands.'

We walked back through the fields and got home before midnight. Dad lay down on the sofa in his suit and started playing prison ballads on a lime-tree leaf, while Mum and Bear, who had been let off his chain especially for this occasion, formed his faithful audience. I shut myself in the dining room, made a makeshift mosquito net out of a sheer curtain and with reverence laid out seventeen tubes of paint on top of a duvet. Seventeen because one was missing. The English names of the colours made me think of distant planets: 'cyclamen', 'ultramarine', 'umber'. I tried to squeeze out a bit of paint onto a straw mat, but all that leaked out of the tubes were colourless drops of viscous liquid. It turned out that the paints which the priest from St Lawrence's parish donated to the raffle had come from Western gift parcels and were past their expiry date.

I went back to school after the summer holidays and forgot about painting – until I spotted an announcement for an art competition on the noticeboard in the common room. The theme was to be 'Moscow through your eyes'; the deadline was the end of October 1983. Obviously, I had to enter. In January, I had won a province-wide competition titled 'Threats around your farm'. I had painted a potato beetle climbing out of an empty Coca-Cola bottle. Nobody believed that I had really seen my grandfather collecting potato beetles in just such a bottle. The jury at the provincial level concluded that my drawing 'portrayed, in a deeply metaphorical manner, the crusade of the imperialist beetle'. If it hadn't been for the fact that my father had been boasting to his co-workers that he was distantly related to the Sinti Gypsies, my work might have even made it onto postage stamps. In any case, it all ended very well for me. My mother stopped dragging me to evening religion classes in the shack by the forest, and I got a rucksack and a box of chocolates from the competition organisers.

Three weeks after the results of the 'Threats around your farm' contest were revealed, a letter came to my school. The headmistress announced during assembly that a special sub-committee of the committee for the promotion of culture in the province of Silesia had chosen to send me to an outdoor painting workshop in nearby Lubliniec for the winter break. This was a serious blow. The entire school laughed at me: I was going to spend a week in the loony bin, since Lubliniec was home to a psychiatric ward. On top of that, the holiday centre in which we were lodged was right next door to an

army unit, and as we walked around the woods in search of inspiration, soldiers at the training ground were firing blanks, practice bullets were whistling over my head, and I couldn't concentrate. However, the week-long workshop turned out to be a splendid adventure because the common room had satellite TV and a VCR. In my free time, when I wasn't watching films, I painted a series depicting the derelict Lubliniec distillery, but this time I got only a special mention and, instead of my longed-for oil paints, I came home with a certificate and a glossy book about the Russian painter Vasily Surikov, whom I'd never heard of before.

Third time lucky, I thought to myself and decided to enter the competition titled 'Moscow through your eyes'. I didn't know what the capital of the socialist republics looked like, and the pictures that accompanied the readings in my Russian textbook were rather blurry. Fortunately, my form teacher Mrs Walo, who also ran the art club, brought me some colour postcards showing the Kremlin and St Basil's Cathedral. I spread out newspapers on the table and went on painting a panorama of Moscow until two in the morning, when the power was cut.

The next day at school, I left my bag on the floor during the lunch break. Big Witek sat on it, and my spare pen cartridges, which were in the same compartment as my painting for the competition, leaked all their ink. I went pale. The picture was ruined. I went to the toilet and smudged the ink on the page with a tissue. It looked as if the capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was being engulfed by a viscous ocean of indigo. I left the picture to dry out by the tile stove. During the next break, I put it in a brown envelope and handed it over to Mrs Walo. She didn't even glance inside; she stamped it with the Wojsławice Primary School's emblem and hurried off to the post office.

A month later, a strange man appeared at the school. Nothing about him matched anything else: he had gentle facial features and pointy ears; he was dressed in a black turtleneck and a light-coloured suit jacket; his trousers were neatly creased but his shoes were muddy. He went straight to the headmistress's office.

'Rogalówna!' I heard. I had been summoned.

I ran along gladly because I thought I was going to get some sort of prize again. Through the clouds of cigarette smoke, I saw Mrs Walo's tear-smearred face. My Moscow lay on the desk. The headmistress led the jittery teacher out of the room.

After they left, the stranger said, 'I've made a special trip all the way from the provincial government office to reward your work.'

I imagined he would present me with a new set of oil paints and bars of Wedel milk chocolate with hazelnuts, or a bag of sweets. I swallowed – and he really did pull out some chocolate from his briefcase. He slowly unwrapped the silver foil. The velvety scent of cocoa filled the office.

'Go on, help yourself.' He held the desecrated bar right under my nose. I took three squares. My stomach was rumbling. I was hungry because I hadn't eaten breakfast that morning.

'Have you ever been to Moscow, Wiola?'

'No.'

The chocolate melted pleasantly in my mouth.

'And who might have given you this... interesting idea? Was it your parents? Or maybe the teacher who runs the art club? What's her name – Mrs Walo?'

Don't start a sentence with 'and', I thought.

'That's how I imagined Moscow myself, sir.' I decided not to mention the whole business with my school bag, Big Witek and the ink.

'But why so... so catastrophically?'

'So *what?*'

'Why so gloomily?'

Why did the chicken cross the road? I sighed and remembered Mrs Walo's teary face. I didn't trust this man, but I reached for another square of chocolate.

'If you tell me who gave you this idea, the competition organisers will send you on a free trip to Moscow. What do you say to that? You could see the Kremlin!'

He looked at me slyly and smiled, showing his crooked teeth. This conversation was wearing me out. I started shifting from foot to foot. I felt nauseous from the chocolate, and to make things worse the man kept on muttering something and walking around in circles. As he held the drawing up to my face, someone knocked on the door. A shaggy head peeked into the room.

'Boss, I have some bad news. I swear I just popped to the gents' for a minute, and when I got back, there were two punctured tyres.'

'Don't bother me right now; you know what to do. This always happens. Put the spares on.'

'Yessir, right away.'

The shaggy head disappeared and I felt faint. I heard the questions 'Who?' 'Well, who?' 'When?' 'Why?'

I leaned over the desk and saw my pale reflection in the polished surface. A fly sat on top of the painting, in the darkest nook of the Red Square, and proceeded to crawl freely over the ink-flooded Spasskaya Tower. I felt a cramp in my stomach, and then my brown vomit covered the light part of the city.

The school nurse was called, and I was sat in an armchair and plied with bitter stomach drops diluted in water. I glanced at the Polish coat of arms hanging over the door frame. The crownless eagle was blurring into the red background. When I recovered, the caretaker walked me home. In the yard, I chased away hissing geese with my school bag, stepped up onto the porch and walked through the hallway, which stank of mouse droppings, and into the kitchen. I nodded hello to my mother, threw down my school bag by the dresser, climbed the ladder up to the attic, lay down beside the pigeon cage on sacks filled with wheat and thought that on Sunday I would travel to Olsztyn and find a cave for myself there, just like my grandfather.

In the weeks that followed, the headmistress dissolved the school art club, and I did not participate in any more painting competitions. Once in a while, in secret, Miss Dorota from our neighbourhood would have me decorate a letter to her boyfriend, who was stationed with the army unit in Lubliniec. I also painted a skull for Big Witek on the ceiling of his room, in exchange for three matchbox labels, which I was collecting.

On the tenth of December, Lech Wałęsa received the Nobel Peace Prize and I stayed behind at school for a Christmas play rehearsal. Dad was supposed to pick me up at six o'clock, but the bus which he usually took from the paper mill hadn't come. I was standing by myself at the bus stop, shifting from foot to foot. The water dripping out of the tap by the fire station had started to form an icicle in the freezing cold. In the shop across the street, the windows had frosted over. The street lights flickered and flickered, and then went out. The woman from the shop cracked open the door and stuck out her head, bundled up in a fox-fur hat.

'What are you doing here, my child, all alone? Go home, or you'll freeze in this chill!' she shouted.

I was very cold and hungry, so I decided to take her advice – to stop waiting for Dad and walk home by the shortcut through the farm fields. It didn't occur to me, however, that I would have to

wade through snowdrifts in the dark. Just before I reached the state-owned farm, I slipped, hit the back of my head on a stone, and then fell into a huge snowdrift and couldn't dig myself out. One of my boots slipped off while I was struggling in the snow. My soaked tights were starting to freeze. My toes went numb. I felt faint.

Suddenly, I was standing in Red Square, dressed in an embroidered vest and a carmine headscarf. My felt boots were muddied. It was an autumn morning, and the Orthodox church shimmered blue and gold in the sun. I didn't know why I had come here with my grandparents, and I stood in the crowd frightened. The stench of horse dung and human sweat mingled with the smell of hot wax. I grabbed my grandmother's hand. In the distance, someone was swinging from a gallows like a scrap of wet canvas. My grandmother was crying terribly; she had covered her face and was squeezing a candle in one hand, without even noticing the hot wax dripping on her skin.

When I came to, I realised I was in Hektary, not in Moscow, and I had simply dreamt about one of Vasily Surikov's paintings, the one about the execution of the Streltsy. I was still lying in the snowdrift, but I wasn't cold anymore and I didn't feel any pain in my toes. All of a sudden, I noticed the flash of a torch.

'Boss, should I rescue her before she freezes?'

I thought I heard the driver of the man from the provincial government, the one who had questioned me about Moscow at school a few weeks earlier. I could smell petrol, vodka and cigarettes. Someone pulled me out of the snowdrift and moved me to the road. That's where my father, on his way back from work, found me a quarter of an hour later. He immediately wrapped me up in his trench coat and carried me home piggyback.

After midnight, Mum ran over to the neighbour who made moonshine in his cellar and brought back two bottles. She poured out half a pint, mixed in strong tea and sugar, and served it to Dad, who still couldn't calm down after finding me lying half-dead in the road. She rubbed the rest of the moonshine into my feet. After the application of all possible remedies – including a poultice of par-boiled cabbage leaves on my calves and a greasing with mutton and dog tallow – I regained the feeling in my toes.

Translated by Eliza Marciniak



Foto © Maka Gogaladze

Šota Iatašvili

Šota Iatašvili se je rodil leta 1966 v Tbilisiju v Gruziji, kjer tudi živi. Poezijo je začel objavljati na začetku devetdesetih let, v zelo nemirnem času gruzijskega osamosvajanja in državljanske vojne – neodvisnost je država razglasila konec leta 1991 – prvenec z naslovom *სიკვდილის ფრთები* (Krila smrti) pa izdal leta 1993. V tem času se je pridružil družbeno angažiranim umetnikom, ki so delovali v skupini *მარგო კორაბლიოვას პერფორმანსის თეატრი* (Performativno gledališče Margo Korabliove), na njihovo ustvarjalnost pa so močno vplivali tudi ameriški beatniki. Družbena angažiranost in vpetost v vsakdan, pogosto s primesmi humorja, sta še danes značilni drži avtorjeve pisave. Iatašvili poleg poezije piše tudi prozo, eseje in literarne kritike, nazadnje je izdal pesniško zbirko z naslovom *პოეტური გამოცდილების სიმწარე* (Grenkoba pesniške izkušnje, 2015), kratkoprozno zbirko *მიზიდულობა* (Gravitacija, 2012) in zbirko literarnih kritik *დალაგება* (Pospravljanje, 2010), za katero je 2011 prejel najpomembnejšo gruzijsko literarno nagrado Saba za literarnokritičsko knjigo; isto nagrado je prejel tudi 2007 za najboljšo pesniško zbirko *სანამ დროა* (Dokler je še čas), prav tako je bil 2009 nagrajen z ukrajinsko pesniško nagrado *Киевские Лавры* in 2018 s poljsko literarno nagrado Klemensa Janickega. Je odgovorni urednik gruzijske literarne revije *ახალი საუნჯე* (Novi zaklad). Njegova dela so prevedena v večino evropskih jezikov in v kitajščino. Je redni gost mednarodnih literarnih festivalov.

Shotia Iatashvili was born in 1966 in Tbilisi, Georgia, where he lives today. He started publishing poetry at the beginning of the 1990's, during the very restless period of Georgia gaining its independence – an independence proclaimed at the end of 1991. His first collection, *სიკვდილის ფრთები* (The Wings of Death), was published in 1993. In this time, he joined the socially committed artists who worked together as *მარგო კორაბლიოვას პერფორმანსის თეატრი* (Margo Korabliova's Performance Theatre) and were largely influenced by the American beatniks. Social involvement and integration into everyday life, often combined with humor, are still the typical attitudes of the author. Besides poetry, Iatashvili also writes prose fiction, essays, and literary criticism; his latest published works are the poetry collection *პოეტური გამოცდილების სიმწარე* (The Bitterness of Poetic Experiences, 2015), the short story collection *მიზიდულობა* (Gravitation, 2012), and the literary criticism collection *დალაგება* (Tidying Up, 2010). The last was awarded the most important Georgian literary prize – the SABA – for the best collection of literary criticism, and he received the same prize in 2007 for the best poetry collection, *სანამ დროა* (Until it's Time). In 2009 he also won the Ukrainian international poetry award *Киевские Лавры* and in 2018 the Klemens Janicki literature award in Poland. Iatashvili is the editor in chief of the Georgian literary magazine *ახალი საუნჯე* (New Treasure). His works have been translated into most European languages as well as into Chinese and he is a regular guest of international literary festivals.

მფრინავი

გაფრინდა და მართალი აღმოჩნდა:

შეაქეს, დალოცეს, მოუდრიკეს ქედი.

გაფრინდა მეორედ და კვლავ მართალი აღმოჩნდა:

მიიღეს, არ დაამადლეს პური, წყალი და

სავარცხელი ფრთა-ბუმბულისათვის.

გაფრინდა მესამედ და ამჯერადაც მართალი აღმოჩნდა:

აიტანეს, შეეგუენ.

გაფრინდა მეოთხედ და მტყუანი აღმოჩნდა:

ანგელოზის სულელი პლაგიატორი უწოდეს.

მაინც გაფრინდა მეხუთედ და -

ესროლეს

მოკლეს.

როგორ ქვეყნდება ყოველდღიური ქალაქი

უთენია იწყებენ მუშაობას ქალაქის კორექტორები და სტილისტები.

კრეჭენ ბალახს გაზონებზე,

შენობების ფასადებს დეზავენ,

გაწყვეტილ კაბელებს აერთებენ.

სტრიქონ-სტრიქონ მიუყვებიან ქუჩებს,

გამოცდილი თვალით აკვირდებიან:

ეს ძალი აქ ზედმეტია, მოვაშოროთ,

ამ ორ ხეს შუა საგაზეთო ჯიხურია ჩასამატებელი,

ბოლოში კი, სადაც ქუჩა მთავრდება,

ნაგვის ურნა უნდა დავსვათ აუცილებლად და

ახალ ქუჩაზე გადავიდეთ.

იქ დედანთან შესადარებელია სუპერმარკეტი -

ციტატა ამერიკული ყოფიდან,

რომელიც ახლახან დაიმოწმა ქალაქმა.

მოკლედ, საქმე ულევია,

მაგრამ ისინიც არ არიან ჯაბანნი.

ყოველ დილით მარადი სიბეჯითით

ცხვირს რგავენ მტვრიან ფოლიანტებში და

თავიანთ მოუთავებელ სამუშაოს უკირკიტებენ:

ქვაფენილის ამოვარდნილ ფილებს აგებენ,

დღესასწაულების დაშესაბამისად საზეიმო ტრანსპარანტებს

ცვლიან,

საგზაო ნიშნებს კიდებენ,

დღის ბოლოს კი გაკორექტურებულ და

სტილისტურად გასწორებულ ქალაქს

დასაბეჭდად აბარებენ რედაქტორ ღამეს.

* * *

შენს სხეულზე შემოტკეცილი
საზაფხულო კაბა
ისევე მალეღვებს,
როგორც შენს ზამთრის ქურქში
შეფუთნული სული.

მე ხომ მგონია, რომ
ნივთიერებათა ცვლა
მხოლოდ ორგანიზმში არ მიმდინარეობს.

მე ხომ მგონია, რომ
კაბის ელემენტები შენს სისხლში გადადიან,
ამონასუნთქის ნახშირორჟანგი კი
შენი ღუნღულა ქურქის ღრუბელია.

ეს ქიმიია და არა ეროტიკა.

ეს ქიმიია და შეიძლება ესთეტიკაც,
მაგრამ არავითარ შემთხვევაში
სიყვარულის ორიგინალური ახსნა.

შენი კაბისა და სულის დიფუზიის შესახებ
ჩემს ქიმიის სახელმძღვანელოში წერია.

ნე მეტყვი, რომ ვულგარული ქიმიკოსი ვარ.

ისედაც ვიცი, რომ
ჩემი ყვითელი მაისური
უცენზუროდ ყვითელია
და ვან-გოგის მზესუმზირებთან
დიფუზიის ნიშანწყალიც
კი არ ეტყობა.

მოდრაობა

ქარი ქროდა და ქალს მიაფრიალებდა.
 ქალი მიფრიალებდა და კაცი მისდევდა.
 კაცი მირბოდა და უკან სამეგობრო მიყვებოდა.
 სამეგობრო მიდიოდა და ლუდხანა იდგა.
 ლუდხანა იდგა და ლუდი მჟავდებოდა.
 ლუდი მჟავდებოდა და დახლიდარი ბერდებოდა.
 დახლიდარი ბერდებოდა და თმა ცვიოდა.
 თმა ცვიოდა და ბომბებიც ცვიოდა ციდან.
 ბომბები ცვიოდა ციდან და სახლები ინგრეოდა.
 სახლები ინგრეოდა და ახალი ლუდხანა შენდებოდა.
 ახალი ლუდხანა შენდებოდა და ახალი სამეგობრო მოდიოდა.
 ახალი სამეგობრო მოდიოდა და ახალი კაცი მორბოდა.
 ახალი კაცი მორბოდა და ახალი ქალი მოფრიალებდა.
 ახალი ქალი მოფრიალებდა და ძველი ქარი ქროდა.
 ძველი ქარი ქროდა და ქარის წისქვილები ტრიალებდნენ.
 ქარის წისქვილები ტრიალებდნენ და დონ კიხოტიც იზადებოდა.
 დონ კიხოტი იზადებოდა და სერვანტესიც კვდებოდა.
 სერვანტესი კვდებოდა და შექსპირიც კვდებოდა.
 ანუ 1616 წლის 23 აპრილი იდგა და
 ლიტერატურა გლოვობდა და ღმერთი იცინოდა.
 ღმერთი იცინოდა და ხანდახან კაციც იცინოდა.
 კაცი იცინოდა და ლუდს სვამდა.
 ანუ პირიქით: ჯერ ლუდს სვამდა და მერე იცინოდა.
 და მერე ტიროდა.
 ბოლოს კი დგებოდა ფეხზე და ბარბაცით ქალს მისდევდა.
 ქალი გარბოდა და ქარს კუდში მიჰყვებოდა.
 ქარი მიქროდა და ცდილობდა სინათლის სხივს დასწეოდა.
 კაცი იდგა და მათ დაჭერობანას უყურებდა.
 კაცი ხან ფიზიკოსი იყო,
 ხან პოეტი,
 ხან ლოთი. კაცი ხშირად შედიოდა ლუდხანაში და
 სანამ ლუდი დამჟავდებოდა და დახლიდარი დაბერდებოდა,
 სვამდა ლუდს და მეგობრებთან ბჭობდა,
 ღმერთი კი იცინოდა,
 ღმერთი იცინოდა...
 და ქარი ქროდა...

Letalec

Poletel je in izkazalo se je, da srečno:
hvalili so ga, blagoslavljali, pred njim so se klanjali.
Poletel je vnovič, spet srečno:
sprejeli so ga, ni jim bilo žal ne kruha ne vode in
podarili so mu glavnik za peruti.
Poletel je še tretjič in tudi tokrat mu ni šlo slabo:
pomirili so se in se privadili.
Poletel je četrtič, toda tokrat zaman:
obsodili so ga kot lahkomiselnega posnemovalca angela.
Vendar je kljub vsemu poletel še petič –
ustrelili so vanj,
ubili so ga.

Kako mesto vsak dan pripravljajo za tisk

Še pred zoro za svoje delo poprimejo mestni korektorji in stilisti.
 Na vlažnih tratah kosijo travo
 in barvajo fasade stavb,
 iščejo in menjavajo
 žice pretrganih kablov.
 Urno prečesavajo vrstico za vrstico parkov
 in z izkušenim očesom pretikajo ulično pletivo –
 ta pes nima tu kaj iskati, treba ga je odstraniti,
 tu, med drevesi bi lahko dodali kiosk;
 tam, na koncu slepe ulice
 pa bi lahko postavili smetnjak. In je neizbežno.
 Nato morajo pregledati, kaj je treba popraviti na drugih ulicah.
 Zaželeno je, da se supermarket uskladi s prototipom –
 s citatom ameriškega vsakdana,
 ki ga je mesto že potrdilo.
 Opravičilo, skratka, ni videti konca,
 in odkrito, korektorji niso polovičarji.
 Od jutra s prizadevno zagnanostjo
 vtikajo svoje nosove med liste prašne folije
 in z delom rokujejo – kot z dragocenostmi:
 obnavljanje tlakovcev, starih ploščic na pločnikih,
 ob prazničnih ceremonijah menjujejo izveske,
 razobešajo plakate in ustrezne svečane ulične znake.
 Ob koncu dneva, ko je prestalo korekturo
 in je stilistično zglajeno, je mesto
 pripravljeno in posredovano, če tako rečemo, v tisk
 z enim samim podpisom: urednice Noči.

* * *

Tanka pomladna obleka
okrog tvojega telesa
me preseneča,
kot da bi bila tvoja duša odeta
v zimski plašč.

Veš, zdi se mi,
da se presnova
ne dogaja samo znotraj organizma.

Veš, zdi se mi,
da se elementi tvoje obleke
mešajo s tvojo krvjo
in so ogljikovi hidrati
oblak tvoje puhovke.

To je kemija, ne erotizem.

To je kemija, morda celo estetika,
toda nikakor ni
namišljeno priznanje v ljubezni.

Razlago te difuzije obleke in duše
najdem v svojem učbeniku za kemijo.

Zdaj pa mi ne reci, da sem laični kemik.

Saj se zavedam,
da je moja rumena majica
necenzurirano rumena
in da nima niti sledu
spojenosti z divjostjo
van Goghovih *Sončnic*.

Premikanje

Veter je pihal in s seboj odnašal žensko.
 Ženska je letela z vetrom in sledil ji je moški.
 Moški je hitel, za njim pa njegovi prijatelji.
 Prijatelji so hodili, pivnica pa je mirno stala.
 Pivnica je stala, pivo pa se je kisalo.
 Pivo se je kisalo, krčmar pa se je staral.
 Krčmar se je staral, izgubljal je lase.
 Izpadali so lasje in padale so bombe.
 Bombe so padale, hiše pa so se rušile.
 Hiše so se rušile in gradili so novo pivnico.
 Novo pivnico so gradili in prihajali so novi prijatelji.
 Prihajali so novi prijatelji in hitel je nek drug, nov moški.
 Drugi moški je hitel, veter pa je nosil drugo žensko.
 Veter je odnašal drugo žensko, pihal pa je stari veter.
 Stari veter je pihal in mlini na veter so se vrteli.
 Mlini na veter so se vrteli in rojeval se je Don Kihot.
 Don Kihot se je rojeval, Cervantes pa je umiral.
 Umiral je Cervantes in umiral je Shakespeare.
 Torej je bil 23. april leta 1616, in
 literatura je žalovala, Bog pa se je smejal.
 Bog se je smejal, včasih pa se je smejal tudi moški.
 Moški se je smejal in pil pivo.
 Ali nasprotno: najprej je pil pivo, nato pa se je smejal.
 Potem pa je jokal.
 Zatem je vstal in se zibajoč odpravil za žensko.
 Ženska je hitela in za rep lovila veter.
 Veter je pihal in skušal prehiteti žarek svetlobe.
 Moški je stal in opazoval njihovo lovljenje.
 Moški je bil včasih fizik,
 včasih pesnik,
 včasih pijanec.
 Moški je pogosto zahajal v pivnico.
 In preden je pivo zakisalo, krčmar pa se je postaral,
 je pil pivo in debatiral s prijatelji,
 Bog pa se je smejal,
 Bog se je smejal ...

In veter je pihal ...

The Aviator

He flew off and turned out to be right:
They praised him, blessed him, bowed their head for him.
He flew off again, and again turned out to be right:
They accepted him and didn't grudge him bread, water and
A comb for his wing and plumage.
He flew off a third time and this time, too, he turned out to be right:
They put up with him, tolerated him.
He flew off a fourth time and turned out to be in the wrong:
They called him a silly plagiarizer of an angel.
But he still flew off a fifth time—
They fired at him,
They killed him.

Translated by Donald Rayfield

On How a City Gets Published Each Day

They start working at dawn, the proofreaders and city stylists.
They mow the lawns,
paint the facades of buildings,
reconnect broken cables,
read the streets line by line
like professionals:
this dog should not be here, let's take it off;
let's add a newsstand between these two trees,
and down there, at the end of the street
a trash can should be placed but
let's change the street name.
Right there we need to correlate a supermarket with its original text—
citations from American life,
those the city just recently approved.
Frankly, many tasks wait to be done,
but not out of weakness.
Every morning there's a steady diligence;
they stick their noses in the dusty volumes and
do their never-ending jobs:
replace the street tiles,
re-paint billboards in accordance with each holiday,
hang the street signs
and, finally, bring this stylistically corrected
city to the Night Editor for publishing.

* * *

The slim spring dress
around your body
amazes me
as if your soul was wrapped
in a winter coat.

You know, I suppose
metabolism doesn't
just take place in the organism.

You know I suppose
elements of your dress
are mixing with your blood
and carbohydrates are
your feather-coat cloud.

This is chemistry, not eroticism.

This is chemistry, maybe even aesthetics,
but in no way
an imaginative confession of love.

This diffusion of dress and soul
is explained by my chemistry book.

Don't tell me I'm a vulgar chemist.

I know already
that my yellow shirt is
an uncensored yellow
and has not even a trace
of diffusion with the fury
of Van Gogh's Sunflowers.

Translated by Tim Kercher

Motion

A wind was blowing and a woman was flying with the wind
 the woman was flying with the wind and a man was running after her
 the man was running and all his friends were following him
 the friends were coming along and a pub was standing
 the pub was standing and the beer was turning sour
 the beer was turning sour and the bartender was getting old
 the bartender was getting old and his hair was falling
 his hair was falling as bombs were falling down from the sky
 bombs were falling from the sky and the houses were collapsing
 the houses were collapsing and a new pub was being constructed
 a new pub was being constructed and new friends were coming along
 new friends were arriving and a new man was running along
 a new man was running along and a new woman was flying with
 the wind
 and a new woman was flying with the wind and the old wind was
 blowing
 the old wind was blowing and new windmills were turning
 the windmills were turning and the new Don Quixote was coming
 into the world
 the new Don Quixote was coming into the world and Cervantes
 was dying
 Cervantes was dying and Shakespeare was also dying
 or it was the 23rd of April in 1616 and
 literature was mourning and God was laughing
 God was laughing and occasionally a man was laughing too.
 The man was laughing and drinking beer
 or vice versa: he was drinking beer at first and then laughing
 followed by crying
 and finally he finally rose to his feet and stumbled after the woman
 the woman was running away tracing the wind
 the wind was blowing and attempting to overtake the light
 the man was standing and watching them try to catch up
 and from time to time
 the man was a physicist
 a poet
 a drunk.
 The man was often going into the pub

and while the beer was turning sour and the bartender was getting old,
he was making conversation with his friends
and God was laughing
God was laughing...

And the wind was blowing...

Translated by Tim Kercher and Dalila Gogia



Foto © Nóra Halász, Budapesti Zeitung

Noémi Kiss

Noémi Kiss se je rodila leta 1974 v mestu Gödöllő blizu Budimpešte na Madžarskem in sodi med najvidnejše literarne glasove svoje generacije. V svojih delih se brezkompromisno loteva tem, o katerih se v javnosti še danes redko govori, kot sta družbeni spol, neprijetne strani materinstva itd. Družbeno perečih vprašanj – od družinskega nasilja, zaznamovanosti zaradi neplodnosti, ženskega odnosa do lastnega telesa – se loteva tudi v romanu *Sovány angyalok* (Suhi angeli, 2015), objavljenem v zborniku. Noémi Kiss je študirala primerjalno književnost, sociologijo in madžarski jezik na Univerzi v Konstanci v Nemčiji in na Univerzi v Miskolcu, kjer je leta 2003 doktorirala s temo o recepciji poezije Paula Celana na Madžarskem, danes pa poučuje kreativno pisanje in predava o sodobni literaturi. Je avtorica več proznih del, med zadnjimi so izšla: kratkoprozna zbirka *Ikeranya* (Mati dvojčkov, 2013) o doživljanju materinstva, zbirka esejev o fotografiji in literaturi *Fotográfia és irodalom* (Fotografija in književnost, 2011), fiktivno-biografske potopisne kratke zgodbe *Rongyos ékszerdoboz* (Zguljena skrinjica za nakit, 2009) o potovanju po Madžarski, Romuniji, Ukrajini in Srbiji. Njena dela so prevedena v več jezikov, pogosto gostuje tudi na literarnih festivalih doma in v tujini.

Noémi Kiss was born in 1974 in the town of Gödöllő near Budapest, Hungary, and belongs to the top-level literary voices of her generation. In her work, she uncompromisingly addresses the topics that are still rarely talked about in public, for example, the social construction of gender, the unpleasant sides of motherhood, etc. In her novel *Sovány angyalok* (Thin Angels, 2015), an excerpt from which is published in this almanac, she also tackles such burning social issues as domestic violence, being stigmatized due to barrenness, and woman's attitude towards her own body. Kiss studied comparative literature, sociology, and Hungarian language at the University of Constance in Germany and at the University of Miskolc, where she obtained her PhD for a dissertation on the reception of Paul Celan's poetry in Hungary; today she is a lecturer in creative writing and in contemporary literature. She is the author of several works of fiction, to mention just the latest: the short story collection *Ikeranya* (Mother of Twins, 2013) about experiencing motherhood, essays on photography and literature *Fotográfia és irodalom* (Photography and Literature, 2011), and the collection of fictitious-biographic travel diary short stories *Rongyos ékszerdoboz* (The Tattered Jewel Box, 2009) about travelling around Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, and Serbia. Her works have been translated into several languages and she is a regular guest of literature festivals in Hungary as well as abroad.

Meddő

(részlet a *Sovány angyalok* című regényből)

Beköltözött télre a genya. Befészkelte magát a fűtött szobába. Szagot árasztott, bűdös gőzt, pára vette körbe. Nem is bírtam követni az útját, bárhol, bármikor felbukkanhatott. A genya egy rossz érzés, viszketés, libabőr és ráz. Hol a szőnyegre kúszott, akkor ott feküdtem, hol a fürdőszobában bukkant elő, rádőltem a kád szélére. Radiátort kért, gazdasejtet, akibe beköltözhet. Én lettem a gazda, genya. Ölbe vettem a betegséget, babusgattam, növesztettem. Szoba a méhem, nagy, üres, kirámolt semmi. Nem is szoba, garázs, poros fáskamra. Egy fekete gödör a kert végében.

Hogy nem lehet gyereked, ezt nem mondja a szemedbe soha senki. A genya egy sunyi titok. Nem lehet kirakni, ha egyszer már bened lakik, örökre ott marad. Hiába kergetem, ámítom magam, vára-kozok, bizakodom. Kapaszkodom a remény lábujjába. Akkor is ott ül a sunyi. Rám ragad, átölel, visszahúz. Kihúz a normális életből.

Üres az átlátszó méhem a röntgenképernyőn. Egy üveg. Máskor kis, görbe krumplics, mikor az orvos megmutatja. Nem hiszem, hogy másnak is ilyen, csak én kaptam egy öklömnyi csonkot. Nem látok semmit, nincs ott baj, az ultrahangkép tökéletes. Mondja a doki. Hogyhogy semmi? Évek óta próbálkozunk. Ebből még bármi lehet, biztat az orvos minket, mosolyog. Csakhogy én már nem biztatásra vágytam, elég volt a szóból. Legszívesebben kiabáltam volna egyet a gumikesztyűjének. Hozzám ne nyúljon többet!

Vagyis nyúljon! Csináljon már valamit, könyörgök. Csináljon nekem valaki gyereket!

Álmomban azt kívántam, bárcsak egér foga rágna, kukac, szöcske, bolha, egy gombostűnyi tetű is elég lett volna odabentre, csak szúrja meg a méh falát. Nem szúrta meg, a spermák nagy ívben elkerültek. Az elhalt petesejtek rendszerint fonnyadt magként csorogtak bele a tamponba. A tamponból a csatornába, én nem fogom a szemétkébe dobni, hogy ott gőzölögjön a lakásban, az enyém ússzon el, jó meszszire, ne is lássam többé.

Az igazgatóval kudarcot vallottam, a szeretőség idővel kimerített játék lett köztünk, kicsi, aranyos, kopasz fejét hiába húztam magamhoz. Fárasztott, rettenetesen. Immáron véglegesen beitta magát a koponyám alá egy göb: mélyen beszorult a fájdalom. Ez járt a fejemben, fel és alá. Migrént okozott, álmatlan éjszakákat és reggeleket, amikor nem akar-

tam felkelni, még a takarót is képtelen lettem volna megemelni, olyan gyengének éreztem magam. Mintha túvel szúrnák a karomat. Zsibbadt és húzott lefelé. A föld alá, ahol meg tűz volt, hatalmas lángok.

Hosszú évek alatt egyik szeretőm sem tudott teherbe ejteni. Futottam egyikőtől a másikig. Rám tört újra a boldog mehetnék, bíztam benne, hogy sikerülni fog, nekem ne lenne gyereke, de hát gyereke minden nőnek lehet, még a madarak is hangosan párzanak, nincs mit szégyellni ezen. Fészket építenek, és jön a gyerek. A patkánynak is sikerül. Kocának lesz kismalaca, ahogy a fának hajtása. A fű kihajt, a méh megtapad. Sorban jöttek a jelentkezők, mint a tantárgyak az órarendben: tesi, matek, kémia, fizika, ének-zene. A gombák is szaporodnak. A baktérium, az ideg. Az önkormányzatnál ketten. Egy hülye karácsonyi évszáró buli után ott maradtam a művelődési házban a portással. Utána úgy fájt a gerincem. Emlékszem, mentem haza, beléptem a kapun, Orsolya kifutott elém, rám ugrott, és én ájultan elestem a gyengeségtől. Öcsi vitt be a házba. Örüljön, hogy nem jött ki a sérve, mondta az orvos.

Undorodtam, mikor a tükörben megláttam összekarmolt arcomat és a foltos nyakamat. De mégis jött a vízilabdás doki, vele a gyógyszeres szekrényben csináltuk. Mások gyógynövényeket esznek, vitaminbombákat szednek, rohannak pszichiáterhez, a pszichológus ejti őket teherbe. Ismertem olyat, akit akupunktúráztak, és megegett. Hormonkúrára járnak, csöveket dugnak a hüvelyükbe peteérés-kor. Én féltem, rettegettem a szerektől. Inkább össze akartam szedni valahol a gyereket, bekapni a legyet. Széttett lábbal, a vékony bőr alá tenni, a hüvelybe szorítani. Ez egyszerűbbnek tűnt, mint egy rendelőben feltett lábbal várni a tűre.

Képzelttem. Én vagyok a hibás. Jött az önvád, aztán mindenki megvádolása: anyám, apám és Öcsi, a sulis, a szomszéd, az egész város, azt hittem, az egész világmindenség ellenem fordult. Aztán megint előlről: hogy miattam nem jön össze. Álltam lábujjhegyen a hideg kövön a fürdőszobában, széttett lábbal, egy tócsa volt alattam. Kínomban hangosan kacagtam.

Alábbhagyott a hitem, egészen alábbhagyott, nem mentem többé, nem kívántam, undorodtam. Szárazra égett a combom, senkit sem kívántam, a vágó utolsó csöppje is kifolyt belőlem.

Csontváz vagyok, ezt éreztem.

Harmadik éve próbálkoztunk hiába, és a házasságunk előtti hónapokat nem is számolom. Bizony, ebből egyikőnk sem fog egy új,

kis embert kigyurmázni. A sárból nem lesz baba, csak száraz, szikes föld. Koszos, kihajított pólya, fújja a szél a határban. Dobálja, löki, fel az égbe, aztán zuhan a földre.

Azt hittem, kipurcanok. Meg fogok örülni. Nincs végállomás. Kattogott a fülemben egy hang. Anyátlan anya! Az elején azt hittem, nem hallok jól, valaki fát vág, de aztán egyre élesebb lett, szúrós, női hang. Jött velem, folyton elkísért.

Öcsi mérges volt, ha panaszkodtam. Hagyd már abba. Te hallucinálsz! Na, ezt nem halkán mondtá, hanem kiabált, hogy mit rinyálsz.

Bögőmasina lettem, aki üveges tekintettel fekszik az ágyban, ha nincs munkanap, meg sem mozdul. Hétfőnként mégis összeszedtem magam. Az iskola húzott ki a legnagyobb bajból: a sötét, hajnali hideg hálósobából. Kiszáradtam, elfogyott a víz a testemből. A szomjúság nem a szerelem kínja, a szerelemről fogalmam sem volt. Amire vágytam, nem érkezett meg, és erre úgy reagált a szervezetem, hogy nem kért vizet. Halpikkelyes, hámlós bőrömre ültek a pattanások az arcomon. Mindig pontosan megjött a vérzésem, sosem késett, mint ha így reagáltak volna a hormonok a vágytalanságra. Talán megpróbálták rendes háztartást vezetni. Egy rendetlen nő életét fenntartani.

Az anya: nem én voltam.

Folyton eszembe jutnak az orvosok, a régi orvosok, akik kezeltek mindenféle rendelőkben, még köpenyük sem volt, pulóverben ültek, méricskéltek az ultrahanggal. Az ultrahang olyan volt, mint egy vérrel teli hímvesző. Betonkemény, fehér, műanyag bumszli. Egészen másképpen beszéltek velünk, biztattak, energiát adtak, ha csak a petéket számolták a tévé képernyőjén, már az is jó érzéssel töltött el. Ezerszer jobb, mint most itt ülni, félig a paplan alatt, nekitámaszkodni reménytelenül az ágytámlának.

Egy időben az orvos tanácsára szúrtam egy szert peteérés előtt, amiben patkányvizelet volt. Stimulált, serkentette a petefészket. Vízrel teli zsákokat cipeltem a hasamba, úgy éreztem, kidurranok. Mikor elfogyott a vér, újra megugrott a hormonszintem, villámcsapások jöttek. Jó jel! Kiáltott az asszisztens. Bízson magában, menni fog. Az orvos selymes hangon biztatott, én meg fizettem a patikában. Sok ezer forint volt egy kúra. Hat petesejtem lett. Hittem benne, biztos voltam benne, hogy sikerülni fog. Súgott a lélek is, beszélt, a hasamba bújt az erő. Kirobbanó a formám! Dagadt, érett és kerek

lettem az injekcióktól. Addig futottam, addig repkedtem örömben, amíg meg nem jött újra a vér. Fálnak koppant a fejem.

Leengedtem, mint egy rossz lufi a hideg majálison.

Ültem a vécén és csurgott a vér, egy csepp vér, aztán még tíz, végül ömlött. A szertár melletti budin ültem, fakeretes vécé, emlékszem rá, milyen erős vizeletszaga volt. Aztán vérszaga. Már vártak a diákok, dolgozatot íratam a következő órán, de képtelen voltam bemenni az osztályterembe.

Nem múlt el, vérzett tovább. Minden hónapban eresztett. Meddőségspirál: lila, kanyargós, út. Önmagába ér és kezdődik újra előlről. Mint akiből egy darabot kiharaptak.

A hormoninjekciók feldobtak és ettől egy ideig jól voltam, de újra visszahullottam. Kezdődött előlről.

Leszálltam a vécéről, nagy nehezen négykézlábra dőltem és lefeküdtem a padló rideg csempéjére, sírtam. Bömböltem, öklömet a számba tettem, úgy jobb volt, hogy beleharapok. Talán meg sem hallották.

Jalova

(odlomek iz romana *Subi angeli*)

Gnus se je priselil prezimit. Ugnezdil se je v zakurjeni sobi. Širil je zadah, smrdljivo soparo, obdajala ga je vlaga. Sploh nisem mogla slediti njegovi poti, pojavil se je lahko kjerkoli in kadarkoli. Gnus je slab občutek, srbenje, kurja polt in trese. Če se je priplazil na preprogo, sem obležala na njej, če pa se je pojavil v kopalnici, sem se naslonila na rob kadi. Hotel je radiator, gostiteljsko celico, v kateri bi se naselil. Postala sem gostiteljica, gnus. Svojo bolezen sem vzela v naročje, jo pestovala, pustila rasti. Moja maternica je soba, velik, prazen, izvotljen nič. Pravzaprav ni soba, ampak garaža, prašna drvarnica. Črna luknja na koncu vrta.

Da ne moreš imeti otroka, tega ti nikoli nihče ne pove v obraz. Gnus je potuhnjena skrivnost. Ne moreš se ga znebiti, ko se je enkrat naselil v tebi, ostane za vedno. Zaman ga podim, se slepim, čakam, upam. Oklepam se drobcenega upanja. Tudi takrat potuhnjen sedi tam. Nalepi se name, objame me, me potegne nazaj. Potegne iz normalnega življenja.

Moja prosojna maternica na rentgenskem zaslonu je prazna. Kot steklenica. Spet drugič, ko mi jo zdravnik pokaže, je majhen, zvit krompir. Ne verjamem, da imajo tudi druge tako, samo jaz sem dobila za pest velik štrcelj. Ničesar ne vidim, tam ni nič narobe, ultrazvočna slika je popolna. Pravi dohtar. Kako ničesar? Že leta se trudi. Iz tega bo lahko še marsikaj, naju spodbuja zdravnik in se nasmehne. Le da si nisem več želela bodrenja, dovolj je besed. Najraje bi zakričala njegovi gumijasti rokavici, naj se me nikoli več ne dotakne!

Pravzaprav, naj se me dotakne! Naj že naredi nekaj, moledujem. Naj mi nekdo naredi otroka!

V snu sem si želela, da bi me naglodal mišji zob, tudi črv, kobilica, bolha, že kot bucika velika uš bi bila dovolj za tja noter, samo da prebode maternično steno. Nič je ni prebodlo, spermiji so se me ogibali v velikem loku. Odmrle jajčne celice so po navadi kot ovela semena scurljale v tampon. Iz tampona v kanalizacijo, jaz ga že ne bom vrgla v smeti, da bi se paril v stanovanju, moj naj odplava, tja daleč, da ga ne vidim več.

Z ravnateljem sem doživela polomijo, najino ljubezensko razmerje je sčasoma postalo izčrpavajoča igra, zaman sem vlekla k sebi njegovo majhno, srčkano, plešasto glavo. Utrujal me je, strašansko.

Pod mojo lobanjo se je dokončno naselil nek tvor: bolečina se je globoko usidrala. Rojil mi je po glavi, gor in dol. Povzročal je migreno, nespečne noči in jutra, ko nisem hotela vstati, niti odeje nisem mogla dvigniti, tako šibko sem se počutila. Kot da bi mi v roko zabadali iglo. Drevenela je in me vlekla navzdol. Pod zemljo, kjer je bil ogenj, velikanski plameni.

Dolga leta mi z nobenim ljubimcem ni uspelo zanositi. Tekala sem od enega k drugemu. Znova me je prevzela osrečujoča želja, da bi šla, upala sem, da mi bo uspelo, samo jaz da ne bi mogla imeti otroka, ko pa ga lahko ima vsaka ženska, celo ptiči se glasno parijo, tu se ni česa sramovati. Zgradijo gnezdo in pride naraščaj. Tudi podgani uspeva. Svinja dobi prašička, drevo poganjek. Trava požene, maternica se zalepi. Kandidati so si sledili kot predmeti na urniku: telesna, matematika, kemija, fizika, glasba. Tudi gobe se množijo. Bakterije, živci. Pri občinski zgradbi dva. Po bedasti božični žurki konec leta sem ostala v kulturnem domu z vratarjem. Pozneje me je tako bolela hrbtenica. Spominjam se, šla sem proti domu, vstopila skozi vrata, Orsolya mi je pritekla naproti, skočila name, jaz pa sem onemogla padla v nezavest. Brat me je odpeljal v bolnišnico. Bodite veseli, da niste dobili kile, je rekel zdravnik.

Gnusila sem se sama sebi, ko sem v ogledalu zagledala svoj opraskani obraz in vrat z madeži. Pa je vseeno sledil dohtar vaterpolist, z njim sva to počela v omari z zdravili. Druge jejo zdravilne rastline, jemljejo vitaminske bombe, tekajo k psihiatru, oplodi jih psiholog. Poznala sem žensko, ki je hodila na akupunkturo in zanosila. Obiskujejo hormonske terapije, ob ovulaciji jim potiskajo cevi v nožnico. Strah me je bilo, trepetala sem pred temi sredstvi. Raje bi otroka nekje dobila, ulovila semenčico. Z razširjenimi nogami, položila bi jo pod tanko kožo, stisnila v nožnico. To se mi je zdelo preprosteje kot v ordinaciji z dvignjenimi nogami čakati na iglo.

Fantazirala sem. Sama sem kriva. Sledilo je samoobtoževanje, potem obtoževanje vseh drugih: matere, očeta, brata, šole, soseda, celega mesta, verjela sem, da se je ves univerzum obrnil proti meni. In potem spet od začetka: da se ne zgodi zaradi mene. Stala sem na prstih na mrzlem kamnu v kopalnici, z razširjenimi nogami, pod mano je bila mlaka. Od muk sem se glasno krohotala.

Izgubila sem vero, popolnoma sem jo izgubila, nisem več šla, nisem si želela, gnusilo se mi je. Moja stegna so zdrgnjena do živega, nikogar si nisem želela, še zadnja kaplja poželenja je odtekla.

Okostnjak sem, tako sem čutila.

Že tretje leto sva si zaman prizadevala, mesecev pred poroko sploh ne štejem. Iz tega ne bo gotovo nobeden od naju oblikoval novega majhnega človeka. Iz blata ne bo dojenčka, je le suha, kislja zemlja. Umazana, odvržena plenica, veter jo nosi po pokrajini. Meče, suva jo gor proti nebu, potem pade na zemljo.

Mislila sem, da bom crknila. Znorela. Končne postaje ni. V ušesih mi je pokal nek glas. Mati brez matere! Spočetka se mi je zdelo, da ne slišim dobro, da nekdo cepi drva, potem pa je postajal glas čedalje ostrejši, zbadajoč, ženski. Hodil je z mano, nenehno me je spremljal.

Brat je bil jezen, če sem mu tožila. Nehaj! Haluciniraš! No, tega ni rekel po tiho, zakričal je, kaj javkaš!

Postala sem cmerava, s steklenim pogledom sem ležala v postelji, če ni bil delavnik, se sploh nisem ganila. Ob ponedeljkih sem se vseeno pobrala. Šola me je potegnila iz največje težave: iz temne, jutranje hladne spalnice. Bila sem izsušena, telesu je zmanjkalo vode. Žeja ni ljubezenski zanos, o ljubezni nisem imela pojma. Tisto, po čemer sem hrepenela, ni prišlo in moj organizem je reagiral tako, da ni zahteval vode. Po luskasti, suhi koži obraza so se naselili mozolji. Mesečno perilo sem dobila točno, nikoli ni zamujalo, kot bi hormoni tako reagirali na stanje brez poželenja. Morda so poskušali voditi normalno gospodinjstvo. Vzdrževati življenje nenavadne ženske.

Mati: to nisem bila jaz.

Kar naprej se spominjam zdravnikov, nekdanjih zdravnikov, ki so me zdravili v vseh mogočih ordinacijah, niti halje niso imeli, sedeli so v puloverju, premerjali so me z ultrazvokom. Ultrazvok je bil kot s krvjo napolnjen ud. Betonsko trda bela plastična bunka. Čisto drugače so se pogovarjali z nami, spodbujali so nas, dajali so nam energijo, že samo to, da so preštevali jajčeca na zaslonu, je v nas vzbujalo dober občutek. Tisočkrat boljšega kot sedeti zdaj tukaj, na pol pod odejo, ko se brez upanja naslanjam na naslonilo postelje.

Nekaj časa sem si pred ovulacijo po zdravnikovem nasvetu injicirala sredstvo, v katerem je bil podganji urin. Stimuliral, spodbujal je delovanje jajčnikov. V trebuhu sem nosila vreče, napolnjene z vodo, zdelo se mi je, da bom počila. Ko je zmanjkalo krvi, je raven hormonov spet poskočila, po meni so švigale strele! Dobro znamenje, je kriknil asistent. Zaupam vam, šlo bo. Zdravnik me je z žametnim

glasom spodbujal, jaz pa sem plačevala v lekarni. Kura je stala kar nekaj tisoč forintov. Nastalo je šest jajčec. Verjela sem, prepričana sem bila, da bo uspelo. Tudi duša mi je šepetala, mi govorila, moč se je skrivala v mojem trebuhu. Moja forma je eksplozivna! Zaradi injekcij sem postala napihnjena, zrela in okrogla. Tako dolgo sem tekala, od veselja sem letala vse dotlej, dokler se ni spet pojavila kri. Z glavo sem udarila v zid.

Spustila sem kot slab balon med hladnim majskim rajanjem.

Sedela sem na veceju, kri je curljala, kapljica krvi, pa deset kapljic, na koncu je lila. Sedela sem na stranišču poleg laboratorija, bil je vece z leseno desko, spominjam se, kako močno je zударjal po urinu. Potem po krvi. Dijaki so me že čakali, naslednjo uro naj bi pisali šolsko nalogo, toda nisem bila sposobna iti do razreda.

Ni minilo, krvavela sem dalje. Vsak mesec je puščalo. Spirala jalovosti: vijolična, ovinkasta pot. Konča se v sebi in se znova začne. Kot takrat, ko od nekoga odgriznejo kos.

Hormonske injekcije so me nabile z energijo, nekaj časa sem bila v redu, a sem spet padla nazaj. Začelo se je znova.

S težavo sem se spustila z veceja na vse štiri in legla na hladne ploščice na tleh, jokala sem. Tulila sem, zarila sem si pest v usta, bolje mi je bilo, če sem jo grizla. Najbrž me sploh niso slišali.

Prevedla Gabriella Gaál

Barren

(excerpt from the novel *Thin Angels*)

The Fester moved in for the winter. It found itself a home in the warmth of the room. It gave off a stench, it was shrouded in putrid vapour. I couldn't keep up with it, it might turn up anywhere, any time. The Fester is a nasty feeling, a tingling, gooseflesh, and it convulses you. It might slither onto the carpet, and I would just lie there, or else it might bob up in the bathroom and I would clutch the edge of the bath. It was looking for a radiator, a host cell. I turned into its host, the Fester. I took my illness into my lap, nursing it, nurturing it. My womb is a room, a great big, empty, trashed void. Less than a room, a garage, a dusty woodshed. A pit, black, at the end of the garden.

That you can't have children is not something anyone ever says to your face. Fester is a scummy secret. There's no evicting it, once wedged in you it stays for ever. Trying to hound it out is no use, I'm fooling myself, hanging round, hoping against hope. Clinging on by hope's toenails. And still the scum sits there. Sticking to me, embracing me, dragging me back. Dragging me out of normal life.

On the x-ray monitor my womb is transparent, empty. A bottle. Sometimes it's a small, bent potato that the doctor shows me. I don't think it's like others', I'm the only one blessed with a stumpy one the size of my fist. I don't see anything, there's no problem, the ultrasound is perfect. Says the doc. What d'you mean, nothing? We've been trying for years. You have it all to play for, the doctor says, beaming at us encouragingly. It's just that it wasn't encouragement I wanted, I've had it up to here with words. Most of all I would've loved to scream at his latex gloves. Don't you dare touch me again!

Or rather: do touch me! Do *something*, I beg you. Someone make me a child!

In my dreams I wished I could be chewed by mice, it would've been enough to have maggots, grasshoppers, fleas, even a pinhead-sized louse inside to prick the uterus wall. But it wasn't pricked, sperm avoided me like the plague. The lifeless eggs would drip into my tampon like withered seeds. From the tampon they went straight to the drains, I'm not throwing them in the bin only for them to stink the place out, my eggs should swim off, far, far away, to make sure I never saw them again.

It was a washout with the boss, having sex eventually became an exhausting pastime, it was no use drawing his sweet little bald pate towards me. It tired me out, dreadfully. A lump had now lodged itself permanently under my skull, a pain trapped deep inside it. This pounded up and down in my head. It gave me migraine, sleepless nights, and mornings when I didn't want to get up, too washed out to even lift the covers, that's how weak I felt. As if repeatedly stabbed by pins, my arms were numb and dragging me down. Underground, down to where a fire was blazing, a towering inferno.

Year in, year out none of my lovers could get me pregnant. I scurried from one to the next. I was happy every time the sudden urge came to move on, quite sure this was the one that would work out. Why shouldn't I have a child, every woman can have one, even birds mate, noisily too, it's nothing to be ashamed of. They build a nest, and bang, a little one comes along. Even rats can manage it. The sow has her piglet, just as a tree has its offshoot. Grass grows, the fertilized egg grips the womb wall. The candidates followed one after the other, like lessons in the school timetable: PE, maths, chemistry, physics, music. Even fungi multiply. Bacteria, nerve cells. Two guys at the town hall. After a stupid Christmas party I stayed behind in the arts centre, alone with the caretaker. How my spine ached afterwards. I remember getting home, opening the gate, Orsolya running out, and me, feeling faint and keeling over. Kiddo had to carry me in. Count yourself lucky you didn't get a hernia, the doctor said.

I was disgusted to see in the mirror the scratches covering my face and the blotches on my neck. But then the waterpolo doc came and we did it in the medicine cupboard. Others eat herbs, take vitamin supplements, go haring off to their psychiatrist, or their psychologist gets them pregnant. I know someone who went to get acupuncture and got knocked up. People go in for hormone treatments, get tubes poked up their uterus while they're ovulating. But I was afraid, terrified of all the paraphernalia. I preferred to imagine I could pick up a kid, get a bun in my oven, some other way. With my legs akimbo, it would be inserted under the endometrium, squeezed into the uterus. It seemed simpler than waiting for the needle in the surgery, legs held high in the air.

I imagined things. The problem was me. First I reproached myself, then everyone else: my mother, my father, and Kiddo, school, the neighbours, the entire city, I thought the whole world had

turned against me. And then the cycle would start all over again: it was my fault it didn't work out. I stood on tiptoe on the cold stone floor of the bathroom, a puddle beneath me. I laughed out loud in my agony.

My faith began to ebb, it ebbed away completely, I stopped trying, I didn't want it, it disgusted me. My thighs were burnt to a crisp, I wanted no one, every last drop of desire had drained from me.

A skeleton, that's how I felt.

We'd been trying for three years without success, and that's without counting the months before we actually married. One thing's for sure: we're neither of us going to knead a little person out of this stuff. You don't get to make a baby out of mud, all you get is dry, alkaline soil. Foul, discarded swaddling clouts, the wind blew them about the fields. Flung them around, tossing them high into the sky, then they came crashing to the ground.

I thought I was done for. That I'd go mad. No end to it in sight. A voice drilled in my head. Motherless mother! At first I thought I wasn't hearing right, that it was some repetitive drone, but then it became steadily louder, a shrill, female voice. It came with me everywhere.

Kidido was furious if I complained. Put a sock in it. You're raving! And he didn't say this quietly but yelled: what are you yammering on about!

I became an automaton that wept, lying in bed with a vacant look, if it wasn't a workday, I wouldn't stir. By Monday though I always managed to pull myself together. It was school that saved me from the worst: the darkness of my cold bedroom at first light. I was all dried up, all the water had drained from my body. Thirst is not the agony of love, I hadn't the foggiest notion of love. What I longed for wouldn't come, and my body reacted to this by not wanting any water. The pimples on my face perched on the flaking fish-scales of my skin. My periods came like clockwork, I was never late, as if this was the hormones' response to the absence of desire. Perhaps they were just trying to make sure the household was well-run. To keep the life of a messed-up woman on track.

A mother: not me.

I kept thinking of the doctors in the old days, who treated me in surgeries of all sorts, not even wearing white lab coats, sitting

in their pullovers as they did the ultrasound. The probe was like a blood-filled penis. A white plastic pod, hard as concrete. And the way they spoke to us was quite different, they buoyed us up, energised us, even if all they were doing was counting the eggs on the monitor it made us feel good. A thousand times better than just sitting here now, under the duvet, propped up hopelessly against the headboard.

One time a doctor advised that before ovulating I should have a pouch of rat urine injected into my abdomen. Supposedly to stimulate the ovaries. Lugging little sacs of liquid around in my gut, I thought I would burst. When there was no blood left, my hormone levels spiked again: lightning struck. A good sign! the nurse exclaimed. Have faith in yourself, it's going to work. Soothed by the doctor's velvet voice, I shelled out at the chemist's. A single course of treatment cost several thousand forints. I got six eggs. I believed – I was certain – that success was in the bag. My soul whispered, spoke to me, my gut filled with strength. I was in terrific form! The injections made me swell, ripen, round out. In my joy I ran around, flew about, until the blood started to flow again. My head slammed against the wall.

I deflated, a lead balloon at the Mayday fair.

I sat on the toilet and the blood came dripping down, first one drop, then ten, by the end there was a steady stream. I was in the ladies' by the equipment store, a bowl with a wooden seat, I recall how it stank of urine. And then of blood. The students were waiting, I had set them an essay to write, but I just couldn't make it into the classroom.

It wouldn't stop, the blood, it just kept coming. Oozing out every month. A downward spiral of barrenness, a winding, purple road. Flowing into itself only to start all over again from the beginning. As if someone had taken a bite out of me.

The hormone injections gave me a lift, so I'd be fine for a while, but soon came down with a crash. And then it would begin again.

I clambered off the toilet, going down with great effort on all fours, then lay on the cold hard tiles of the floor. I wept. I howled, stuffing a clenched fist in my mouth, it felt better if I bit hard into it. With luck maybe no one would hear.

Translated by Peter Sherwood



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Uršula Kovalyk

Uršula Kovalyk se je rodila leta 1969 v Košicah na Slovaškem, danes pa živi v Bratislavi. Pisateljica, po izobrazbi socialna delavka in po prepričanju feministka, je bila dejavna v neprofitnih organizacijah, ki se ukvarjajo s pravicami žensk, danes pa v nevladni organizaciji Proti prúdu (Proti toku) pomaga brezdomcem. Vodi tudi delavnice dramske terapije v gledališču Divadlo bez domova (Gledališče brez doma), v katerem igrajo brezdomci, odvisniki in hendikepirani. Njen opus obsega več dram, kratkoprozni zbirki *Neverné ženy neznášajú vajíčka* (Nezveste žene ne ležejo jajčec, 2002) in *Travesty sou* (2004), ki je 2015 z naslovom *Drag šov* v prevodu Andreja Pleterskega izšla pri Cankarjevi založbi, ter romana *Žena zo sekáča* (Ženska iz druge roke, 2008) in *Krasojazdkyňa* (Akrobatska jahalka, 2013), za katerega je prejela nagrado 22. mednarodnega knjižnega sejma Bibliotéka v Bratislavi za najboljšo delo slovaške avtorice. Tik pred izidom je njena zbirka kratkih zgodb *Čisté zviera* (Čista žival). Avtorica tematizira položaj ženske v sodobni patriarhalni družbi, problematizira predpisane družbene vloge in norme, žensko seksualnost, pri čemer pogosto prehaja iz realnega v fantazijski svet, ki ga razume kot edino zatočišče, v katerem se lahko ženska samouresniči. Dela Uršule Kovalyk so zato pogosto predmet razprav. Njene knjige so prevedene v več jezikov, zgodbe pa so izšle v številnih antologijah od ZDA do Indije, s čimer sodi med najbolj prevajane slovaške avtorje.

Uršula Kovalyk was born in 1969 in Košice, Slovakia. Today she lives in Bratislava. A writer, a social worker by profession and a feminist by conviction, she has been active in the past in non-profit organizations dealing with women's rights, while today she works for the nongovernmental organization Proti prúdu (Against the Current), helping the homeless. She also mentors drama therapy workshops in the Divadlo bez domova (Theatre with No Home), in which homeless people, addicts, and the disabled perform. Her oeuvre includes several plays, the short story collections *Neverné ženy neznášajú vajíčka* (Unfaithful Women Lay No Eggs, 2002) and *Travesty sou* (Travesty Show, 2004), as well as the novels *Žena zo sekáča* (The Secondhand Woman, 2008) and *Krasojazdkyňa* (The Equestrienne, 2013), for which she received the award of the 22nd International Book Fair Bibliotéka for the best work by a Slovak female author. Her short story collection *Čisté zviera* (Pure Animal) is about to be published. The focus of her literary interest are women, their position in the modern patriarchal society; she problematizes roles and norms assigned to women, as well as women's sexuality, where she often switches between the real and the fantastic, since she believes that the latter is the only haven for women's self-realization, so her works are often a source for discussions. Kovalyk's fiction has been translated into many languages and is included in several anthologies, from USA to India. She is one of the most translated Slovakian authors.

Mesačnica

Je polnoc. Cez polostiahnuté žalúzie presvitá okrúhly mesiac. Opatrne osvetľuje izbu, aby nikoho nezobudil. Na starom nábytku premieňa prach na zlatý piesok. Marta nespí. Dlhو čakala, kým sa dom utíši, odumrie, kým posledný zvuk zanikne v pravidelnom oddychovaní muža a detí. Iba praskanie parkiet, puknutie skrine a tikot hodín narušia občas kráľovstvo spánku. Je ticho. Ani z ulice nič nepočuť, len klapnutie ručičky pokazených hodín na námestí odmeriava nočný čas. Marta chvíľu leží v posteli a mlčky sleduje pás mesačného svetla. Potom vstane a nehlučne prejde do vedľajšej izby. Sadne si do kresla a kolená pritisne až k brade. Objíme holé päty. Je ticho a tma. Marta miluje ticho. Po celom dni, plnom myšlienok, zhonu a povinností, plnom počúvania a rozprávania, môže konečne myslieť na všetky malichernosti sveta. Na malichernosti svojho sveta. Niekedy sa jej to nepodarí. Zaspí od únavy skôr, než sa jej telo dotkne posteľe. Dnes jej to vyšlo. Je konečne sama. Sama so sebou. Očami prechádza po nábytku, ozdobných predmetoch, skrinkách a kobercoch. Izba je v noci iná. Noc otupuje ostré hrany, drsné látky premieňa na zamat. Ešte aj obrovský klavír, ktorý Marta tak nenávidí, lebo zavadzia a musí ho večne leštiť, premenila na čierne krídlo havrany. Marta má rada havrany. Pripomínajú jej noc. Pripomínajú jej ticho. Mesiac sa pohne, prekotúľa do inej časti oblohy. Ostrý pás svetla prereže izbu. Ako nožničky, pomyslí si. Vopchá doň ruku. Ruka vo svetle spriesvitnie, vyhladí sa, zmesačnie. Dopukaná koža zmizne. Je to krásna ruka, pomyslí si Marta a strčí do svetla aj druhú. Chvíľu ju krúti a sleduje kvapky potu, ktoré majú teraz farbu striebra. Marta sedí v kresle. Je tma. Všetci spia, izba je nemá. Sedí v kresle a pás mesačného svetla jej drží ruky. Páči sa jej to. Začne nimi hýbať, ako keď si ich umýva. Potom do svetla ponorí svoje prsty na nohách, koleno a prsník. Lakte, brucho a plecia. Celé telo okúpe v bielom svetle mesiaca. Marta vstane a nehlučne odkrača po zrkadlo. Vezme ho do rúk a ponorí do svetla aj svoju tvár. Je žltobiela, trocha strieborná. Vrásky sú preč, aj znamienka, vyrážky. Je hladká a priesvitná. Dokonalá. Ako lebka kostlivca. Vycerí zuby a vystrčí jazyk. Mesačnica, povie Marta. Žena v zrkadle to povie tiež. Mesiac sa znova prehupne. Prevalí. Prekotúľa ako oranžová lopta na čiernom koberci. Svetlo dopadne na stenu. Oblíže obraz. Je to starý obraz.

Marta naň dávno zabudla. Už dávno sa nedíva na obrazy na stenách. Je to vlastne fotka. Malého chlapca s rybou na hlave. Stojí na brehu mora. More je sivé. Vystrihla ju, keď bola ešte dievča. Z akéhosi časopisu. Už si nepamätá. Zabudla. Lenže teraz mesiac osvetľuje chlapca. Obrovská ryba na hlave sa leskne. Marta sa díva do jeho očí. Ako len môže niesť takú veľkú rybu? Celé roky. Na hlave. Obzerá si jeho vychudnuté telo, otrhané šaty a bosé nohy zaborené v piesku. Pery má dopukané od slnka. Rybie oko sa tupo díva do neba. Chlapec sa odrazu pohne. Pomaly otočí hlavou, poškriabe si koleno a rybu zloží na zem.

„Marta,“ povie, „moja ryba je hladná.“ Marta sa strhne, prekva-pene otvorí ústa. Chvíľu neverí. Je to len obraz, pomyslí si, ale podíde bližšie, aby si mohla lepšie obzrieť rybu. Naozaj, ryba je vychudnutá, spod kože trčia rybie rebrá. Obrovské rozdavené čeľuste nemo hltajú vzduch. „Zabudla som,“ povie Marta, „dávno som zabudla.“ Chlapec prevaľuje rybu zboka nabok.

Na chudé telo sa lepí piesok. Ryba pomaly pohne okom. Díva sa na Martu. „Tvoja ryba je naozaj hladná,“ povie a vezme ju do rúk. Je ľahká ako zväzok papiera. Ako vyschnutý list stromu. Niekde v malíčku cíti slabý tlkot studeného rybieho srdca. Hladká ju rukami, ponára do úzkeho pásu svetla, bozkáva. Prikladá ju na svoju tvár. Hojdá ju a mazná sa s ňou, potľapkáva ju. Spieva jej. Ryba sa zväčšuje. Jej telo sa zaobljuje, koža jemnie, rebrá miznú a oči dostávajú rybí lesk. Netrvá dlho a ryba sa trepoce v bielom mesačnom svetle. „Mesačnica,“ povie chlapec. Je ticho. Všetci spia. Mesačnica stojí uprostred izby a v ruke drží trepotajúcu sa rybu. Podá ju späť do obrázka. Chlapec sa usmeje. Usmeje sa a rybu hodí do mora. Stojí sám a nohy zabára do sivého piesku. Kdesi v diaľke počuť šumenie mora. Mesiac sa prevaľí na opačný koniec oblohy. Odrazu je tma. Pás svetla zmizne a havranie krídlo sa zmení na čiernu dieru. Marta ešte dlho potme stojí pred obrázkom na stene. Skúmavo ho obzerá. Chlapec mlčí. Iba veľké oči zádumčivo hľadia do tmy. Marta pocíti úľavu. Ľahne si spať.

Ráno je iné. Ráno je vždy iné. Plné nepokoja, smiechu a kriku. Deti sa obliekajú, kričia, bijú. Búchajú dvermi. Marta chystá raňajky. Na tanier kladie horúce hrianky. Z čajníka sa parí. Maslo sa topí a všetci si sadajú za stôl. Muž chrúme hrianky. Z úst mu odskakujú omrvinky, deti sa hašteria. Rukami robia po stole mastné mapy. Str-

kajú do seba, kladú otázky. Donekonečna. Krúti sa jej z toho hlava a trasú ruky. Ani nie je hladná. Odchádza do izby vybrať mužovi košeľu. Izba je ráno iná. Havranie krídlo je preč, na nábytku leží obyčajný prach. Stoličky majú ostré hrany. Pozrie sa na obrázok. Malý chlapec stojí v piesku na brehu mora. Marta otvára skriňu. Vôňa čistej bielizne jej pohladí nos. „Marta,“ povie muž, „je čas.“ Ukáže na hodinky. Ona mu podá košeľu. „Všimol si si?“ opýta sa. Muž si oblieka košeľu, vôňa sa prilepí na jeho telo. „Čo?“ povie a prstami, tenkými ako nohy pavúka, zapína gombíky. „Ten chlapec na obrázku už nemá na hlave rybu.“ Jeho pohľad zablúdi k obrazu. „Nikdy nemal na hlave rybu, Marta,“ odpovie muž. Marta zneistie. Na malú chvíľu zaváha. Potom si však spomenie na zrkadlo, na Mesačnicu. Na úzky pás svetla. „Včera v noci ju mal,“ povie. V jej hlase znie istota. „Mal ju na hlave,“ hovorí mužovi, díva sa mu rovno do očí a rukou pridržiaava jeho bradu. „A tá ryba bola hladná, ja som ju nakŕmila a on ju potom hodil do mora. Preto ju teraz nemá.“ Marta sa mu ešte vždy díva do očí. Muž sa prestane zapínať. Neveriacky pristúpi k obrazu. „Niečo sa ti muselo snívať,“ povie a zotrie z rámu prach. „Cítila som v rukách jej rebrá a v malíčku tlkot jej srdca,“ dodá neústupčivo. Muž si vzdychne. Marta si vzdychne tiež.

„Musím ísť, je čas,“ povie muž a rýchlo si uviaže kravatu. Oblečie si kabát. Do rúk vezme kľúče. Deti vbehnú do auta. Marta z okna pozoruje, ako sa hádajú, kto bude sedieť na akom mieste. Rukami si strhávajú čiapky, kopú nohami. Muž na ne zakričí. Stíchnu. Auto zabliká zadnými svetlami. Na pozdrav. Marta sa chvíľu prechádza po izbách, ktoré jej teraz pripadajú cudzie. Vníma neporiadok povahujúci sa v dome. Tony porozhadzovanej bielizne. Roztrhaných papierikov. Prilepených žuvačiek. Poschovávaného kriku. Kopy otázok a budúcich odpovedí. Kým sa pustí do práce, urobí si kávu. Sadne si do kresla. Pred obraz. Vyloží nohy na stôl. Chlapec mlčí. Marta popíja kávu. A kdesi v hĺbinách mora pláva lesklá ryba.

Mesečevka

Polnoč je. Skozi napol zastrte žaluzije preseva okrogla luna. Previdno osvetljuje sobo, da bi nikogar ne zbudila. Na starem pohištvu se prah spreminja v zlato mivko. Marta ne spi. Dolgo je čakala, da hiša obmolkne, odmre, da se zadnji zvok razgubi v pravilnem dihanju moža in otrok. Samo škripanje parketa, pokljanje omare in tiktakanje ure občasno zmotijo kraljestvo spanca. Tiho je. Tudi z ulice ni slišati ničesar, le trkanje kazalca pokvarjene ure na trgu odmerja nočni čas. Marta nekaj časa leži v postelji in molče spremlja pas mesečine. Nato vstane in neslišno stopi v sosednjo sobo. Sede v naslonjač in si kolena pritisne k bradi. Objame gole pete. Tiho je in temno. Marta ljubi tišino. Po celem dnevu, polnem misli, naglice in obveznosti, polnem poslušanja in govorjenja, lahko zdaj končno premišljuje o vseh malenkostih sveta. A ji včasih ne uspe. Od utrujenosti zaspi, še preden se ji telo dotakne postelje. Nocoj pa se ji je posrečilo. Končno je sama. Sama s sabo. S pogledom drsi po pohištvu, okrasnih predmetih, omarah in preprogah. Ponoči je soba drugačna. Noč zgladi ostre robove, grobo blago spreminja v žamet. Še ogromni klavir, ki ga Marta tako zelo sovraži, ker je v napoto in ga mora kar naprej loščiti, je spremenila v črno vranjo perut. Marti so vrani všeč. Spominjajo jo na noč. Spominjajo jo na tišino.

Luna se premakne, skotali na drugi del neba. Sobo prereže oster pas svetlobe. Kot škarjice, jo prešine. Vanj potisne roko. Na svetlobi roka postane prosojna, hladna, mesečna. Razpokana koža izgine. Čudovita roka, pomisli Marta in v svetlobo porine še drugo. Nekaj časa jo vrti in opazuje kapljice znoja, ki so zdaj srebrne. Marta sedi v naslonjaču. Tema je. Vsi spijo, soba je nema. Sedi v naslonjaču, pas mesečine pa ji drži roke. Kar ji godi. Začne jih premikati, kot bi si jih umivala. Potem v svetlobo potopi prste na nogah, koleno in prsi. Komolce, trebuh in ramena. Celotno telo okopa v beli mesečini.

Marta vstane in neslišno stopi po ogledalo. Vzame ga v roke in v svetlobo potopi še svoj obraz. Rumenobel je, malce srebrnkast. Gub ni več, niti znamenj, izpuščajev. Gladek je in prosojen. Popoln. Kot lobanja okostnjaka. Pokaže zobe in jezik. Mesečevka, reče Marta. Isto reče ženska v ogledalu.

Luna se spet prekucne. Prevali. Skotali kot oranžna žoga po črni preprogi. Svetloba pade na steno. Oblizne sliko. Staro sliko. Marta je nanjo že zdavnaj pozabila. Že dolgo ne gleda več slik na stenah.

Pravzaprav gre za fotografijo. Majhnega dečka z ribo na glavi. Stoji na morski obali. Morje je sivo. Izrezala jo je, ko je bila še dekle. Iz neke revije. Ne spomni se več. Pozabila je. Zdaj pa luna osvetljuje dečka. Ogromna riba na glavi se blešči. Marta ga gleda v oči. Kako neki lahko nosi tako veliko ribo? Vsa ta leta. Na glavi. Ogleduje si njegovo suhljato telo, raztrgana oblačila in bose noge, pogreznjene v mivko. Ustnice ima popokane od sonca. Ribje oko prazno strmi v nebo. Deček se naenkrat zgane. Počasi obrne glavo, se popraska po kolenu in ribo odloži na tla. »Marta,« reče, »moja riba je lačna.« Marta se zdrzne, začudeno odpre usta. Za hip ne more verjeti. Saj je samo slika, jo spreleti, in stopi bliže, da bi si ribo ogledala podrobneje.

Tako je, riba je suhljata, izpod kože molijo ribja rebra. Ogromne zevajoče čeljusti nemo hlastajo za zrakom. »Pozabila sem,« reče Marta, »že zdavnaj sem pozabila.« Deček ribo vali z boka na bok. Na suho telo se lepi mivka. Riba počasi zgane oko. Zre v Marto. »Tvoja riba je res lačna,« reče in jo vzame v roke. Lahka je kot zvit papirček. Kot posušen drevesni list. Nekje v mezincu začuti rahlo bitje mrzlega ribjega srca. Boža jo z rokami, potopi v ozki pas svetlobe, poljublja. Si jo priloži k obrazu. Guga jo in ljubkuje, treplja. Ji prepeva. Riba se veča. Telo se ji zaokroža, koža mehča, rebra izginevajo, oči pa dobivajo ribji lesk. Ne traja dolgo in riba opleta v beli mesečini. »Mesečevka,« reče deček. Tiho je. Vsi spijo.

Mesečevka stoji sredi sobe in v rokah drži zvijajočo se ribo. Ponese jo nazaj v sliko. Deček se nasmehne. Nasmehne se in ribo vrže v morje. Stoji sam in noge pogreza v sivo mivko. Nekje v daljavi se sliši šumenje morja. Luna se prevali na nasprotni konec neba. Naenkrat tema. Pas svetlobe izgine, vranja perut se spremeni v črno luknjo. Marta še dolgo v temi stoji pred sliko na steni. Jo preučuje. Deček molči. Velike oči le še zamišljeno zrejo v temino. Marta si oddahne. Leže spat.

Jutro je drugačno. Jutro je zmeraj drugačno. Polno nemira, smeha in vrišča. Otroci se oblačijo, vreščijo, tolčejo. Loputajo z vrati. Marta pripravlja zajtrk. Na krožnik nalaga vroče popečene kruhke. Iz čajnika se dviga para. Maslo se topi in vsi se posedejo za mizo. Mož grizlja kruhke. Iz ust mu poskakujejo drobtine, otroci se pričkajo. Z rokami na mizi delajo mastne zemljevide. Drezajo se, sprašujejo. V nedogled. Od česar se ji vrti v glavi in se ji tresejo roke. V bistvu ni več lačna. Odhaja v sobo po srajco za moža. Soba je zjutraj drugač-

na. Vranje peruti ni več, po pohoštvu leži navaden prah. Stoli imajo ostre robove. Pogleda sliko. Mali deček stoji v mivki ob morski obali. Marta odpira omaro. Vonj čistega perila ji poboža nos. »Marta,« reče mož, »mudi se mi.« Pokaže na uro. Ona mu izroči srajco. »A si opazil?« ga vpraša. Mož si oblači srajco, vonj se mu prilepi na telo. »Kaj?« reče in s prsti, tankimi kot pajkove nožice, zapira gumbe. »Ta deček na sliki nima več ribe na glavi.« Njegov pogled zatava k sliki. »Saj nikoli ni imel ribe na glavi, Marta.« Marta se zbega. Za hipec je negotova. Potem se spomni na ogledalo, na Mesečevko. Na ozki pas svetlobe. »Včeraj ponoči pa jo je imel,« mu reče. Njen glas izraža gotovost. »Na glavi jo je imel,« pravi možu, zastrmi se mu naravnost v oči in mu z roko pridrži brado. »Riba je bila lačna, nahranila sem jo, on pa jo je vrzel v morje. Zato je nima več.« Marta mu še vedno strmi v oči. Mož si neha zapirati gumbe. Nejeverno stopi k sliki. »Nekaj se ti je moralo sanjati,« reče in z okvirja obriše prah. »V rokah sem čutila njena rebra, v mezincu pa bitje njenega srca,« neomajno doda. Mož zavzdihne. Tudi Marta zavzdihne.

»Iti moram, mudi se mi,« reče mož in si na hitro zaveže kravato. Obleče plašč. Vzame ključe. Otroci stečejo v avto. Marta z okna opazuje, kako se prerekajo, kdo bo sedel na katerem mestu. Pulijo si kapo, brcajo. Mož povzdigne glas. Utihnejo. Avto utripne z zadnjimi lučmi. V pozdrav.

Marta se nekaj časa sprehaja po sobah, ki ji zdaj delujejo tuje. Opaža navlako, ki se valja po hiši. Tone nametanega perila. Razcefranih papirčkov. Prilepljenih žvečilok. Nakopičenega vrišča. Celi kupi vprašanj in prihodnjih odgovorov. Preden se loti dela, si skuha kavo. Usede se v naslonjač. Pred sliko. Položi noge na mizo. Deček molči. Marta sreba kavo. Nekje v morskih globinah pa plava bleščeča riba.

Prevedel Andrej Pleterski

Moonmaiden

Midnight. The round moon shines through the half-closed venetian blinds, cautiously lighting up the room, so as not to wake anyone. It turns the dust on the old furniture into golden sand. Marta is not asleep. She has been waiting a long time for the house to fall quiet, to die down, for the last sound to fade into the regular breathing of her husband and children. Only the creaking of the parquet floor, the faint cracking of the cupboards and the ticking of the clock disturb the realm of sleep from time to time. All is quiet. There are not even sounds from the street, just the clicking of the hands on the broken clock marking off the time in the square. For a while Marta lies in bed, silently watching the strip of moonlight. Then she gets out of bed and quietly slips into the next room. She sits down in an armchair, pressing her knees to her chin. She hugs her bare heels. Silence and darkness. Marta loves silence. After whole days thinking, rushing about, doing chores, listening and talking, she can at last ponder all the trivialities of the world. The trivialities of her world. She cannot always manage this, sometimes dropping off from exhaustion before her body even touches the bed. But today she has succeeded. She is alone at last. All by herself. Her eyes run over the furniture, the ornaments, cupboards and carpets. The room is different in the night. The night has its own magic. It smooths sharp edges, turns coarse materials to velvet. Even the huge piano, which Marta hates so much, which gets in the way and always has to be polished, has turned into the black wing of a rook. Marta likes rooks. They remind her of the night. They remind her of silence. The moon moves, rolling on to another part of the sky. A sharp strip of light cuts through the room. Like scissors, she thinks. She holds out her hand. In its light the room becomes translucent, smooth, moon-like. The cracked skin disappears. It is a beautiful hand, thinks Marta and holds out the other. For a moment she turns it over, watching the beads of sweat, now the colour of silver. Marta sits in the armchair. It is dark. Everyone is asleep, the room is dumb. She sits in the armchair and the strip of moonlight caresses her hands. She likes that. She begins to move them, as if washing them. Then she immerses her toes in the light, her knee and breasts. Her elbows, tummy and shoulders. She bathes her whole body in the white light of the moon.

Marta gets up and quietly tiptoes across the room to get the mirror. She picks it up and immerses her face in the light. It is yellowish-white, with a touch of silver. Her wrinkles are gone, her moles and spots, too. Her face is smooth and translucent. Perfect. Like the skull of a skeleton. She bares her teeth and wags her tongue. Moonmaiden, says Marta. The woman in the mirror says so too.

The moon takes another leap. Rolls over and along like an orange ball on the black carpet. The light falls onto the wall and licks a picture. An old picture. Marta had forgotten all about it. She hasn't looked at the pictures on the walls for a long time. It is a photograph really. Of a little boy with a fish on his head. He's standing on the seashore. The sea is grey. She cut it out when she was still a young girl. From some magazine. She can't remember which. She's forgotten. But now the moon is lighting up the boy, the enormous fish glistening on his head. Marta looks into the boy's eyes. How can he carry such a big fish? All these years. On his head. She gazes at his emaciated body, torn clothes and bare feet sinking in the sand. His lips parched from the sun. The fish's eye staring dully up at the sky. Suddenly the boy moves. He slowly turns his head, scratches his knee and puts the fish down on the ground. Marta, he says, my fish is hungry. Marta starts, opening her mouth in surprise. For a moment she can't believe it. It's only a picture, she tells herself, but she moves closer to get a better view of the fish.

It's true, the fish is emaciated and its ribs are protruding from its skin. Its huge yawning jaws dumbly gulping air. I'd forgotten, says Marta. I forgot long ago. The boy rolls the fish over from side to side, the sand sticking to its thin body. The fish slowly moves its eye to look at Marta. Your fish really is hungry, she says and takes it in her arms. It is light, like a roll of paper. Like a dry leaf from a tree. Somewhere in her little finger she can feel the weak beating of its cold, fish's heart. She strokes it with her hands, bathes it in the narrow strip of light and kisses it. She holds it to her face. She rocks it and fondles it, pats it and sings to it. The fish grows larger. Its body fills out, its skin softens, its ribs disappear and its eyes take on the sheen of a fish. Very soon the fish is quivering in the moonlight. Moonmaiden, says the boy. All is quiet. Everyone is asleep. The moonmaiden stands in the middle of the room, holding the quivering fish in her arms. She hands it back to the boy in the picture. He smiles. He smiles and throws the fish back into the sea. He

stands alone and his feet sink into the grey sand. Somewhere in the distance can be heard the murmur of waves. The moon rolls along to the other end of the sky. Suddenly it is dark. The strip of light disappears, and the rook's wing becomes a black hole. Marta remains standing for a long time in the darkness scrutinizing the picture. The boy says nothing. His large eyes just gaze pensively into the darkness. She feels a sense of relief. She goes to lie down and sleep.

The morning is different. The mornings are always different. Full of agitation, laughter and shouting. The children make chaos in the house. They get dressed, shout and fight. They slam doors. Marta gets the breakfast, putting hot toast on a plate. Steam rises from the teapot. Butter melts and they all sit round the table. Her husband munches his toast, crumbs falling from his mouth. The children squabble. Their hands leave greasy prints all over the table. They poke each other, ask questions. Endlessly. It makes her feel giddy and her hands shake. She isn't even hungry. She goes into the living room to prepare a shirt for her husband. The room is different in the morning. The rook's wing is gone, the furniture is covered with ordinary dust. The chairs have sharp edges. Marta looks at the picture. The little boy is standing in the sand on the seashore. She opens the cupboard. The smell of clean linen soothes her nose. Marta, says her husband, it's time to go. He points at his watch. She hands him his shirt. Have you noticed? she asks. Her husband is putting on his shirt and the pleasant smell clings to his body. What? he says, doing up his buttons with fingers as thin as spider legs. That boy in the picture hasn't got a fish on his head any more. His gaze wanders to the picture. He never did have a fish on his head, Marta, her husband replies. Marta feels puzzled. For a moment she hesitates. Then she remembers the mirror, and the moonmaiden. The narrow strip of light. He did last night, she says. Her voice sounds confident. On his head, she says to her husband, looking him straight in the eye and holding his chin in her hand. And that fish was hungry; I fed it and then he threw it back into the sea. That's why he hasn't got it now. Marta is still looking into his eyes. Her husband stops doing up his buttons. Clearly disbelieving, he goes over to the picture. You must have been dreaming, he says and wipes the dust off the frame. I felt its ribs in my hands and the faint beating of its heart, she added, not giving in. He sighs. Marta sighs, too.

I must be going, it's time, says her husband and quickly knots his tie. He puts on his coat. Picks up his keys. The children run out to the car. Marta watches them from the window as they squabble about who is going to sit where. They pull each other's hats off and kick each other. Her husband shouts at them. They fall silent. The car blinks its rear lights. To say goodbye.

For a while she walks around the house, the rooms now seeming unfamiliar to her. She notices the mess lying around. Heaps of dirty clothes scattered everywhere. Scraps of paper. Chewing gum stuck to the furniture. Hidden yelling. Piles of questions and future replies. Before she gets down to work, she'll make herself a cup of coffee. She sits down in the armchair. In front of the picture. She puts her feet up on the table. The boy in the picture says nothing. Marta sips her coffee. All is quiet. The boy in the picture stands and says nothing, she sips her coffee and somewhere in the depths of the sea a shiny fish swims.

Translated by Heather Trebatická



Foto © Andrij Dejvis

Andrij Ljubka

Andrij Ljubka se je rodil leta 1987 v Rigi v Latviji, družina pa se je kmalu nato vrnila v Ukrajino v Užgorod, kjer živi še danes. Ljubka je najvidnejši literat mlade generacije in tudi mednarodno eden najprepoznavnejših ukrajinskih avtorjev. Sprva je pisal poezijo, nato prozo in esejistiko, ob tem prevaja iz več jezikov, je vodja dveh mednarodnih literarnih festivalov v Ukrajini in publicist. Najprej je diplomiral na visoki vojaški šoli v Mukachevem, nato iz ukrajinistike na Univerzi v Užgorodu, iz balkanskih študij pa na Univerzi v Varšavi. Zadnjo pesniško zbirko *Сорок баксів плюс чайові* (Štirideset dolarjev in napitnina) je izdal 2012, sledila so prozna dela, med katerimi je najodmevnejši roman *Карбід* (Karbid, 2015), ki je bil uvrščen v ožji izbor petih najboljših knjig leta za literarno nagrado BBC Ukrajine. V slovenščini ga bo še letos izdalo Društvo slovenskih pisateljev. Duhoviti, satirični in avanturistični roman je postavljen v leto 2015 v izmišljeno ukrajinsko mesto na meji z Madžarsko, osrednje dogajanje pa se pleče okoli cvetoče 'panoge' – tihotapstva. Tudi njegovo zadnje delo, zbirka esejev *Сayдаде* (Saudade, 2017), je bilo nagrajeno. Prav tako je prejemnik več štipendij, med njimi pisateljske štipendije SEP (2017), ki se podeljuje na festivalu Vilenica. Tudi politično je zelo angažiran, sodeloval je na protestih oranžne revolucije (2004) in na Majdanu (Trgu neodvisnosti) 2013, medtem ko je bil zaradi sodelovanja na opozicijskem shodu ob predsedniških volitvah v Belorusiji leta 2006 zaprt. Močno si prizadeva in želi, da bi se Ukrajina približala Evropi.

Andriy Lyubka was born in 1987 in Riga, Latvia, but his family soon returned to Ukraine, to Uzhgorod, where he lives today. Lyubka is the most prominent writer of the young generation and one of the most internationally acclaimed Ukrainian authors. He first wrote poetry, then prose and essays; he translates from many languages, is the director of two international literary festivals in Ukraine, and a publicist. Lyubka first graduated from Mukachevo Military School, then studied Ukrainian philology at Uzhgorod University and Balkan studies at the University of Warsaw. His latest poetry collection, *Сорок баксів плюс чайові* (40 Dollars Plus the Tips), came out in 2012. Next came his prose works, the most well-known being the novel *Карбід* (Karbid, 2015), which was shortlisted for the top 5 books of the year by BBC Ukraine. In Slovenian translation it will be published this year by Slovene Writers' Association. The novel, set in 2015 in an imaginary town in Ukraine bordering with Hungary, is satirical and adventurous, the central plot revolving around the blossoming "industry" – smuggling. His latest work, essay collection *Сayдаде* (Saudade, 2017) also won a prize. He is the recipient of many scholarships, among them the CEI Fellowship for Writers in Residence (2017) awarded by the Vilenica festival. Very politically engaged, he took part in the Orange Revolution (2004), as well as in Euromaidan Revolution in 2013. He was imprisoned for attending the oppositional protest during the presidential elections in Belarus. He is still striving for Ukraine to move closer to Europe.

Як я пишу?

Я пишу кирилицею, правою
Рукою, по другій ночі, в блокноті
На сторінці «18 серпня 2011 року»,
Тому вірш годилося б так і назвати,
але ні, бо я хочу писати про тебе,
але пишу кирилицею, а значить –
здебільшого про Ігоря і Святослава,
Нестора, Памву, Григорія і так далі,
Хоча що «так далі»? Пишу про Тараса,
Люблінську унію, боротьбу за віру,
Про зраду віри як боротьбу, про Квітку,
Церкви і Болгарію (ну, ви здогадалися),
Пишу про помилку Павича (бо Кирил і Мефодій
Вигадали глаголицю), майже не пишу про сучасну
Сербію (зрадники!), не пишу про віскі, бо пишу
Про сивуху – аякже, бо послуговуюся кирилицею,
Хоч мене й не розуміє більша частина світу.
Чесно кажучи, тобі більше б пасувала латинка,
Але вибач, так уже склалося, не можу нічого вдіяти:
Мушу писати про Анну у Франції, Богдана, Івана,
Самійла та іже з ними, бо Бог покарав нас тричі:
Сходом, владою і абеткою.
Я пишу кирилицею: такий мій первородний гріх,
Вибачте.

Вечеря на двох

І я теж міг би бути чорним наркодилером
десь у Клівленді, штат Огайо. Слухати свою музику
в салоні машини, шукати нових адептів, втюрювати їм
порошок, а на день Подяки запрошувати своїх найближчих
друзів – проститутток – додому, дарувати їм фігурки янголів
і ароматичні свічки; довгими-довгими вечорами дивитися
на подвір'я, дорогу, знічев'я читати написи на банці пива в своїх
руках, засинати під якісь дебільні ток-шоу.

Або я міг би працювати десь на автозаправці в горах
Боснії і Герцеговини, приязно вітатися з клієнтами, знати всіх в околиці
Банської Луки, дослухатися до обідніх новин з маленького
радіоприймача, почути зранку пісню і цілий день наспівувати:
«Сараєво, серце моє», вчити своїх дітей правильно кидати ножа,
ловити рибу і збирати суніці, одного вечора перевірити, чи
знають вони напам'ять слова національного гімну, а потім,
втішений, роздати їм шоколадні цукерки.

припускаю, що в будь-якому з можливих життів ти б
мала з'явитися. Прийти за дозою чи приїхати завправити
свою машину. Бути проституткою чи просто сестрою. Бути донькою.
Провадити дебільне ток-шоу після півночі. Співати в церковному хорі.
Бути зіркою з найвідомішим хітом «Сараєво, серце моє», який
Я, почувши по радіо, потім цілий день мугикав би під ніс.
Думаю, ти обов'язково мала б з'явитися в кожному із
моїх можливих життів, навіть не думаю, впевнений.
Але чому ти не з'являєшся тепер, чому запізнюєшся вже
на двадцять хвилин, вечеря ж холоне?!

Жінко прекрасна, хліб мій насущний,

Дякую тобі сьогодні, що ти є,
Що ти напускаєш воду у ванну,
Жінко прекрасна, що змиваєш лак на нігтях,
І вводиш мене у спокусу постійно,
Жінко прекрасна, хліб мій насущний,
Дякую тобі й завтра, і післязавтра, і повсякчас за те,
Що ти є, і вводи мене у спокусу, жінко прекрасна,
І дивися на мене лукавим поглядом,
І голосно видихай, сідаючи в гарячу воду,
І проси намилити спину, хліб мій насущний,
Жінко прекрасна, і святися, тобто світися
Вночі то ногою, то щокою, губою трися,
Хліб мій насущний, тричі і тричі скрикни,
Жінко прекрасна, що живеш у моєму серці,
Що спиш у моєму ліжку, що будиш мене зранку,
Хліб мій насущний, хай буде воля твоя,
Хай грає твоя улюблена музика і горять
Ароматичні свічки, жінко прекрасна,
Я є тіло твоє, я є кров твоя, хліб мій насущний,
Жінко прекрасна з таким сумним іменем,
З таким тихим поглядом і такою маленькою долонею,
Хліб мій насущний, і вдома, і на роботі, і коли ти близько,
І коли ти далеко, жінко прекрасна,
Думаю про тебе, ти дай мені трохи щастя сьогодні,
Дай мені завтра, хліб мій насущний,
Жінко прекрасна, в ім'я твоє,
В ім'я твоє, в ім'я твоє –
Тричі в ім'я твоє.

Жінка, яка голить ноги у твоїй ванні,
Завтра відсвяткує свої 24.
Хоча «відсвяткує» - заголосно сказано,
Просто подзвонить додому батькам
І помолиться ввечері.
Ти не розумієш її молитов, її загадкових поглядів,
Мови меню в її телефоні.
Вам не судилося бути разом, воно й на добре,
Кажеш собі, воно й на добре.
У хвилини особливої ніжності ти кажеш,
Що віриш, ніби в них немає ядерної зброї,
Жодної ядерної зброї, і відчуваєш себе придурком.
Потім тобі сниться, що її тіло
Пахне ядерною зброєю, пустелями і циганськими піснями.
Чому циганськими? – питаєш себе зранку,
Але відповіді на це немає, ти не знаєш,
Як минало її дитинство і де вона вивчила англійську,
Чому обрала саме тебе.
Ви разом три тижні. Часом ти розглядаєш карту світу,
Оцінюючи розташування Ірану, його сусідів,
Природні й людські ресурси.
Тобі здається, що розумієш її все краще.
Іноді розпитуєш її про Іран, обіцяєш поїхати туди з нею,
А вона все пахне циганським літом і ядерною зброєю,
І її пустеля між вами, і насувається вечір,
І вона голить ноги в твоїй ванні.

Kako pišem?

Pišem v cirilici, z desno roko, po drugi uri ponoči, v beležnici na strani z zapisom »18. avgust 2011«, zato bi moral pesem tako tudi poimenovati, vendar je ne, ker hočem pisati o tebi, čeprav pišem v cirilici, to pa pomeni, da največ sporočam o Igorju in Svjatoslavu, Nestorju, Pamvu, Grigoriju in tako dalje, toda kaj pomeni »tako dalje«? Pišem o Tarasu, Lublinski zvezi, boju za vero, o izdaji vere kot boju, o Kvitku, cerkvi in Bolgariji (a saj ste že uganili), pišem o Pavičevi napaki (kajti Ciril in Metod sta izumila glagolico), sodobne Srbije naj niti ne omenjam (izdajalci!), ne pišem o viskiju, ker pišem o »sivuhi«,¹ kakopak, saj uporabljam cirilico, čeprav me ne razume večji del sveta. Odkrito rečeno, bi ti bolje pristajala latinica, vendar oprosti, tako se je sestavilo, nikakor ne morem pomagati: pisati moram o Anne v Franciji, Bohdanu, Ivanu, tudi Samijlo potuje z njimi, kajti Bog nas je kaznoval trikrat: z zahodom, vlado in abecedo. Pišem v cirilici: to je moj izvorni greh, oprostite.

¹ Značilno ukrajinsko žganje.

Večerja za dva

Tudi jaz bi bil lahko črni diler
nekje v Clevelandu, v državi Ohio. V avtomobilu bi poslušal
svojo glasbo, iskal bi nove adeptne in jim vsiljeval
prašek, na zahvalni dan pa bi vabil v goste svoje najbližje
prijateljice – prostitutke, podaril bi jim figurice angelčkov
in dišeče svečke; dolge, dolge večere bi opazoval
dvorišča, cesto, iz dolgega časa bi bral napise na pločevinkah piva v svojih
rokah, zaspal bi ob kakem butastem talkshowu.
Lahko pa bi delal na bencinski črpalki tu v gorah
Bosne in Hercegovine, prijazno bi pozdravljal stranke, poznal bi vse
iz okolice Banjaluke, poslušal bi večerne novice na malem
tranzistorju, zjutraj bi slišal pesem in ves dan popeval
Sarajevo, srce moje, svoje otroke bi naučil pravilno metati nože,
loviti ribe in nabirati jagode, nekega večera bi preveril, ali
znajo na pamet himno, potem pa
bi jim pomirjen dal čokoladne bombone.
Skleпам, da bi se ti morala pojaviti v vsakem od
mojih mogočih življenj. Prišla bi po dozo ali pa napolnit
rezervoar avtomobila. Bila bi prostitutka ali samo sestra. Bila bi hči.
Povezovala bi butast talkshow po polnoči. Pela v cerkvenem zboru.
Bila bi zvezda z največjim hitom *Sarajevo, srce moje*,
ki bi ga slišal po radiu in si ga potem ves dan popeval.
Mislim, da bi se ti gotovo pojavila v vsakem
od mojih mogočih življenj, ne le da to mislim, prepričan sem.
Toda zakaj se ne pojaviš zdaj, zamujaš že
dvajset minut, večerja se ohlaja!

Ženska prekrasna, kruh moj vsakdanji,

danes se ti zahvaljujem, da obstajaš,
da točiš vodo v kopalno kad,
ženska prelestna, ki si odstranjuješ lak za nohte
in me nenehno vodiš v skušnjavao,
ženska prelestna, kruh moj vsakdanji,
zahvaljujem se ti tudi za jutri in pojutrišnjem in ves čas,
za to, da obstajaš, in popelji me v skušnjavao
in opazuj me z lokavim pogledom
in glasno vzdihuj, ko sedaš v vročo vodo,
in prosi me, naj ti namilim hrbet, kruh moj vsakdanji,
ženska prelestna, lesketaj se, torej sveti se
ponoči, z nogo ali licem, z ustnico se podrgni,
kruh moj vsakdanji, trikrat in še trikrat zavpij,
ženska prelestna, ki živiš v mojem srcu,
ki spiš v moji postelji, ki me zjutraj prebujáš,
kruh moj vsakdanji, naj se zgodi volja tvoja,
naj igra tvoja najljubša glasba in gorijo
dišeče svečke, ženska prelestna,
jaz sem telo tvoje, jaz sem kri tvoja, kruh moj vsakdanji,
ženska prelestna, s tako otožnim imenom,
s tako nevsiljivim pogledom in tako majhno dlanjo,
kruh moj vsakdanji, in doma in v službi, in ko si blizu
in ko si daleč, ženska prelestna,
mislim nate, malce sreče mi danes podari,
podari mi jutri, kruh moj vsakdanji,
ženska prelestna, v imenu tvojem,
v imenu tvojem, v imenu tvojem –
trikrat v imenu tvojem.

Ženska, ki si brije noge v tvoji kopalnici,

bo jutri praznovala 24 let.

»Praznovala« je sicer v tem primeru pretirano,

ker bo samo poklicala starše

in zvečer na kratko zmolila.

Sam ne razumeš njenih molitev, njenih skrivnostnih pogledov,
jezika menijev v njenem telefonu.

Ni vama bilo usojeno biti skupaj, kar je dobro,

si rečeš, kar je dobro.

V trenutku posebne nežnosti rečeš,

da verjameš, da nimajo jedrskega orožja,

nikakršnega jedrskega orožja, in se počutiš kot idiot.

Potem sanjaš, da njeno telo

diši po jedrskem orožju, kot puščave in ciganske pesmi.

»Zakaj ciganske?« se vprašaš zjutraj,

vendar odgovora na to ni, ti ne veš,

kakšno je bilo njeno otroštvo in kje se je učila angleško,

zakaj je izbrala prav tebe.

Skupaj sta tri tedne. Včasih opazuješ zemljevid sveta

in ocenjuješ položaj Irana, sosednjih držav,

njegove naravne in človeške vire.

Zdi se ti, da jo razumeš vse bolje.

Včasih jo sprašuješ o Iranu, obljubiš, da ga bosta obiskala skupaj,

ona pa zmeraj diši po ciganskem poletju in jedrski energiji,

in njena puščava med vama in večer se bliža

in ona si brije noge v tvoji kopalnici.

Prevedla Andreja Kalc

How do I write?

I write in Cyrillic, with a right
Hand, past two in the morning, in a notebook
On the page titled “18th of August 2011”,
Thus the poem should be called just so,
But no, because I want to write about you,
But I write in Cyrillic, which means
Mostly about Igor and Svjatoslav,
Nestor, Pamva, Grygoryj and so on,
However what is “so on”? I write about Taras,
Lyublin Union, struggle for faith,
About betrayal of faith as struggle, about Kvitka,
Churches and Bulgaria (well, you guessed it),
Write about Pavych’s mistake (for Cyril and Methodius
Invented Glagolitic), hardly write about modern
Serbia (traitors!) I don’t write about whiskey, because I do
About syvuha what else, because I use Cyrillic
Even though the majority of the world doesn’t understand me.
Frankly speaking Latinic would suit you better,
But forgive me, it happened so, I can’t help it:
I have to write about Anna in France, Bohdan, Ivan,
Samiylo and the rest of them, for God punished us thrice:
By East, by power and by alphabet.
I write in Cyrillic and that is my original sin,
Forgive me.

Dinner for two

I might as well be a black drug dealer
 Somewhere in Cleveland, state Ohio. Listen to my music
 in the car, look for new disciples, push powder to them
 and for Thanksgiving Day invite my closest friends – prostitutes –
 home, give them angel figurines and aromatic candles;
 all evenings long watch the yard, the road, for lack of better
 things to do,
 read the writings on a beer can in my hands,
 fall asleep to some dumb talk shows.
 Or I could work somewhere at a gas station in the mountains
 of Bosnia and Herzegovina, pleasantly greet customers, know
 everyone around Banja Luka,
 listen to the evening news on a little radio
 hear a song in the morning and sing all day
 “Sarajevo, my heart” teach my children to throw a knife the right way,
 catch fish and gather wild strawberries, one night check if they know
 the words of the national anthem by heart and then,
 satisfied, hand out chocolates.
 I suppose that in any of the possible lives
 you’d have to show up. To come for a fix or come to fill your car.
 To be a prostitute or just a sister. To be a daughter.
 To host a dumb talk show after midnight. To sing in a church choir.
 To be a star with the famous hit “Sarajevo, my heart”, having
 heard which
 on the radio I would hum the entire day.
 I think you’d certainly have to show up in each of my possible lives,
 not even think, I am sure.
 But why are you not showing up now, why are you twenty minutes
 late already, the dinner is getting cold?!

Translated by Helen Harney

Oh wondrous woman, thou arst my daily bread

I thank thee on this day that thou existest
that thou arst discharging water into the bath
oh wondrous woman, thou which removest the varnish from thy nails
and ledest me into temptation everytime
I thank thee furthermore to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow,
and thereafter
That thou arst, and lead me dost into temptation, oh thou
wondrous woman
And dost behold me with thy cunning eyes
and dost breathe out loudly when immersest thou into hot water
and ask me dost to put some soap onto thy back, my daily bread,
oh wondrous woman, hallow... that is may a halo
surround thee; and then at night dost rub thy leg, and cheek, and
lip against me,
my daily bread, cry dost three times and thrice
oh wondrous woman, thou who livest in my heart
who sleepest in my bed, awakenest me in morningtime
my daily bread, thy will be done,
thy favourite music may resound, and may ignited be
the fragrant candles, wondrous woman,
I am thy body, and thy blood, and thou arst my daily bread,
oh wondrous woman with a name so cheerless
with eyes so silent, and a palm so petite
my daily bread at home, at work, and when thou near arst,
and when thou arst away as well, oh wondrous woman,
I think of thee, bestow dost upon me a modicum of happiness today,
dost give me it tomorrow, too, my daily bread,
oh wondrous woman, in thy name,
in thy name, in thy name,
thrice in thy name.

This woman in your bathroom, shaving her legs

will celebrate her twenty fourth birthday tomorrow.
 Though 'celebrate' is perhaps too loud a word
 she merely will ring her mum and dad
 and say her prayers ere she goes to bed.
 You do not understand her prayers, nor her enigmatic glances
 the language of the menus of her phone
 You two are not predestined to be together, which is for the best,
 you say this to yourself: "Tis for the best"
 In moments of uncommon gentleness you say
 that you believe that they have no nuclear weapons,
 no nuclear weaponry at all, and you start feeling like an arse.
 And then you have a dream in which her body
 smells like nuclear weapons, like the deserts, like the music of the gypsies.
 "But why the gypsies?" — wonder you next morning,
 alas, there is no answer to that question; you know nothing
 about her childhood years, about the location where she received
 her English language education,
 and why exactly did she choose exactly you and not somebody else.
 You two have been together for three weeks so far. And sometimes
 you examine the world map,
 as you are making an evaluation of the location of Iran, its neighbours,
 and its resources, natural and human.
 You reckon that, as time goes by, you start to understand her better.
 At times you ask her questions about Iran, and promise her that
 you will travel there together,
 and she still smells of gypsy summer and nuclear weapons,
 her desert is between the two of you, the evening's getting nearer,
 and she is in your bath, shaving her legs.

Translated by Ostap Dzondza



Foto © Dominique Hammer

Karin Peschka

Karin Peschka se je rodila leta 1967 v Linzu, odrasčala v Eferdingu v Gornji Avstriji kot gostilničarjeva hči, zdaj pa živi na Dunaju. Po študiju na akademiji za socialno delo v Linzu je med drugim delala z alkoholiki in brezposelno mladino, se ukvarjala z organizacijo projektov in pisala kolumne. Romaneski prvenec *Watschenmann* (Grešni kozel) je objavila leta 2014 in zanj prejela več avstrijskih literarnih nagrad (nagrade Wartholz, Florianana in Alpha), medtem ko ji je za drugi roman *FanniPold* (2016) mesto Dunaj podelilo štipendijo Eliasa Canettija, namenjeno dunajskim ustvarjalcem. Zadnji roman *Autolyse Wien* (Avtoliza Dunaja) je izdala lani. Za odlomek iz tega romana, naslovljen *Wiener Kindl* (*Dunajski otroček*), ki ga objavljamo tudi v zborniku, je prejela nagrado občinstva v okviru vsakoletnega literarnega natečaja za nagrado Ingeborg Bachmann, ki poteka v Celovcu. V središču romana je postapokaliptični Dunaj, vendar ni znano, zakaj in kdo ali kaj je razdejanje povzročil. Na ruševinah mesta nas avtorica поблиže seznanja z zgodbo osirotelega otroka, ki ga posvoji krdelo psov. Roman je bil leta 2017 nominiran tudi za Avstrijsko književno nagrado in bil več mesecev na lestvici ORF najboljših domačih in tujih novoizdanih del.

Karin Peschka was born in 1967 in Linz, grew up in Eferding in Upper Austria as an innkeeper's daughter, and she now lives in Vienna. After studying at the Academy of Social Work in Linz, she worked with alcoholics and unemployed youth, and also in project organization, while writing various columns. Her first novel, *Watschenmann* (Scapegoat), was published in 2014 and was awarded many Austrian literary prizes (Wartholz Prize, Florianana Prize, and Alpha Prize), and for her second novel, *FanniPold* (2016), the City of Vienna awarded her the Elias Canetti scholarship. *Autolyse Wien* (Vienna's Autolysis), her latest novel, came out last year. An excerpt from this novel – which appears in this almanac under the title *Wiener Kindl* (Vienna Baby) – received the audience award in Klagenfurt at the annual literary competition for the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize. The focus of the novel is post-apocalyptic Vienna, but it is not known why and who or what caused the havoc. In the ruins of the city, the author takes a closer look at a story of an orphaned child adopted by a pack of dogs. In 2017, the novel was also nominated for the Austrian Book Prize and was for several months on the ORF list of the best newly-published books.

Wiener Kindl I

(Auszug aus dem Roman *Autolyse Wien*)

„W...“, versuchte das Kindl. Stellte eine Frage auf, sein Gesicht ein Zeichen. Hatte alles einen Namen gehabt, bevor es ein Pelz geworden war, ein Pfötchen. „Krschh“, machte das Kindl, Zähne zeigend, zwei Reihen, ganz ordnungsgemäß. Fiel einer dem Kindl aus dem Mund, stopfte es seine Zungenspitze in die Lücke. Die Hunde berochen den Zahn, das Kindl, den Zusammenhang. Verzogen sich, verschwanden einzeln oder in kleinen Gruppen, kamen zurück, weil das Kindl sie an ihre Menschen erinnerte, die unter den Trümmern lagen oder nach dem Unglück, nach dieser Irritation, aus der Stadt geflüchtet waren. Ohne sie mitzunehmen. Ohne ihnen das Halsband abzunehmen und das Brustgeschirr. Manchmal hielt sich das Kindl daran fest. Lag quer über dem Rücken eines schwarzweiß Gefleckten, der es sich gefallen ließ und ein paar Schritte ging. Bevor er sich von der Last befreite; brauchte sich nur zu setzen, das Kindl rutschte ihm vom Fell. Oft lief der Hund davon, durch Lücken und Bruchstaub. Durch rote Ziegelblüten und Gestrüpp den immer gleichen Weg, dorthin, wo alte Gerüche ihn nach wie vor verwirrten und er sich setzte, wartete, ob nicht doch.

In der Dämmerung kam er wieder, noch vor der Nacht, alle kamen wieder, manche hatten gefressen, die meisten nicht, furchtbar mager waren sie nun schon seit Wochen. Das Kindl aber, stärker geworden in der Zwischenzeit, spielte Xylophon auf ihren Rippen.

Am Abend, bevor Wien zerstört wurde, vielleicht nur Wien, vielleicht das ganze Land. Damals, an jenem Abend, hatte sich die Mutter über sein Bett gebeugt, die dünnen Hände des Kindls gefaltet, ein kleines Gebet gesprochen. So eine Mutter war das gewesen. Mit dem Daumen das Kreuzzeichen auf die Stirn. Hat nicht geholfen. Am Morgen danach stand der Himmel offen über dem Kindl. Wo sich ein Mobile aus Origamivögeln gedreht hatte, flogen echte Vögel weit oben zwischen Wolken und Sonne. Das Kindl streckte einen Finger ins Blau, spürte die kühle Luft und nieste, hing noch Staub darin.

War vorerst still geblieben. Es ließ sich schwer zum Reden bringen, womöglich eine Verstockung oder die Verzögerung der sprachlichen Kompetenz, dem zu geringen Wuchs und dem schwachen Knochenbau entsprechend. Hatte oft zu Streit geführt in der

Familie, die zwischen Verzärteln und strenger Hand geschwankt war. Ein unruhiges Schiff. Es hieß, das Kindl käme nach einem Onkel oder einer Cousine, klein und sprechfaul bis zum Tod.

Lange starrte es durch den offenen Plafond den Vögeln nach. Das Draußen: ein Drinnen. Dachbalken, ins Zimmer gestürzt, hatten durch eine Verkeilung das Gitterbett vor fallenden Ziegeln und Holzsplintern weitestgehend geschützt. In diesem Sinn war es ein Glück gewesen und hatte die schwankende Mutter Recht gehabt, das Gitterbett vorerst zu belassen. Ein Jahr noch, wie sie meinte, denn fiel das Kindl in der Nacht aus dem Bett, könnte es sich die Knochen brechen. Sicher würde es stärker werden mit der Zeit, und die Medizin schreite ja voran.

Die Medizin allerdings, die in Form von Medikamenten und einer Flasche klebriger Flüssigkeit auf dem Schrank gestanden war, lag verschüttet auf dem Boden. Die Tabletten, in Viertel geteilt zum einfachen Schlucken, zwischen den Scherben der Flasche. Das Kindl hatte diesen Saft geliebt. Jeden Tag ein Löffel. Der Löffel war ein besonderer, silber, man vererbte nicht nur Krankheit und schlechte Gene in der Familie.

War also aufgewacht an jenem Morgen, hatte geschaut und gelauscht, hatte sich an den neuen Zustand des Zimmers gewöhnt und an die Geräusche, die nicht von den Eltern kamen und den Geschwistern. Keine Schritte auf der Treppe, keine Türen, die auf- und zugingen, kein Wasserrauschen aus Toilette und Bad, kein Streit zwischen den gesunden Brüdern, die um diese Uhrzeit sonst aneinander vorbeidrängten hinunter in das Esszimmer, wo die Zugehfrau das Frühstück bereitet haben sollte. Damit die Mutter sich dem Kindl widmen konnte, ein Tablett über die weichen Teppichstufen hinauftragend, aber nichts würde das Kindl anrühren, erst wollte es die Medizin. Presste vorsorglich die Lippen zusammen. Der Silberlöffel glänzte zwischen den Ziegeln.

Rannte niemand, drängte niemand, kam niemand. Es gab keinen mehr, der die Stufen heraufgehen könnte, es war sogar fraglich, wie lange die Statik den noch bestehenden Hausrest aufrechthalten würde. Ein Knirschen und Rucken. Ab und zu fiel etwas von der Fassade in den Kies der Einfahrt oder in der Ruine selbst ungehindert vom obersten Stockwerk ins Erdgeschoss. Dann heulten Hunde im Garten, bellten vielstimmig und lang, war schwer, Beruhigung zu finden. Bald schrie das Kindl und weinte auf seine Art.

Der weitläufige Rasen, der einzige Platz in der näheren Umgebung, der sicher war vor um- und abstürzenden Gegenständen, dort hatten sich die überlebenden Hunde der Nachbarschaft versammelt, verwöhnt wie das Kindl, hatten die Bedrohung gespürt einen Augenblick vor der Vernichtung, waren geflohen im letzten Moment, sich außer Reichweite von Bäumen und Mauern zusammenrottend.

Auch das Kindl musste fort. Es war wieder in den Zustand der leeren Starre verfallen, der in der nahen Kinder und Jugendpsychiatrie als Hinweis auf die zu erstellende Diagnose bezeichnet worden war. Maßgeblich und relevant. Lag das Klinikschreiben, datiert vor wenigen Tagen, in einem Kuvert unter Tonnen von Schutt, der Vater nicht weit daneben. Aber letztlich war es eben diese leere Starre, die das Weinen unterdrückte, die das Kindl aus dem Bett klettern ließ, sich an spitzen Ziegelkanten die Haut ritzend. Der Pyjama riss an beiden Knien und dem rechten Ellbogen. Stoisch weiterkriechend, dem Bellen der Hunde nach, das anhob mit jedem lauten Geräusch, wie jenem, wenn das Kindl mit einer Treppenstufe, weil sie einbrach, ein heftiges Stück nach unten plumpste. Worauf die Hunde fast hysterisch kläfften, alle das Gesicht nach dem sich immer weiter neigenden Gebäude gerichtet, wieder still wurden, die Schwänze steif nach oben gereckt.

Ein Großer mit breitem Kopf und kleinen Augen stürmte vor, als sich dort, wo gestern noch das Haustor schwer verschlossen war und wo dieses heute flach am Boden lag wie nicht zugehörig, als sich dort das Kindl zeigte beim letzten Absatz der Treppe. Der große Hund rannte, getrieben vom Gebell der anderen, verbiss sich im Pyjamastoff und zog das Kindl über die Schwelle, über den Kies – hier schrie es auf vor Schmerz –, über den Rasen, allen Hindernissen ausweichend, auf die freie Fläche.

Keinen Augenblick zu spät war es gewesen. Was vom Haus übrig geblieben war, stürzte endgültig in sich zusammen. Im ersten Reflex sprangen die Hunde Richtung Hecke, wollten durch das Loch auf die Straße schlüpfen. Sie zwickten sich im Gedränge in Läufe und Flanken, bis einer, dann noch einer zum Kindl blickte und dieses ruhig saß, wo sie es zurückgelassen hatten. Den Silberlöffel hielt es in der Faust und die erhoben zu den Trümmern. War das die Sehnsucht nach Normalität bei den Hunden, nach Vertrautem, nach Ordnung und Befehl? War es Angst, weil die ersten von der verwüsteten Straße gleich wieder in den Garten wollten? Sie liefen

zum Kindl und lehnten sich an dieses, schleckten ihm Gesicht und Hände. Lagen hechelnd oder mit den Köpfen auf den Pfoten dicht bei diesem letzten Menschen, den sie hatten.

Hin und wieder wurde einer unruhig. Erhob sich, streckte den Körper, gähnte, trottete zum Kindl und schnüffelte daran. Erkundete in engen Zirkeln den Garten, sich nie zu weit entfernend. Hob ein Bein oder hockte sich hin, urinierte, setzte Kot ab, trank aus dem Zierteich, in dem sich der inzwischen fahlgelb verhangene Himmel spiegelte, tappte nach den Kois, die sich im Schilf versteckten oder tot an der Oberfläche trieben, wie die Frösche, denen im Sog des Unglücks die Schallblase geplatzt war.

Legte sich ein Hund wieder zur Gruppe, erhob sich der nächste, gähnte, streckte die Beine, zog seine Runde, urinierte, trank, sah nach den Fischen. Die Wangen des Kindls glänzten vom Speichel. Hatte es genug von einer feuchten Zunge, schlug es mit dem Silberlöffel kräftig auf die Schnauze des jeweiligen Hundes. Der zog winselnd den Schwanz ein, krümmte sich und präsentierte, auf dem Rücken liegend, die Kehle. Bis zum Mittag waren die Rollen im Rudel bestimmt.

Dunajski otroček I

(odlomek iz romana *Avtoliza Dunaja*)

»K ...,« je poskušal otroček. Oblikoval je vprašanje, njegov obraz vprašaj. Vse je imelo ime, preden je postalo kožuh, tačka. »Grrr,« je izustil otroček in pokazal zobe, dve vrsti, povsem ravni. Če mu je kakšen padel iz ust, je v luknjo zatlačil jezik. Psi so ovohavali zob, nato otročka, povezavo med njima. Razkropili so se, stran so odhajali posamezno ali v majhnih gručah, se vračali, ker jih je otroček spominjal na njihove ljudi, ki so ležali pod ruševinami ali pa so po nesreči, po tej zmedi pobegnili iz mesta. Ne da bi jih vzeli s sabo. Ne da bi jim sneli ovratnice in oprsnice. Včasih se jih je otroček oprijel. Legel je čez hrbet črno-belega lisastega psa, ki je to pustil in naredil nekaj korakov naprej. Dokler se ni rešil bremena; le usesti se je moral in otroček mu je zdrsel po kožuhu navzdol. Pes je pogosto smuknil skozi luknje in prah od ruševin. Skozi rdeče opečnate rože in goščavo, vselej po isti poti do tja, kamor so ga še vedno vodile stare vonjave, kjer se je usedel in čakal, morda pa vendarle ...

Še pred nočjo, v mraku se je spet vrnil, kot so se vrnilo vsi, nekateri so se nažrli, večina ne, že več tednov so bili strašno shirani. Otroček, ki se je medtem okrepil, pa je po njihovih rebrih igral ksilofon.

Na predvečer, preden so porušili Dunaj, morda ne le Dunaj, ampak celo deželo. Takrat, tistega večera se je mama sklonila nad otročkovo posteljico, sklenila je njegove suhcene ročice in na kratko odžebrela molitev. Takšna mati je bila to. S palcem ga je pokrižala na čelo. Ni pomagalo. Naslednje jutro je nad njim zazevalo odprto nebo. Kjer se je prej sukal vrtiljak z visečimi papirnatimi ptički, so daleč zgoraj med oblaki in soncem letale prave ptice. Otroček je iztegnil prst v to modrino, začutil hladno sapo in kihnil, v zraku je bilo še vedno polno prahu.

Zaenkrat je bil tiho. Težko ga je bilo pripraviti do govorjenja, najbrž je šlo za nerazvito ali v razvoju zaostalo govorno izražanje, kar se je skladalo s počasnejšo rastjo in šibkejšim okostjem. To je pogosto vodilo do prepira v družini, saj je krmarila med razvajanjem in strogostjo. Nemirna ladja. Govorilo se je, da se je otroček vrgel po nekem stricu ali sestrični, droben in na smrt len za govorjenje.

Dolgo se je skozi odprti plafon oziral za pticami. To zunaj: tu znotraj. V sobo zrušeni strešni tramovi so se zagozdili tako, da so otroško posteljico obvarovali pred padajočimi opekami in trskami.

To je bila še sreča v nesreči, cincajoča mati je imela prav, da je ohranila posteljico. Še eno leto, si je mislila, kajti če bi otroček ponoči padel iz postelje, bi si lahko polomil kosti. Da se bo sčasoma že okrepil, je menila, in da medicina konec koncev tudi napreduje.

Zdravilo v obliki tablet in stekleničke z lepko tekočino, ki je stalo na omari, je zdaj raztreseno ležalo na tleh. Tablete, razdeljene na četrтинke, da jih je lažje pogoltniti, so bile pomešane s črepinjami steklenice. Otroček je oboževal ta sirup. Vsak dan po eno žličko. Žlička je bila posebna, srebrna, v družini se niso dedovali le bolezni in slabi geni.

Tega jutra se je torej zbudil, pogledal in prisluhnil, navadil se je na nov videz sobe in na zvoke, ki jih niso oddajali starši ali sestre in bratje. Nobenih korakov na stopnicah, nobenih vrat, ki bi se odpirala in zapirala, nobenega šumenja vode iz stranišča ali kopalnice, nobenega prepira med zdravimi brati, ki so se ta čas običajno že drenjali drug mimo drugega dol v jedilnico, kjer naj bi postrežnica že imela pripravljen zajtrk. Da se je lahko mama posvetila otročku in po mehkih tapeciranih stopnicah odnesla pladenj gor, toda otroček se ni hotel ničesar pritakniti, dokler ni dobil zdravila. Preventivno je stiskal ustnice. Srebrna žlička se je zdaj lesketala med opeko.

Nihče ni drvel, nihče se ni drenjal, nihče ni prišel. Nikogar več ni bilo, ki bi se vzpenjal po stopnicah, vprašljivo je bilo celo, kako dolgo bo še zdržala statika obstoječih ostankov hiše. Škrtanje in cviljenje. Tu in tam je padlo kaj s fasade na prodnati dovoz ali v ruševini stavbe neovirano iz zgornjega nadstropja v pritličje. Takrat so na vrtu zatulili psi, večglasno in dolgo so lajali, težko so se pomirili. Kmalu jim je pritegnil še otroček in zavekal na svoj način.

Prostrana zelenica, edino mesto v bližnji okolici, ki je bilo varno pred podiranjem in rušenjem objektov, tam so se zbirali preživeli psi iz soseščine, razvajeni kot otroček so trenutek pred katastrofo zaznali nevarnost, v zadnjem hipu pobegnili in se v krdelu zatekli onkraj dreves in zidov.

Tudi otroček je moral stran. Spet je zapadel v popolno otopelost, ki so jo na bližnji psihiatriji za otroke in mladostnike opredelili kot enega od simptomov za diagnozo, ki jo je bilo treba šele določiti. Merodajen in relevanten simptom. Dopis s klinike, datiran pred nekaj dnevi, je ležal v kuverti pod kupom ruševin, nedaleč stran oče. Toda ne nazadnje je ta otopelost zatrla jok, ko je otroček splezal iz postelje in si ob ostrih robovih opeke opraskal kožo. Pižama se je

strgala na obeh kolenih in desnem komolcu. Stoično se je odplazil naprej, za pasjim laježem, ki se je okreplil ob slehernem glasnejšem šumu, kot v tistem trenutku, ko je otroček na eni od stopnic, ki se je udrla, štrbunknil precej globoko navzdol. Nakar so psi, s pogledom, uprtim v vedno bolj majavo stavbo, skoraj histerično zabevskali, potem pa spet potihnilo in togo iztegnili repe kvišku.

Eden od večjih psov, s široko glavo in majhnimi očmi, se je nenadoma zagnal, ko se je tam, kjer so še včeraj stala zapahnjena vhodna vrata – ki so danes ležala na tleh, kot da ne bi pripadala hiši – ko se je torej tam na zadnjem stopniščnem podestu prikazal otroček. Velik pes, ki ga je gnal lajež drugih, je stekel in se zagrizel v pižamo ter otročka odvedel čez prag, čez prod – kjer je zakričal od bolečine – čez zelenico, pes se je izognil vsem oviram in z otročkom zdrvel na prosto.

Niti za trenutek ni bilo prepozno. Kar je še ostalo od hiše, se je dokončno sesulo vase. Najprej so se psi refleksno pognali proti živi meji, hoteli so smukniti skozi luknjo na cesto. Med drenjanjem so se ščipali v noge in kolke, dokler se ni eden, nato pa še drugi ozrl za otročkom, ki je mirno obsedel tam, kjer so ga pustili. V pesti je stiskal srebrno žličko in jo dvigoval proti ruševinam. Je šlo pri psih za hrepenenje po normalnosti, po domačnosti, po redu in ukazih? Je bil to strah, ker so se prvi z opustošene ceste spet vračali nazaj na vrt? Stekli so k otročku in se privili obenj, lizali so mu obraz in ročice. Sopihaajoče ali z glavami, naslonjenimi na tace, so se stiskali k zadnjemu človeku, ki jim je ostal.

Tu in tam je kakšen postal nemiren. Dvignil se je, se pretegnil, zazehal, odklamal k otročku in ga ovohaval. V majhnih krogih je preiskoval vrt, ne da bi se preveč oddaljil. Dvignil je taco ali počenil, uriniral, se podelal, pil iz okrasnega ribnika, v katerem se je zrcalilo zagrnjeno bledorumeno nebo, s taco pobrkjal za japonskimi krapji, ki so se skrili v trsje ali pa jih je mrtve nosilo po gladini kot žabe, ki jim je v vrtincu nesreče razneslo zvočni mehur.

Ko se je eden od psov spet ulegel k skupini, je vstal drugi, zazehal, se pretegnil, naredil obhod, uriniral, pil, pogledal za ribami. Otročkova lička so se lesketala od sline. Ko mu je bilo dovolj vlažnega jezika, je s srebrno žličko močno udaril psa po gobcu. Ta je potem stisnil rep med noge, se zvil, se prekucnil na hrbet in zazeval. Do opoldneva so bile vloge v krdelu določene.

Vienna Child I

(excerpt from the novel *Autolysis Vienna*)

“W...,” tried the child. It formed a question, its face a question mark. All things had had their names before they became fur, paw. “Woof,” uttered the child, showing its teeth, two rows, completely straight. When one of them came out, it stuck its tongue in the gap. The dogs sniffed at the tooth, the child, the connection between them. They scattered around, disappearing separately or in small packs and then came back because the child reminded them of their people who were lying under the ruins or had fled the city after the calamity, after that mess. Not taking their dogs with them. Not even freeing them from their straps and breast collars. Sometimes the child clutched at them. It hopped onto the back of a black and white-spotted dog that allowed this to be done to him and made a few steps. And then the dog freed himself; he only had to sit down and the child slid from his fur. The dog often ran away through the cracks and dust of the ruins. Through red brick blossoms and thicket, always taking the same path to the place that still invited him by some old scents, where he sat and waited, because maybe...

At dusk before darkness, the dog returned, like all the others, some had eaten, the majority not, they'd all looked awfully scrawny for weeks. The child, who had meanwhile grown stronger, played xylophone on their ribs.

On the eve before, Vienna was destroyed, perhaps not only Vienna but the whole country, on that eve the child's mother leaned over its cot, clasped its tiny hands and said a short prayer. She was that kind of a mother. With her thumb she made the sign of the cross on his brow. Not that it helped. The next morning the sky gaped open above the child. Where an origami bird mobile had twirled above it, real birds were flying high in the sky between the clouds and the sun. The child held out a finger into the azure, felt the cold breeze and sneezed; dust was still hanging in the air.

At first, it kept quiet. It was not an articulate child, perhaps due to a laggard progress or speech expression disorder, consistent with its slow growth and weak frame. That used to be the cause of dispute in the family, which wavered between either spoiling or reprimanding the child. An infirm ship. They said the child inherited these things from an uncle or maybe a cousin, puny and too lazy to speak.

For a long time it searched for birds through the open ceiling. As on the outside, so on the inside. Beams, having collapsed into the room, wedged above the cot, thus protecting it from the falling bricks and splinters. Be it for good or ill, the hesitant mother did right to have kept the cot a while longer. Just one more year, she thought, the child might break its bones if it tumbled from a proper bed during the night. Little by little it would surely get stronger, and medical science makes progress anyway.

Medicine in the form of pills and a bottle with sticky liquid that had stood on a cupboard now lay scattered on the floor. The tablets, cut into quarters to be swallowed more easily, were mixed with the bottle chips. The child loved this syrup. One teaspoon a day. The spoon was quite special, made of silver; the family didn't inherit just illnesses and poor genes.

So on that morning it woke up, looked around and listened, got used to the new appearance of the room and the sounds that did not come from its parents or sisters and brothers. No steps on the staircase, no doors that would open and close, no flushing of the toilet or splashing from the bathroom, no squabble between the healthy brothers who would at that time usually be pushing each other on the way downstairs to the dining room where the housemaid would already have breakfast prepared for them, so that their mother could devote her attention to the child and carry a tray up the soft, carpeted steps. But the child would not touch anything before it had been given its medicine. Warily it would press its lips together. Now the silver spoon gleamed between the bricks.

Nobody was running, nobody was in a hurry. Nobody was there to climb the steps, it was even uncertain for how long the structure of the house or what remained of it would hold. Grumbling and squeaking. At times a piece fell from the facade on the gravel drive or from the ruins themselves, directly from the upper to the ground floor. The dogs in the garden would then start to howl, polyphonously and endlessly, and they were hard to calm down. Soon the child joined, too, whining in its own way.

It was on a large green plot, the only place in the near surroundings safe from collapsing and crashing of objects, where the surviving dogs gathered; just as spoiled as the child, they could feel the danger the moment before the catastrophe and, running away at the last instant, in a pack they took to that spot beyond trees and walls.

The child had to leave as well. It had got itself into a state of total lethargy, which the nearby Psychiatry for Children and Youth had defined as one of the symptoms for a diagnosis they were about to declare. A decisive and relevant symptom. A letter from the clinic, bearing a recent date, lay under a pile of ruins, the child's father not far away. But then this lethargy stifled its crying when it climbed out of the cot and scratched its skin on the brick shards. Its pajamas ripped open at the knees and the right elbow. Stoically it crawled away, following the barking of the dogs that got stronger with each louder sound, like when the child plumped rather deep down together with a step that had sunk. At which point the dogs, gazing into the ever more wobbly building, yelped almost hysterically, then hushed again and stiffly stretched their tails.

One of the bigger dogs with a broad head and small eyes suddenly leapt forward when at the spot, where even the day before bolted entrance doors stood – now lying on the floor as if they had never belonged to the house – on the lowest landing, the child appeared. The huge animal, driven by the barking of other dogs, ran to it, seized the pajamas' cloth with his teeth and dragged the child over the doorstep and the gravel – so that it shrieked with pain – across the lawn, avoiding all hindrances, bringing it to the open green plot.

Not a moment too early. The last remnants of the building finally collapsed in the ruins. Acting on instinct, the dogs rushed towards the hedge, intending to slip through a hole onto the road. Pushing and jostling, their hips chafed, until one of them glanced at the child who quietly sat where they had left it. It held the silver spoon in its fist, raising it toward the ruins. Was it due to the dogs' longing for normalcy, comfort, order and commands? Or maybe it was due to their fear, for the first ones were already returning from the desolate street back to the garden. They ran to the child, snuggled up to it, licked its face and hands. Panting or with their heads against the paws, they cuddled up to the last man they still had.

Now and then one of them got restless. Stood up, stretched, yawned, crawled to the child and sniffed at it. Searched the garden in small circles, never going too far. Held up a leg or squatted, urinated, shat, drank from the pond in which a shrouded pale yellow sky was mirrored, groped with a paw for the koi hiding in the reed or floating dead on the surface like frogs, whose throat pouches had burst in the turmoil of the calamity.

When that dog lay down to the pack again, another one got up, yawned, stretched, made a round, urinated, drank, searched for fish. The child's cheeks glistened from saliva. When it got tired of a wet tongue, it struck the snout determinedly with its silver spoon. The dog would put his tail between his legs, roll, turn onto his back, gaping. By noon the roles in the pack were firmly defined.

Translated by Miriam Drev



Foto © Jože Subadolnik

Primož Repar

Primož Repar se je rodil leta 1967 v Ljubljani, kjer je študiral filozofijo in zgodovino na Filozofski fakulteti. Je pesnik in filozof, piše pa tudi eseje in prevaja, je vnet raziskovalec in prevajalec danskega filozofa Kierkegarda, iz katerega je tudi doktoriral, ter ustanovitelj Srednjeevropskega raziskovalnega inštituta Søren Kierkegaard. Leta 1993 je ustanovil najprej društvo, nato založbo KUD Apokalipsa ter še istoimensko kulturno revijo, ki jo ureja. Izdal je devet pesniških zbirk, zadnja z naslovom *Trije dnevi v Istri in en dan prej* je izšla 2017. Njegova knjiga esejev *Spisi o apokalipsi* (2000) je bila nominirana za Rožančev nagrado, pesniška zbirka *Stanja darežljivosti* (2008) pa za Jenkovo. Prepoznavna značilnost Reparjeve poezije je nenehno prepletanje s filozofskim diskurzom, preko katerega išče metafizično bistvo, zato je njegova pesniška govorica pogosto hermetična. Od neizrekljivega in transcendentalnega se najbolj odmakne v svoji zadnji zbirki, v kateri prevladujejo osebnoizpovedne pesmi o ljubezni ter razmišljanja o sodobnem svetu. Repar je tudi velik ljubitelj haikujev, po njegovi zaslugi (ustanovitev zbirke Haiku, natečaj za najboljši haiku) pa je ta zvrst postala priljubljena tudi pri slovenskih piscih. Njegova poezija in eseji so prevedeni v več jezikov, knjižno je izšel v angleščini, francoščini, češčini, slovaščini in srbščini. Kot svobodni književnik živi v Dolenjskih Toplicah.

Primož Repar was born in 1967 in Ljubljana, in Slovenia, where he studied philosophy and history at the Faculty of Arts. He is a poet, essayist, philosopher, a fervent researcher and translator of Søren Kierkegaard, on whom he wrote his PhD, and is the founder of the Central European Research Institute Søren Kierkegaard Ljubljana. In 1993, he first established the KUD Apokalipsa Association, then the KUD Apokalipsa publishing house, and the cultural magazine of the same name, which he edits. His latest poetry collection *Trije dnevi v Istri in en dan prej* (Three Days in Istria and One Day Earlier), came out in 2017. His book of essays *Spisi o apokalipsi* (Essays about the Apocalypse, 2000) was nominated for The Rožanc Award for the best essay collection, and his poetry collection *Stanja darežljivosti* (States of Generosity, 2008) was nominated for the Jenko Award for the best poetry collection. A recognizable characteristic of Repar's poetry is the constant interweaving of poetry with philosophical discourse as he searches for a metaphysical essence, which is why his poetic language is often hermetical. It is in his latest collection that he most departs from the ineffable and the transcendental, for here it is his highly personal poems about love and thoughts about the contemporary world that prevail. Repar is also a great lover of haiku, and it is owing to him (he established the collection Haiku and the competition for best haiku) that the genre became popular in Slovenia. His books were published in English, French, Czech, Slovak, and Serbian.

Drugega dne

Adam in Eva v 21. stoletju

nista zmogla napraviti izvirnega greha.

Ker sta na strogi dieti.

Pa tudi bog sploh ni Bog,

ampak morda samo ime med imeni,

nekakšen sveti Nič(e)

ali še bolje Ničla.

Matematično rečeno,

z računalniško simulacijo dokazano

in natančno razloženo,

ponazorjeno z animacijo.

Fizika pa je pač fizika,

kaj bi izgubljali besede,

ki kvantno preskočijo že *kam*.

Nekaj malega o ljubezni

Tako močno ljubim,
tako močno ljubiš,
da svet kar poka po šivih
in se zemlja trese
v tesnobi ponovnega rojstva.
Po hindujskem nauku
je *maja* privid,
ampak jaz vem, da *eva* ni kriva
za *adamov* padec.
Je le govorica,
govorica navznoter,
ki te zavrtinči
v bivanjskem občevanju
in nič več ne spusti.
Ta vrtoglavica je večja
od vesolja, naj je to še
tako neskončno brezkončno.
Ni jabolko krivo, da je Adam
zagrizel vanj.
Pač pa ga je zajelo spoznanje
in je pozabil, *kako* pobožati Evo.
Evino srce je čisto
kot solza, ki kapne *edina*,
iz njenega očesa kot kristal –
ali pač sočno jabolko.
Evino srce je čisto
in še vedno potrpežljivo ga čaka.

Tu sem na pravem kraju

(prosto po W)

Tu sem,
da bi znanost napredovala,
pa kar naprej nazaduje.
Tu sem,
da bi pokazal na pravo smer gibanja,
pa se ta izmika v protismer.
Tu sem,
in nočem se Ti izmakniti,
nikdar odreči,
ko spregovori poezija
in znanost umolkne.
Tu sem,
in tu bom ostal,
pa četudi še jezik umolkne;
znanost gor ali dol,
končno – tudi poezija.
Tu sem,
in tu bom ostal,
dokler me ne poiščeš.

Ljuba, naj te ne vznemirja moja pesem

Tako preprosto je to,
Ko ti zaželim lahko noč.
In poslušam odmev moje besede
V tvojih ustih
Ter se tako vznemirim,
Da ne morem zaspati.
V polsnu lebdim,
Ko svet dokončno pretresa,
Plavam skozi steklene stene,
Ki me ranijo do krvi,
Po obrazu in povsod.
A moja ljubezen do tebe,
Ki se šele začinja,
Prav to čustvo mi brani,
Da ne izkrvavim.
In ni me več strah,
Tako preprosto je to osvobajanje,
Tako preprosto.
En takšen dar od Tebe.
Zato naj te moja pesem ne vznemiri,
Ampak varuje kot *skrbni* Angel varuh.
Ko si zjutraj prezračim svoj pesniški samostan,
Kot mi sama svetuješ,
Kjer si samo tajno prisotna,
Toda navzoča,
Tu in zdaj,
Čprav tega nisem vedel,
Zato niti mogel izdati,
Si skrtačim zobe,
Se umijem v jutranji zarji,
Okrepčam v sončnem vzhodu
In preden grem na delo molitve,
Zložim tole pesem,
Ki jo pišeš skupaj z mano.

Zdaj zatrdno vem,
Ne potrebujem dokaza,
Da Bog obstaja
In da je ljubezen.

Ko zjutraj odhajaš na delo,
Ti voščim Ljubezen.

Po čem se bomo ločili v bodočnosti

ko se zdi,
da je ta plen drhali.
Neizmerna je sreča
srečanja s teboj,
ki si dobra in lepa.
Čprav je *dejansko* dober samo Bog.
A včasih te strašijo demoni teme,
toda tvoja *srebrna hči*
te varuje
in ona je moj *skriti zaveznik*.
Toda Hudič dobro ve,
da je samo Bog tisti,
ki mu pomenimo vse.
In je pretkan,
prebrisan kot le kaj,
ko na pomoč prikliče drhal,
da bi za privid sreče
uničila *sleherno* bodočnost.
Mojo, tvojo, njeno, njegovo.
Naučiti se potrpežljivosti trpljenja,
ki ga je treba prenesti,
in bolečine neznosne potrnosti,
ki pa enkrat za vselej mine.
To je edina Učiteljica –
prav vse sprejeti, a *le* v dobrem.
In le to *celi*.
In takrat drhal v nas
izgine.

Zakaj znanosti slabo kaže in zakaj toliko bolje poeziji (prosto po H in P, še drugič)

Juriju, ki je bolj kriv za to pesem kot drugi

Večkrat berem Krivoverske eseje,
 ki jih včasih tudi pišem – samo največkrat ne tako pogumno.
 Ampak zdaj mi je vsega zadosti in moram povedati,
 ko znova berem Patočko v Jurijevi Istri.
 Partikularistična realnost države kot korporacije
 pohlepnega kapitala
 je ratala *čvekalnik* za kozlat.
 Usodna vloga v usodnih časih.
 Bežni uspehi plehkosti in pokvarjenih laži.
 Sprenevedanje splavlja Evropo.
 Personalizem je izrinjen na zidovih Bizanca
 ali pročelijih urbanih mest zdajšnjega časa.
 Znanost, industrija in tehnologija ustvarjajo napačno
 samorazumevanje.
 Kaj šele samozaupanje.
 Samoumevanje,
 ki je plehki videz
 Bruseljskih birokratov in domačih podritnikov.
 Univerzalizem korenitega razsvetljenstva se je nekam zataknil.
 Totalitarizem potrošništva raja na pogoriščih.
 Cinizem razganja od iskrenosti.
 Zato eksistencializem ni zvrst humanizma,
 ampak univerzalnost posamičnega.
 Za življenje in proti orgiastičnemu divjanju drhali,
 ki jih poganja aparat brezhibne korektnosti.
 Vse te slabosti je razkrinkal Imperij,
 ki se nenehno umiva v razkroju
Opustošenega morsklega dna – to je realnost puščave.
 In Nove Države (tako rekoč njenega perverznega ideala).
 Kjer domorodci nastavljajo eksploziv,
 policija pa mreže iz žičnate ograje iz žiletka,
 ki jih varuje vojska
 za romarje v *bodočnost*, ki jih doma pobijajo v rojih
 kakor muhe.
 In še huje je.

Filozofska raziskava bi pokazala, da
ta slika mi pove samo sebe.

Sokrat Teajtetu:

»Nujno je imeti mnenje.«

Teajtet:

»Strinjam se.«

Ti pa dobro veš, da bo sonce obledelo
in potonilo v morje.

Kar ni najhuje.

Hudo je, da filozofi molčijo,
ker se pripravljajo na javne razpise.

Jebi ga, treba je preživeti,
preživljati se
in nahraniti lačno deco.

Ne tiste v Afriki, to je abstraktno,
ampak naše, samo naše.

Fašizem znova postaja glavno orožje Evropskega Vzhoda
(po svoje tudi Zahoda, da ne bo pomote),
da bi znova ubranilo meje Imperija, ki umira. Da bi ubranilo vrednote
dekadentnega Zahoda. Bolje Ničla kot Nič(e). Absolutni nihilizem
na pohodu.

Jan Patočka je bil zadnji Sokrat, ko je zapisal:

»Ironija je, da piše Husserl delo, ki vsebuje fenomenološko
konceptijo zgodovine, na predvečer druge svetovne vojne, ki je
Evropo dokončno odstranila iz vodstva sveta. Res pa je tudi, da
je hkrati vzpostavila evropsko znanost in tehniko kot planetarno
vezivo. In to vezivo je postala evropska civilizacija v tisti različici, v
kateri je Husserlova *Kriza evropskih znanosti* pokazala, da je znanost
dekadentna, da je v njej prišlo do izgube smisla, namreč tiste
osmišljajoče teleološke ideje, na kateri po Husserlu temelji notranje,
duhovno bistvo Evrope.«

Toda preden je zadnji Sokrat umrl zaradi mučenja v
komunističnem zaporu,

je nekje povedal, da je vse skupaj bolj preprosto.

Evropske meje je treba *takoj* odpreti, dokler je ljubezen še mlada
in dokler se kali zmožnost bivanjskega zaobrata

v *dejavno* ljubezen,
suspenzijo teleološkosti.
(To je zapisal v zgodnjih sedemdesetih za železno zaveso,
ko je bil trn v očesu režima in se je šel *Podtalno univerzo*.)
In vsi smo si Tujci vedno.
Pa vdove in sirote.
To, kar potrebujemo, ni nič drugega kakor knez Miškin,
ki bi se poročil z Aglajo,
in ne da bi zblaznel zaradi hudobije sveta,
Nastazije pa nihče ne bi umoril,
še najmanj blaznost domišljije bolne in pohabljene ljubezni.

Tu Wittgenstein pazi na *apokaliptični* ton,
če si sposodimo Derridaja,
in namiguje na Dostojevskega.
Ni mi mar, če bodo t. i. modreci
ali kaki prepametni psihoanalitiki ali socialni filozofi
razglasili tole pisanje za eksistencialistično telenovelo.
Beseda v stavku je postala *preprosta* podoba.
Ikona,
iz katere je kanila solza,
ko je umrl Miklavž.¹

Njegove prve in zadnje besede so bile:
Ne morem ne biti odgovoren.

¹ Miklavž Ocepek (1963–2005), slovenski filozof.

Day Two

Adam and Eve in the 21st century

couldn't commit original sin.
Because they're on a strict diet.
Besides, God is not even a god
but might be just a name among names,
some sort of a holy Nothing(ness)
or better yet Nought.

In mathematical terms,
proven by a computer simulation
and thoroughly elaborated,
represented with animation.

Physics will be physics,
no need to waste your breath
that quantally leaps *wherever*.

A word on love

I love so much,
you love so much
that the world bursts at the seams
and the earth is shaking
in anguish of being reborn.
According to hinduism,
maya is an illusion
but I know that *eve* is not to blame
for *adam's* fall.
It is just a rumour,
a rumour within
that swirls you
in *existential intercourse*
and doesn't let go.
This vertigo is bigger
than universe, no matter how
endlessly infinite it be.
It wasn't the apple's fault
that Adam bit into it.
But the knowledge captured him
and so he forgot *how* to caress Eve.
Eve's heart is pure
as a *single* teardrop that drips
from here eye like a crystal –
or a juicy apple.
Eve's heart is pure
and still awaits him patiently.

Here is the right place for me

(after W, freely)

Here I am
for science to progress,
but it keeps regressing.
Here I am
to show the right direction of movement
but it evades into antidirection.
Here I am,
and I don't want to evade You,
never to give you up
when the poetry speaks
and the science grows dumb.
Here I am,
and here I'll stay,
even if the language grows dumb;
who cares about science,
and ultimately – about poetry.
Here I am,
and here I'll stay,
until you find me.

Darling, may my poem not upset you

It's so simple,
Wishing you good night.
And listening to the echo of my word
In your mouth,
Getting so upset
I can't fall asleep.
In the doze I float
While the world is ultimately shaking,
I'm swimming through glass walls
That hurt me until I bleed,
My face and everything.
But my love for you
Which is just starting to grow,
This emotion itself prevents me
From bleeding out.
And I no longer fear,
So simple is this deliverance,
So simple.
Such a gift from You.
So may my poem not upset you
But protect you like a *caring* Guardian Angel.
When in the morning I ventilate my poetic monastery,
Just as you advise me to,
Where you are only secretly present
But ubiquitous,
Here and now,
Even though I didn't know that
So neither could I tell.
I brush my teeth,
Wash myself in the dawn,
Refresh myself in the sunrise,
And before going to do the praying,
I polish this poem
That you write with me.

Now I know for sure
That God is real
And that he is love.

When you go to work in the morning
I wish you Love.

How will we be distinguished in the future

when it seems
that it is prey to the mob.
Immense is the joy
of meeting you
who are good and beautiful.
Although only God is good *for real*.
But sometimes the demons of the dark haunt you,
though your *silver daughter*
keeps you safe
and she is my *secret ally*.
But the Devil knows well
that God is the one
whom we mean everything to.
So he's shrewd,
sly like a fox,
when he calls the mob to help
ruin *any* future
for an illusion of happiness.
My future, yours, hers, his.
To learn the patience of suffering
that needs to be endured
and the pain of unbearable sadness
that ends once and for all.
That is the only Teacher –
accepting it all, but *only* for better.
And only that *heals*.
And then the mob in us
disappears.

Translated by Aleksandra Kocmut

*Why the future looks grim for science**but better for poetry**(freely after Husserl and Patočka, already the second time)*

To Jurij, who is more to blame for this poem than others

Often I read Heretical texts
 which I sometimes also write – though mostly not so courageously.
 But right now I'm up to here with everything and have to spit it out,
 as once again I am reading Patočka in Jurij's Istria.
 The Particularist reality of the state as corporation
 of greedy capital
 has become *babble* to make you wanna puke.
 Fatal role in fatal times.
 Fleeting successes of superficiality and rotten lies.
 Hypocrisy capsizing Europe.
 Personalism is pushed against the walls of the Byzantium
 or the facades of the urban cities of today.
 Science, industry and technology are creating a false
 sense of self.
 Let alone self-trust.
 Self-evidence,
 which is inane appearance
 of Brussel's bureaucrats and local underlings.
 The universalism of robust Enlightenment got snagged somewhere.
 Totalitarianism of consumerism is raging on scorched ground
 Cynicism is bursting with sincerity.
 Therefore existentialism is not a breed of humanism,
 but rather universality of the particular.
 For life and against the orgiastic rampaging of the hordes,
 Driven by the apparatus of impeccable correctness.
 All these weaknesses were revealed to us by The Empire
 perennially being washed in the disintegration
 of the *Devastated seabed* – that's the reality of the desert.
 And New States (or rather of its perverse ideal).
 where the locals set up explosives,
 and the police (set out) nets out of barbed wire from razorblades,
 protected by the army

for the pilgrims into *the future*, which at home get killed like flies.

And it is even/worse still.

Philosophical research would show that

this *picture speaks only of itself*

Socrates to Teetet:

“*It’s essential to have an opinion.*”

Teetet:

“*I agree*”.

And you know very well that the sun will fade and sink into the sea.

Which is not the worst that can happen.

What’s bad is that philosophers are silent as they fill out applications for projects.

Fuck it, one has to survive,

make ends meet

and feed *hungry mouths*.

Not those in Africa, that is abstract,

but ours, only ours.

Fascism is once again becoming the main weapon of the European East (in a way also of the West, make no mistake),

to again keep and protect the borders of the Empire which is dying.

To protect the values of the decadent West.

Better Zero than Nothing(ness). Absolute nihilism on the loose.

Jan Patočka was the last Socrates when he wrote:

“It is ironic that Husserl wrote the work which contains his phenomenological conception of history on the eve of the second global conflagration that definitively displaced Europe from its leading role in the world. It is true that at the same time it made European science and technology a global link. Yet European civilization became a global link in precisely that form which Husserl’s *Crisis of the European Sciences* showed to be decadent, that in it a loss of meaning takes place, the loss of that very meaning-bestowing teleological idea that, for Husserl, makes up the inner,

spiritual essence of Europe.”

But before the last Socrates died after being tortured in
the communist prison,

he said somewhere that it's all much simpler.

European borders need to be opened *at once*, while the love is still young
and while the possibility of the existentialist turn could still germinate
into *active* love,

A suspension of the teleological.

(This is what he wrote in the early 1970s behind the iron curtain, as
the regime already had an eye on him and he went for

Underground University.)

And we are all *Strangers* to each other, always.

And widows and orphans.

What we need is nothing other than what Myshkin wanted,
to marry Aglaya.

and not go mad because of the wickedness of the world,

while no one would want to kill Nastasya,

least of all the madness of the imagination of sick and crippled love.

Here Wittgenstein is careful about the *apocalyptic* tone,

if we borrow from Derrida,

and is hinting at Dostoyevski

(with a nod to)

I don't care if these so-called wise men

or some over-smart psychoanalyser or social philosophers

will proclaim this piece of writing to be an existentialist telenovela.

The word in the sentence became a *simple* image.

An icon,

from which a tear dropped

when Miklavž died.¹

His first and last words were: *I cannot be responsible*.

Translated by Ana Jelnikar and Barbara Siegel Carlson

¹ Miklavž Očepek (1963–2005), Slovene philosopher.



Foto © Tone Stojko

Simona Semenič

Simona Semenič, rojena leta 1975, je odraščala v Ajdovščini in se v času študija dramaturgije na AGRFT preselila v Ljubljano, kjer živi s sinovoma. Je ena najpomembnejših in tudi najradikalnejših slovenskih dramatičark, ob tem pa se pogosto znajde tudi v vlogi performerke, režiserke, dramaturginje in vodje dramskih delavnic. Piše o tabu temah in rak ranah sodobne družbe, opozarja na vse zatirane in marginalizirane, in ker to počne brez dlake na jeziku, je včasih deležna tudi nestrpnih odzivov. Eksperimentalna je tudi v dramski formi, kjer preizkuša in širi meje dramske pisave in uprizoritve. Vse to je prisotno tudi v njenih avtobiografskih performansih *jaz, žrtev.* (2007), *še me dej* (2009), *drugič* (2014), v katerih je do obisti razgalila svojo intimo, od zdravstvenih težav do nemogočih pogojev, v katerih ustvarjajo in živijo svobodni umetniki pri nas. Performansi so bili 2017 izdani v knjigi *me slišiš?*, istega leta pa so v knjižni izdaji *tri drame* izšla njena dela *1981, 7 kuharic, 4 soldati in 3 sofije* ter *mi, evropski mrliči*. Za svoje ustvarjanje je prejela vsa najpomembnejša slovenska priznanja: tri Grumove nagrade za najboljše slovensko dramsko besedilo: *5fantkov.si* (2009), *24ur* (2010) in *7 kuharic, 4 soldati in 3 sofije* (2015), dve Šeligovi nagradi za najboljšo uprizoritev: *gostija* (2012) in *1981* (2015) ter leta 2018 nagrado Prešernovega sklada za ustvarjalni opus preteklih dveh let. Njena dela so prevedena v več jezikov in uprizarjana v Evropi, ZDA in na Bližnjem vzhodu.

Simona Semenič, born in 1975, grew up in Ajdovščina in Slovenia and graduated from dramaturgy in Ljubljana, where she and her two sons live today. She is one of the most important and most radical Slovenian playwrights, and often also finds herself in the role of a performer, a director, a dramaturg, as well as a mentor of drama workshops. She writes about taboo subjects and the wounds of our society, she brings attention to the repressed and the marginalized, and since she does that in a sharp-tongued manner, it sometimes causes intolerant responses. She experiments with form in her playwriting, while testing and pushing the limits of drama writing and staging. We can observe all of this in her autobiographical performances *jaz, žrtev. (i, the victim., 2007)*, *še me dej (do me twice, 2009)*, and *drugič (the second time, 2014)*, in which she fully exposed her intimacy, from health issues to the unbearable conditions in which freelance artists create and live in Slovenia. Her works were published in the books *me slišiš? (do you hear me?, 2017)* and *tri drame (three dramas, 2017)*. She has received all of the most important Slovenian awards for her work: three Grum Awards for the best Slovenian play: *5fantkov.si (5boys. si, 2009)*, *24ur (24hrs, 2010)*, and *7 cooks, 4 soldiers, 3 sophias (2015)*, two Šeligo Awards for the best staging: *gostija (the feast, 2012)* and *1981 (2015)*, as well as the 2018 Prešeren Fund Award for artistic creation in the past two years. Her works have been translated into several languages, and performed in Europe, the USA, and the Middle East.

mi, evropski mrlič

(odlomek iz drame)

milena se spet sprehodi čez oder
tokrat še lepša, še bolj blesteča, zamenjala je obleko,
milena se spet sprehodi čez oder v prekrasni svileni večerni obleki
rdeče barve
in z dekoltejem, o vsi svetniki v nebesih, kakšen dekolte je to
milan se sprehodi čez oder

in tik za njo pricaplja en pes

in za psom
govoreča papiga
plešoč

medved
akrobatski slon
ploskajoči lev
tiger na konju
in seveda
opica na biciklu

načrtuje se presaditev človekove glave
po sovjetskem poskusu skupine vladimirja demikhova leta 1954
na psih zdaj torinski nevrokirurg sergio canavero v letu 2017
napoveduje prvo uspešno presaditev človekove glave

čas je, zakriči še en dramski lik še enkrat
kdo je sploh še en dramski lik?

jožica, 88 let, in milan, 91 let, se žvalita
še vedno ne vemo, kaj bi si o tem mislili

zakaj bi se dva, stara ko zemlja, ko greh, žvalila, ni logično, nima
smisla, ni v navadi
zakaj torej?

čas je
čas je

zakaj se v državnih službah ne dajejo dol med sabo?
ker so vsi v žlahti

ni še čas, jebemumater
nismo še pripravljeni
a vidiš, da nisem še
nisem še
nisem še

drkanje napram seksu je kot

zadostikrat povedal, da plavamo v dreku

je kot

nisem še zadosti nadrobno pojasnil

žarnica napram soncu

to je res, je res, da smo v dreku, ampak je treba pogledati s svetle plati
kozarec je lahko pol prazen ali pol poln
minuse je treba obrniti v pluse
v vsaki stvari je nekaj lepega
to je res, je res, da smo v dreku, ampak vsaj plavamo
tako moraš na to gledat
vsaj plavamo

zadostikrat povedal, da na ta način stvari ne peljejo nikamor

katere stvari

stvari
stvari pač
družba
družbena ureditev
državna ureditev
ureditev vrtov
vrtovi

nisem še
nisem še

za vstop v združene države amerike ne rabim vizuma
rabim esta obrazec, karkoli naj bi to že bilo

onkraj česa, jebemumater?

milena odide

če nimam esta obrazca, karkoli že to je, potem se stvari zapletejo

partizanka milica zadihana in rdeča v lica prihiti na rampo
tudi partizanka milica je lepa, o jebenti, kako je lepa
partizanka milica je lepa in sije, čeprav je zadihana in rdeča v lica

jebemumater, kaj pa struktura?
ni logično
nima smisla

morda je partizanka milica rdeča v lica in zadihana samo zato, ker
ji je nerodno
partizanka milica je sramežljiv dramski lik
to takoj opazimo
prihiti do rampe in želi nekaj reči
ampak konferansje ni še
še ni

je kot tofu napram

biftek
bifteka
bifteku
biftek
bifteku
biftekom

je kot tofu napram bifteku
drkanje napram seksu je kot tofu napram bifteku

zadostikrat povedal, da plavamo v dreku

partizanka milica stoji tam, rdeča v lica, zadihana in hoče nekaj povedat

stvari se zapletejo, če nimaš esta obrazca, karkoli naj bi že to bilo
ne moreš na letalo
ostaneš na letališču
plačaš stotaka ali par stotakov
in potem so stvari urejene
vpletene letalske družbe tako pokasirajo še par dodatnih stotakov
za letalske družbe stotakov nikoli zadosti

jebemumater, a ne vidiš, da nam stvari še niso jasne?
da ne vidimo še čiste slike?
da ne zmoremo sprocesirat tako hitro?
več časa rabim, več časa rabimo, mi,

da se vzdignemo

biftek
na hitro opečen goveji zrezek
speči biftek
biftek z jajcem
tatarski biftek

da vstanemo

ni v navadi

je kot kučma napram lisici

jaz bi rada nekaj povedala
tiho tiho se oglasi partizanka milica
tako tiho se oglasi, da je nihče ne sliši
opazimo jo, ker je lepa, res lepa, ampak slišimo je pa ne
tiho tiho reče, da bi rada nekaj povedala
al pač kaj temu podobnega

drkanje napram seksu je kot

na odru se pojavi ogromna bala sena
se kotali čez oder
nekdo jo kotali čez oder, vendar ga ne vidimo
ni še čas

kak bedast vic pravzaprav
seveda se dajejo dol v državnih službah, tam še najbolj
saj so vendar vsi poročeni med sabo

a lahko nekaj povem?

še en dramski lik za zdaj obupa
se umakne v zaodrje, poišče kadilski sektor, prižge cigareto in čaka
na svojo naslednjo iztočnico
kdo je sploh še en dramski lik?

partizanka milica bi rada nekaj povedala
vendar nikakor ne more priti do besede
partizanka milica bi rada nekaj delila z nami

to ne pelje nikamor

partizanka milica bi rada povedala svojo zgodbo
medtem ko je konferansje spet v polnem zamahu
ker on ve
on je podkovan
načitan
intelligenten
njemu je jasno
vidi pot, po kateri moramo iti, mi,
mi moramo

kaj že, jebemumater
kaj že

je kot plastična vilica napram vilam

vstati
se dvigniti

je kot zobotrebec napram pajserju

čas je, da stopimo skupaj
čas je, da se upremo
z njim na čelu
konferansje nas bo vodil

kam že, jebemumater
kam že

on ve, jebemumater
on in njegovi vejo

mi jih rabimo, mi,

hotela sem vam samo povedati, hotela sem reči, joj, ne, saj ne vem
prav točno, kako bi začela,
niti ne vem, kaj natančno bi želela doseči s tem, da povem, ne
vem natančno, ker jaz sem, jaz sem sramežljiv in negotov in malce
razštelan dramski lik

partizanka milica je sramežljiv, negotov in malce neosredotočen
dramski lik

in lep

ja, seveda, partizanka milica je lep dramski lik

na kurac mi gre vse to, na kurac mi grejo ti vici

žri, pij, fuki, za jutri se ne cuki

nekako tako bi začela partizanka milica, če bi prišla do besede
vendar partizanka milica ne more priti do besede
ne, ne samo zaradi tega, ker se konferansje ne pusti motiti

drka, drka, drka, drka in ne neha drkat in ne bo nehal drkat

ne samo zaradi tega
partizanka milica, ta prelepa partizanka milica, ki jo ta hip
občudujemo pred sabo, je namreč samo privid
je spomin partizanke milice, take, kot je bila pred mnogo mnogo leti
v časih, ko so se pravljice začenjale z za devetimi gorami in
devetimi vodami
takrat
partizanka milica, rdečeličen, zadihan in sramežljiv dramski lik, je
še od takrat

danes, ko mi to gledamo, mi,
danes ta milica leži v hospicu
brezbarvna
brezkrvna
leži v hospicu in ne more več govoriti

žri, pij, fuki, za jutri se ne cuki

balo sena pred seboj poriva prešvican kmečki fant
prešvican kmečki fant poriva pred seboj balo sena
če je že kmečki fant
in če že poriva balo sena pred seboj
in če je že prešvican
potem je lahko tudi v slovenski narodni noši, s fazanjim peresom
za klobukom
potem lahko tudi zavriska
in če že gledamo predstavo, ki sega čez meje naše domovine, je
kmečki fant lahko tudi v avstrijski narodni noši, ki je radikalno
drugačna kot slovenska, topogledno je predstava z izborom
avstrijske noše nedvomno pripeljana iz ozkega lokalnega momenta
na širši globalni

nosil je belo uniformo
razoglav, nasmejan je stal na rivi
sonce, vetrc, morje
svoboda
bil je junij leta 1945
razoglav, nasmejan, obkrožen z drugimi mornarji
razoglavimi, nasmejanimi

sonce, vetr, morje

svoboda

s tem mornarjem se bom poročila, sem takrat pomislila

ne, ne, to ni ljubezenska zgodba

tako bi milica začela svojo pripoved, če bi prišla do besede

ampak milica ne bo nikoli več prišla do besede

kmečki fant

avstrijska narodna noša

morda, morda pa bi bilo za doseganje radikalnega momenta, ki

pritiče kontekstu, v katerem se ta predstava odvija, najbolje, da je

kmečki fant

klen

trden

zdrav

v dirndlu

radikalno, prav zares

mi gledamo in molčimo, mi,

jakob in nina pa držoč se za roke sedita na robu odra, bingljata z

nogami, glavi imata staknjeni in pritajeno kramljata

ali pa se morda samo gledata

ker poljubljata se ne

to še vedno z vso silovitostjo počneta jožica, 88 let, in milan, 91 let

silvo in andreja pa kar sedita, držoč se za roke

sama sebi dovolj, vse drugo, kot da je daleč stran

vsega drugega kot da ni

kot da nas ni, nas,

kot da njega ni, konferansjeja ali mobilizatorja

kot da dreka, v katerem plavamo, ni

nina in andreja sedita, s staknjenima glavama

samo roka v roki

telo ob telesu

in kot da ni ničesar drugega

mi gledamo
mi,

poštar mi je pustil listek
joj, sranje sranje sranje
kaj je spet?
davčna?

milena spet vstopi
v novi obleki, ozki, oprijeti
se spet sprehodi čez oder
počasi
lepa
zapeljiva
fukabilna
a si lahko privoščimo to pomislit, ko se milena sprehodi čez oder?

fukabilen
pridevnik
pomeni lastnost osebe, ki je privlačna na pogled, vendar si z njo ne
predstavljaš resne, trajne zveze
tudi oseba, ki jo na prvi pogled oceniš za privlačno, seksapilno

primer
se strinjam, njen brat je res fukabilen
ali
včeraj sem opazil skrajno fukabilno dekle
ali
jožica, 88 let, po sedmih dekadah skupnega življenja še vedno
meni, da je njen soprog milan, 91 let, neskončno fukabilen

milena hodi čez oder

samo da joj pizda vidi put

milica je sramežljiv dramski lik
je privid
je spomin
na sonce, vetrce, morje

svobodo
bil je tako lep, tako lep je bil, bil je tako lep kot clark gable
z brčicami
v beli uniformi
razoglav
nasmijan
je stopil do mene
slovenec, o ne, slovenec
takrat še nisem znala slovensko
je stopil do mene
vihravo
sonce, vetrc, morje
tovarišica, a bi se mi pridružili
tovarišica, a bi se mi pridružili, je rekel

in potem ji je pokazal svoj torpedo

z veseljem, tovariš

z veseljem si je ogledala njegov torpedo

kurvo slovenska
slovenska kurvo

joj, sranje, samo da ni davčna
sodišče?

joj, sranje, samo da ni sodišče
ministrstvo?

joj, sranje, samo da ni ministrstvo
joj, sranje sranje sranje

mi molčimo

we, the european corpses

(excerpt from the drama)

milena walks across the stage again
this time even more beautiful, more glamorous, she changed her
dress, milena crosses the stage wearing a gorgeous silk evening
gown, a red one
cut low, oh, all the saints in heaven, have a look at this low cut
milena crosses the stage

and right behind her tiptoes a dog

and behind the dog
a talking parrot
a dancing bear
an acrobatic elephant
a clapping lion
a tiger on a horse
and of course
a monkey on a bicycle

a human head transplant is being planned
based on a soviet experiment of the group lead by vladimir
demikhov in 1954 carried out on dogs, sergio canavero, a
neurosurgeon from turin, is forecasting the first successful human
head transplant for 2017

it's time, yells the extra character again
who is this extra character?

jožica, 88, and milan, 91, are making out
we still don't know what to think of this

why would two people as old as sin be making out, it's not logical,
it makes no sense, it's not what people tend to do
so why?

it is time
it is time

why don't people in the public sector all get laid amongst each other?
because they're all related

it's not time yet, dammit
we're not ready yet
can't you see, i haven't yet
i haven't yet
i haven't yet

jerking off compared to sex is like

haven't yet explained enough that we're swimming in shit

is like

i haven't yet explained it in detail enough

a light bulb compared to the sun

it is true that we're in shit, but we have to look at it from the
bright side

a glass can be half empty or half full
minuses have to be turned into pluses
there's something beautiful in everything
it is true that we're in shit, but at least we're swimming
this is how you should be looking at it
at least we're swimming

told often enough that this way things will lead us nowhere

what things

things
things, like
society
social structure
state structure
garden structure
gardens

i haven't yet
i haven't yet

to enter the united states of america i don't need a visa
i need the esta form whatever that's supposed to be

beyond what dammit?

milena leaves

if i don't have the esta form, whatever that is, things get
complicated

milica the partisan breathless and flushed and rosy-cheeked hurries
to the apron
milica the partisan is also beautiful, sweet jesus, how beautiful she is
milica the partisan is beautiful and glowing, despite being
breathless and flushed

bloody hell, what about the structure?
it's not logical
it makes no sense

perhaps milica the partisan is only flushed and breathless because
she's embarrassed
milica the partisan is a shy character
we notice this straight away
she hurries to the apron of the stage and wants to say something
but the emcee hasn't yet
hasn't yet

is like tofu compared to

beefsteak
rump steak
skirt steak
sirloin
top loin
flank

is like tofu compared to beefsteak
jerking off compared to sex is like tofu compared to beefsteak

haven't yet explained enough that we're swimming in shit

milica the partisan is standing there, rosy-cheeked and breathless
and wants to say something

things get complicated if you don't have the esta form, whatever
that is supposed to be
you can't board the plane
you get stuck at the airport
you pay a hundred or a couple of hundred
and then things are sorted out
the air carriers involved thus bank another couple of hundred
there's never enough hundreds for air carriers
dammit, can't you see that things are not yet clear to us?
that we don't yet have a clear picture?
that we can't process it this fast?
i need more time, we need more time, we, the -

that we stood up

beefsteak
quickly grilled beef steak
prepare a beefsteak
beefsteak with eggs
beefsteak tartare

that we stood up

it's not what people tend to do

is like a fur coat compared to the arctic fox

i'd like to say something
says milica the partisan softly softly
she speaks so softly that nobody can hear her
we notice her, because she's beautiful, truly beautiful, but we don't

hear her
she says softly softly that she wants to say something
or something like that

jerking off compared to sex is like

an enormous bale of hay appears on stage
it rolls across the stage
somebody rolls it across the stage but we don't see him
it's not time yet

what a stupid joke actually
of course they get laid in public sector jobs, they do it most of all
they're all intermarried

can i say something?

the extra character gives up for now
moves backstage, finds the smoking section, lights up a cigarette
and waits for his next cue
who is this extra character?

milica the partisan would like to say something
but she can't get a word in edgeways
milica the partisan would like to share something with us

this leads nowhere

milica the partisan would like to tell her story
while the emcee is once more in full swing
because he knows
because he's skilled
well-read
intelligent
it's clear to him
he sees the path we have to embark, we, the –
we have to

what, bloody hell
what

is like a plastic fork compared to a pitchfork

stand up
rise

is like a toothpick compared to a crowbar

it's time we stood together
it's time we revolted
with him at the front
the emcee will lead us

where to, bloody hell
where to

he knows, bloody hell
he and his people know

we need them, we, the –

i just wanted to tell you, i wanted to say, oh, i don't even quite
know where to begin, i don't even know what i want to achieve by
telling, i don't quite know because i am, i am a shy and uncertain
and slightly out of tune character

milica the partisan is a shy, uncertain and slightly unfocused
character

and beautiful

yes, of course, milica the partisan is a beautiful character

i'm fed up with this shit, fed up with all these jokes

fress, guzzle and screw, there's nothing in tomorrow to pursue

this is something like milica the partisan would begin with if she
could get a word in edgeways
but milica the partisan can't get a word in edgeways
no, not just because the emcee won't be disturbed

he jerks off, jerks off, jerks off, jerks off and doesn't stop jerking off,
and won't stop jerking off

not just because of that
milica the partisan, this beautiful milica the partisan we're
admiring in front of us this moment, is simply a mirage
is a memory of milica the partisan like she was many many years ago
in times when fairy tales began with once upon a time in a place far away
then
milica the partisan, a rosy-cheeked, breathless and shy character, is
from those times

today, when we're watching this, we, the –
today this milica is in a hospice
colourless
bloodless
lying in a hospice and she can no longer speak

fress, guzzle and screw, there's nothing in tomorrow to pursue

a bale of hay, pushed by a sweaty farm boy
a sweaty farm boy, pushing a bale of hay in front of him
if he is a farm boy
and if he is pushing a bale of hay in front of him
and if he is sweaty
then he can very well be wearing a slovene national costume,
with a pheasant feather tucked into his hat
then he can also shout with joy
and if we're watching a performance that goes beyond the borders
of our homeland, the farm boy can also be attired in the austrian
national costume, so radically different from the slovene one,
in this case the performance, by choosing the austrian garb is
definitely transposed from the narrow local juncture to a wider,
global one

he was wearing a white uniform
bareheaded, laughing, he was standing on the waterfront
the sun, the breeze, the sea
freedom

it was june 1945
 bareheaded, laughing, surrounded by other sailors
 bareheaded, laughing
 the sun, the breeze, the sea
 freedom
 this sailor i will marry, i thought then
 no, no, this is not a love story

this is how milica would start her story if she could get a word in
 edgeways
 but milica will never get a word in edgeways again

a farm boy
 austrian national costume
 perhaps, perhaps to achieve a radical moment appropriate for the
 context in which this performance takes place it would be best to
 have him as a farm boy
 vigorous
 firm
 healthy
 in a dirndl
 radical, indeed

we're looking and keeping silent, we, the –

and jakob and nina are sitting at the edge of the stage, holding
 hands, dangling their feet, their heads pressed together and they're
 chatting softly
 or perhaps they're just looking at each other
 because they are not kissing
 kissing is what jožica, 88, and milan, 91, are still doing forcefully

silvo and andreja are simply sitting, holding hands
 self-sufficient, with everything seemingly far away
 with everything else seemingly non-existent

as if we don't exist, we, the –

as if he doesn't exist, the emcee or mobilizer
 as if the shit in which we're swimming doesn't exist

nina and andreja are sitting, heads together
just hand in hand
body by body
as if there's nothing else

and we're watching
we, the –

the postman left a note for me
oh, shit shit shit
now what?
tax office?

milena enters again
in a new dress, tight, close-fitting
walks across the stage again
slowly
beautiful
seductive
fuckable
can we afford to think that when milena crosses the stage?

fuckable
adjective
means a trait of a person attractive to look at but with whom you
cannot imagine a serious, lasting relationship
also a person you rate, at first sight, as attractive, with sex appeal

for example,
i agree, her brother is really fuckable
or
yesterday i noticed an extremely fuckable girl
or
jožica, 88, after seven decades of life together still thinks her
husband milan, 91, is immensely fuckable

milena is walking across the stage

tramping just because she can

milica is a shy character
she's a mirage
she's a memory
of sun, breeze, sea
of freedom
he was so handsome, he was so handsome, he was as handsome as
clark gable
with moustache
in a white uniform
bareheaded
laughing
he came to me
slovene, oh, no slovene
i didn't know any slovene yet then
he came to me
like a whirlwind
sun, breeze, sea
comrade, would you join me
comrade, would you join me, he said

and then he showed her his torpedo

with pleasure, comrade

with pleasure she inspected his torpedo

slovene whore
you slovene whore

oh, shit, i hope it's not the tax office
court?
oh, shit, i hope it's not the court
ministry?
oh shit, i hope it's not the ministry
oh, shit shit shit

we are silent

Translated by Barbara Skubic

Gostje

Vilenice 2018

Vilenica

Guests 2018



Foto © Hazel Coonagh

Éilís Ní Dhuibhne

Éilís Ní Dhuibhne se je rodila leta 1954 v Dublinu na Irskem, kjer je na dublinskem univerzitetnem kolidžu najprej doštudirala anglistiko in nato 1982 doktorirala iz irskega ljudskega pripovedništva. Dolga leta je delala kot knjižničarka v Irski narodni knjižnici, še danes pa poučuje kreativno pisanje v različnih ustanovah. Njen opus obsega romane, kratke zgodbe, drame, dela za otroke in znanstvene monografije, skupno 25 del. Piše tako v angleščini kot v irščini, se preizkuša v različnih žanrih (v irščini je napisala zelo uspešni kriminalki), prepoznavna značilnost njene pisave pa je vpletanje ljudskega pripovedništva in mitov v zgodbe s sodobno tematiko. Kratka zgodba *Literary Lunch* (*Literarno kosilo*), objavljena v zborniku, je prvič izšla v zbirki *The Shelter of Neighbours* (Sosedsko zatočišče, 2012) in pripoveduje o srečanju članov komisije, ki na zasluženem kosilu izbirajo nove literarne štipendiste. Duhovita in satirična zgodba odstre manj laskave vrline omizja, ki deluje v duhu protekcionizma, posmeha in hinavščine. Éilís Ní Dhuibhne je bila za svoje pisanje večkrat nagrajena. Z romanom *The Dancers Dancing* (Plesalke plešejo) se je leta 2000 uvrstila med finalistice ene najuglednejših britanskih literarnih nagrad Orange, ki se podeljuje romanopiskam, piščim v angleščini. Leta 2015 je prejela nagrado irskega PEN-a za izjemni prispevek k irski literaturi in 2016 nagrado Hennessy za življenjsko delo. Po avtoričini zgodbi *Blood and Water* je poimenovana slovenska antologija sodobne irske kratke proze *Kri in voda* (Beletrina, 1998), ki jo je uredila Tina Mahkota.

Éilís Ní Dhuibhne was born in 1954 in Dublin, Ireland, where she first graduated in English language and literature at University College Dublin and then obtained a PhD in Irish folklore in 1982. For years, she worked as a librarian at the National Library of Ireland and since then she has taught Creative Writing at different institutions. Her body of work includes 25 works of literature, among them novels, short stories, plays, children's literature, as well as academic works. She writes both in English and Irish and experiments with different genres (she wrote two very successful crime novels in Irish). A recognizable feature of her writing is her interweaving folklore and myths into stories with contemporary themes. The short story "Literary Lunch," published in this almanac, first appeared in the collection *The Shelter of Neighbours* (2012) and talks about the meeting of jury members selecting their new literary scholarship awardees over a well-deserved lunch. It is a funny and satirical story that shines light on the less flattering virtues of a jury working in the spirit of protectionism, scorning, and hypocrisy. Ní Dhuibhne has been awarded for her writing several times; in 2000, she was one of the finalists shortlisted for the Orange Prize for Fiction awarded to female authors writing in English for her novel *The Dancers Dancing*. In 2015, she received the Irish PEN Award for Outstanding Contribution to Irish Literature and in 2016 the Hennessy Hall of Fame Award for Lifetime Achievement.

A Literary Lunch

(excerpt from the short story)

The board was gathering in a bistro on the banks of the Liffey. “We deserve a decent lunch!” Alan, the chairman, declared cheerfully. He was a cheerful man. His eyes were kind, and encouraged those around him to feel secure. People who liked him said he was charismatic.

The board was happy. Their tedious meeting was over and the bistro was much more expensive than the hotel to which Alan usually brought them, with its alarming starched tablecloths and fantails of melon. He was giving them a treat because it was a Saturday. They had sacrificed a whole three hours of the weekend for the good of the organisation they served. The reputation of the bistro, which was called Gabriel’s, was excellent and anyone could tell from its understated style that the food would be good, and the wine too, even before they looked at the menu – John Dory, oysters, fried herrings, sausage and mash. Truffles. A menu listing truffles just under sausage and mash promises much. We can cook and we are ironic as well, it proclaims. Put your elbows on the table, have a good time.

Emphasising the unpretentiously luxurious tone of Gabriel’s was a mural on the wall, depicting a modern version of *The Last Supper*, a photograph of typical Dubliners eating at a long refectory table.

Alan loved this photograph, a clever, post-modern, but delightfully accessible work of art. It raised the cultural tone of the bistro, if it needed raising, which it didn’t really, since it was also located next door to the house on Usher’s Island where James Joyce’s aunts had lived, and which he used as the setting for his most celebrated story, “The Dead”. In short, of all innumerable restaurants boasting literary associations in town Gabriel’s had the most irrefutable credentials. You simply could not eat in a more artistic place.

The funny thing about *The Last Supper* was that everyone was sitting at one side of the table, very conveniently for painters and photographers. It was as if they had anticipated all the attention which would soon be coming their way. And Gabriel’s had, in its clever ironic way, set up one table in exactly the same manner, so that everyone seated at it faced in the same direction, getting a good view of the mural and also of the rest of the restaurant. It was great. Nobody was stuck facing the wall. You could see if anyone of any importance was among the clientele – and usually there were one or

two stars, at least. You could see what they were wearing and what they were eating and drinking, although you had to guess what they were talking about, which made it even more interesting, in a funny sort of way. More interactive. It was like watching a silent movie without subtitles.

A problem with the arrangement was that people at one end of the last supper table had no chance at all of talking to those at the other end. But this too could be a distinct advantage, if the seating arrangements were intelligently handled. Alan always made sure that they were.

At the right end of the table he had placed his good old friends, Simon and Paul (Joe had not come, as per usual. He was the real literary expert on the board, having won the Booker Prize, but he never attended meetings. Too full of himself. Still, they could use his name on the stationery). Alan himself sat in the middle where he could keep an eye on everyone. On his left hand side were Mary, Jane and Pam. The women liked to stick together.

Alan, Simon and Paul ordered oysters and truffles and pâté de foie gras for starters. Mary, Jane and Pam ordered one soup of the day and two nothings. No starter please for me. This was not owing to the gender division. Mary and Jane were long past caring about their figures, at least when out on a free lunch, and Pam was new and eager to try everything being a member of a board offered, even John Dory, which she had ordered for her main course. Their abstemiousness was due to the breakdown in communications caused by the seating arrangements. The ladies had believed that nobody was getting starters, because Alan had muttered I don't think I'll have a starter and then changed his mind and ordered the pâté de foie gras when they were chatting among themselves about a new production of *A Doll's House*, which was just showing at the Abbey. Mary had been to the opening, as she was careful to emphasise; she was giving it the thumbs down. Nora had been manic and the sound effects were appalling. The slam of the door which was supposed to reverberate down through a hundred years of drama couldn't even be heard in the second row of the stalls. That was the Abbey for you, of course. Such dreadful acoustics, the place has to be shut down. Pam and Mary nodded eagerly; Pam thought the Abbey was quite nice but she knew if she admitted that in public, everyone would think she was a total loser who had probably failed her Leaving. Neither

Pam or Mary had seen *A Doll's House* but they had read a review by Fintan O'Toole so they knew everything they needed to know. He hadn't liked the production and had decided that the original play was not much good anyway. Farvel, Ibsen!

Literarno kosilo

(odlomek iz kratke zgodbe)

Odbor se je sestel v bistroju na nabrežju Liffeyja. »Zaslužimo si spodobno kosilo!« je vedro izjavil njegov predsednik Alan. Bil je vedra oseba. Njegove oči so bile prijazne in ljudi okrog njega spodbujale k občutku varnosti. Tisti ljudje, ki jim je bil všeč, so govorili, da je karizmatičen.

Odbor je bil dobre volje. Njihovega suhoparnega sestanka je bilo konec in bistro je bil veliko dražji od hotela s strašljivo poškrubljenimi prti in meloninimi pahljačami, kamor jih je navadno peljal Alan. Razvajal jih je, ker je bila nedelja. Cele tri ure vikenda so žrtvovali za dobro ustanove, ki so ji služili. Bistro po imenu *Gabriel's* je imel odličen sloves in po njegovem diskretnem slogu je lahko vsakdo presodil, da bo hrana dobra, vino tudi, še preden si je ogledal jedilni list – kovač, ostrige, ocvrti slédi, klobasa in pire. Tartufi. Jedilni list, na katerem se tartufi znajdejo takoj pod klobaso in pirejem, je nadvse obetaven. Znamo kuhati, smo pa tudi ironični, razglaša. Daj komolce na mizo, uživaj.

Umirjeno razkošni pridih lokala *Gabriel's* je poudarjala stenska upodobitev sodobne različice *Zadnje večerje*, fotografija tipičnih Dublinčanov, obedujočih za dolgo samostansko mizo.

Alanu je bila ta fotografija pri srcu kot bistrournna, postmoderna, a nadvse dostopna umetnina. Dvigovala je kulturni pridih bistroja, če ga je sploh bilo treba dvigovati, kajti nahajal se je tik zraven hiše na ulici Usher's Island, kjer sta stanovali teti Jamesa Joycea in ki jo je uporabil kot prizorišče svoje najbolj čislane zgodbe *Mrtvi*. Skratka, med brezštevilnimi restavracijami, ki so se bahale z literarnimi navezavami, je imela *Gabriel's* najbolj neizpodbitne reference. V bolj umetniškem lokalu se preprosto nisi mogel prehranjevati.

Smešno pri *Zadnji večerji* je bilo, da so vsi sedeli na eni strani mize, zelo prikladno za slikarje in fotografe. Dajali so vtis, da so predvideli silno pozornost, ki je bodo kmalu deležni. In pri *Gabriel's* so v svojem bistrournno ironičnem slogu eno mizo pripravili povsem enako, da so vsi sedeči gledali v isto smer in imeli dober razgled na stensko upodobitev in preostanek restavracije. Odlično. Nikomur ni bilo treba buljiti v zid. Lahko si videl, ali je med strankami kak pomembnež – in navadno je bila tam vsaj kakšna zvezda ali dve. Lahko si videl, kaj imajo na sebi in kaj jejo in pijejo, si pa

moral ugibati, o čem teče beseda, zaradi česar je bilo vse skupaj na nek smešen način še bolj zanimivo. Bolj interaktivno. Kot bi gledal nemi film brez podnapisov.

A težava pri takem sedežnem redu je bila, da tisti na enem koncu mize zadnje večerje niso imeli nikakršne možnosti, da bi se pogovarjali s tistimi na drugem koncu. Kar pa se je lahko izkazalo za posebno prednost, če si s takimi razporeditvami modro upravljal. Alan je vedno poskrbel, da je bilo tako.

Na desnem koncu mize je posedel svoja dobra prijatelja Simona in Paula (Joe ni prišel, kot ponavadi. Bil je največji literarni strokovnjak v odboru, prejemnik Bookerjeve nagrade, a se nikoli ni udeleževal sestankov. Preveč nadut je bil. So pa lahko na pisalnih potrebščinah uporabili njegovo ime). Sam Alan je sedel na sredini, kjer je imel vsakogar na očeh. Na njegovi levi so bile Mary, Jane in Pam. Ženske so rade tičale skupaj.

Alan, Simon in Paul so za predjed naročili ostrige in tartufe in gosjo pašteto. Mary, Jane in Pam pa eno dnevno juho in dva ničā. Jaz ne bom predjedi. Kar ni bila zasluga spolne delitve. Mary in Jane že dolgo nista gledali na linijo, vsaj kadar sta šli ven na brezplačno kosilo, medtem ko je bila Pam nova in željna preizkušanja vsega, kar je ponujalo članstvo v odboru, celo kovača, ki ga je naročila za glavno jed. Njihova vzdržnost je bila posledica prekinitvev na zvezi, ki jih je povzročil sedežni red. Dame so bile prepričane, da nihče ne bo predjedi, ker je Alan prej zamomljal, mislim, da ne bom predjedi, potem pa si je med klepetom o novi postavitvi *Hiše lutk*, ki so jo ravno prikazovali v *Abbeyju*, premislil in naročil gosjo pašteto. Mary je bila na premieri, kot je skrbno poudarila; ni bila navdušena. Nora je bila manična, zvočni učinki pa obupni. Treska vrat, ki naj bi odmeval skozi sto let dramatike, ni bilo slišati niti v drugo vrsto parterja. Po vašem seveda zaradi *Abbeyja*. Kakšna grozna akustika, zapreti bi ga bilo treba. Pam in Mary sta vneto prikimali; Pam je sicer menila, da je *Abbey* kar v redu, a je vedela, da bo v primeru, če bo priznala to javno, vsak o njej mislil, da je totalna zguba, ki najverjetneje ni zdelala srednje šole. Ne Pam ne Mary si *Hiše lutk* nista ogledali, sta pa prebrali kritiko Fintana O'Toola, zato vesta vse, kar je treba vedeti. Ni mu bila vseh produkcija in se je odločil, da tudi izvorna drama ni kaj prida. *Farvel*, Ibsen!

Prevedel Andrej Pleterski



Foto © Susan Worsham

Brian Henry

Brian Henry se je rodil leta 1972 v Columbusu (Ohio) v Združenih državah Amerike. Je avtor desetih pesniških zbirk, med njimi *Lessness* (Manjstvo, 2011), *Brother No One* (Brat nihče, 2013) in *Static & Snow* (Atmosferske motnje & sneg, 2015). Avtorjev prvenec *Astronaut* (*Astronavt*, 2000) je v slovenščini v prevodu Janka Lozarja izšel še istega leta pri založbi Mondena. Henry je tudi velik poznavalec in promotor slovenske poezije v ZDA in Veliki Britaniji, kot enega ključnih vplivov pri pisanju zbirke *Quarantine* (Karantena, 2006) pa navaja *Balado za Metko Krašovec* Tomaža Šalamuna. Henry je v angleščino prevedel Šalamunovo zbirko *Gozd in kelihi* (*Woods and Chalices*, 2008), zbirki *Knjiga reči* (*The Book of Things*, 2010) in *Berlin* (angl. prevod 2015) Aleša Štegra ter zbirko *Tihotapci* (*Smugglers*, 2015) Aleša Debeljaka. Za svoje ustvarjanje in prevajanje je prejel več nagrad: za poezijo nagrado Alice Fay di Castagnola Ameriškega pesniškega združenja, nagrado za najboljši knjižni prevod *Knjige reči* ameriškega združenja AATSEL, štipendijo Fundacije Howard za prevod zbirke *Tihotapci*. Henryjeve pesmi so prevedene v več jezikov, poleg pesmi piše tudi literarne kritike in urednikuje; med letoma 1995 in 2018 je bil sourednik priznane mednarodne revije *Verse*, 2004 pa je uredil zbirko literarnokritičskih esejev *On James Tate* (O Jamesu Tatu). V vsakdanjem življenju poučuje angleščino in kreativno pisanje na Univerzi v Richmondu v Virginiji.

Brian Henry was born in 1972 in Columbus, Ohio, USA. He is the author of ten poetry collections, among them *Lessness* (2011), *Brother No One* (2013), and *Static & Snow* (2015). His first book of poetry, *Astronaut* (2000), was published by Mondena publishing house in Slovene in translation by Janko Lozar in the same year. Henry is a great connoisseur and promotor of Slovene poetry in the US and in Great Britain. The poetry of Tomaž Šalamun has especially influenced his writing. He mentions Šalamun's *Balada za Metko Krašovec* (*A Ballad for Metka Krašovec*, transl. Michael Biggins) as one of the major influences on writing his collection *Quarantine* (2006). Henry has translated Šalamun's collection *Gozd in kelihi* (*Woods and Chalices*, 2008), Aleš Šteger's *Knjiga reči* (*The Book of Things*, 2010) and *Berlin* (2015), as well as Aleš Debeljak's *Tihotapci* (*Smugglers*, 2015) into English. He has received many awards for his writing and for his translation work – Best Literary Translation into English Award from AATSEL for *The Book of Things*, the Howard Foundation fellowship for translating *Smugglers*, and The Alice Fay di Castagnola Award given yearly by the Poetry Society of America for his poetry, to name but a few. His poetry has been translated into many languages. Besides writing poetry, he is also a critic and an editor; from 1995 to 2018, he co-edited the acclaimed international journal *Verse*, and in 2004 he edited the collection of literary criticism essays *On James Tate*. In everyday life, he teaches English and creative writing at the University of Richmond in Virginia.

After Winter

No way of knowing when this sick began.
A string that stretches beyond the dirt horizon.

A wasp and a hawk drift and glide. Pollen
has fallen on all the surfaces, and now the wasp,

slapped from air to ground where it will shell
and husk until the next hard rain erases it.

The wet string expands. The sick horizon rivers.
There is no dirt anywhere. Nothing hangs in the air.

*

Which bone protrudes first when a body is broken?

Which limb cries out to the brain to save it?
What is left of the skin removed from the limb?

The mud swallows all the surfaces. The rain shrieks.
The air allows nothing but sound to ride it.

Mud so thick the string fails the horizon,
falls to the ground to be embraced by mud.

*

The sick, the mud, the rain suck the air from the air.
There is no breathing here. Throats only rattle

in a constant attempt to clear. The sputter fills the air.
Phlegm and wet, wet. The mud inches in.

The pollen swallowed, every shell and limb.
Mud annuls the skin horizon, sucks and pulls.

The rain stops. The flood stretches, climbs.
Nothing moves in the mud. Nothing thinks to move.

*

We slide down from the trees we had climbed
and walk across the mud bored hard by the sun,
and we gather to measure what this thicker earth
has given us: a surface above where our heads had been,

a soft horizon open to any who approach it,
a fresh desert marked only by the tops of trees.

The sky has grown closer. The new surface lifts us
toward the stars, the thread that holds us down.

*

And we know the rain will not fall again,
the dirt never turn to mud beneath us.

We know the sky will shrink until what lies beyond
closes in and we can ascend. The thinner sky within reach

and pulsing so hard we cannot hear the breath
that builds inside the mud, a gasp at first, then cough.

And we know the earth is full now, too full and dead to flood.

*

The stars have been wiped from the sky.

Only the fragment of moon, a chipped, stray tooth
one bite away from falling out of its dying mouth, hangs there.

An apology. An alibi. All of creation
a crime scene. Everything alive a victim.

We follow the tooth until morning then climb
into the crania of trees to sleep. A loose sleep.

After After

Black streaks slather the sun. The sky's tooth
has come undone, floats dirtward, away from us.

We follow it, night's lacquer, until the sun bursts
black over the horizon so fast half of us char

before we find trees to block it.

*

The heavy horizon pulls the earth faster,
the sun gone in an hour. Now the toothless night.

We find the moon later that night. More pink
than white, it is soft in our hands—wet sand.

We tear it apart, tear the already broken moon
into pieces. For our mouths. For our pockets and hollows.

One of us (was it you?) discovers that wringing
the moon, like a neck, yields liquid. We quench.

*

The sun struggles at the edge all day, a day all dawn,
but cannot lift itself into the sky. No rise or noon,

no dusk. Finally the horizon frees itself
and the sun falls back out of sight.

We eat what's left of the half-dead and dying trees,
walk in the dark and sleep on the ground in the dark.

*

With nothing to eat, we walk. With nothing else to find.

We decide to remain on the blackdark dirt
under the blackdark hole-strewn sky.

With nothing to watch, we wait. There is nowhere
to go, nowhere worth going.

We sleep, and as we sleep the horizon swells
on every side. What's left shrinks.

*

We measure the remaining space by sleeps.
The edge is now four sleeps away, now three.

Two. Even the sky is squeezed, the once-scattered holes
grow closer, then together. A new moon.

One of us (was it all of us?) tries to reach it, to climb
through and out. But it is too far and we are too tired.

The horizon collapses on us
as we start to fall asleep. Into sleep.

Grand Design

We know
there is no grand design,
no figure
from which we emerged
already buried,
or unburied
as if born,
no field
where everyone
is welcomed
(to play) (to bring
his ball of words,
his bag of myths).
There is no order, no
form
holding it all
together,
no one
to hold any
thing together.
But there is this
(there is this):
you, me,
this collage
of particulars
larger, somehow,
than the known universe,
which, we've heard,
is expanding.

The Tower

We arrived expecting edification
but found a building instead.
It reflected whatever stood
before it, plus the sky, and trees
if there were trees there to be reflected.
You said the clouds were like crowns
though they moved, and were white, not green.

Everything seemed darker outside—
clouds nearly black, human faces masked,
bodies columns of ash. Some passed
through the spinning door and into the interior—
a gilded heaven, we heard, every surface
a choir. The light in there, they said,
was flattering, hopeless, and without end.

Po zimi

Nemogoče je vedeti, kdaj se je ta bolelost začela.
Nit, ki se razteza prek obzorja mrtve prsti.

Osa in sokol drsita in jadrata. Pelod
je padel po vseh površinah, in zdaj osa,

pognana iz zraka na tla, kjer se bo posušila
in oluščila, dokler je naslednji naliv ne izbriše.

Mokra nit se širi. Bolestno obzorje se utekočini.
Nikjer ni nobene prsti. Nič ne visi v zraku.

*

Katera kost prva pogleda ven, ko se telo zlomi?

Kateri ud zavpije možganom, naj ga rešijo?
Kaj ostane od kože, odrte z uda?

Blato pogoltne vse površine. Dež krikne.
Zrak ne dopusti ničemur razen zvoku, da ga jezdi.

Tako gosto blato, da se nit izneveri obzorju
in pade na tla v objem blata.

*

Bolest, blato, dež posrkajo zrak iz zraka.
Tu ni nobenega dihanja. Grla zgolj hropejo

v stalnem poskusu odkašljevanja. Izkašljevanje napolni zrak.
Sluz in mokrota, mokrota. Blato se počasi približuje.

Pelod je pogoltnjen, vsaka luščina in veja.
Blato uničuje obzorje kož, vsrkava in vleče.

Dež preneha. Poplava se razteza, dviguje.
V blatu se nič ne premakne. Nič ne misli na premik.

*

Zdrsremo z dreves, na katera smo splezali,
in hodimo čez blato silno zdolgočaseni od sonca,

in zberemo se, da precenimo, kaj nam je ta gostejša zemlja
dala: površino, nad katero so bile naše glave,

mehko obzorje, odprto vsakemu, ki se mu približa,
novo puščavo, označeno le z vrhovi dreves.

Nebo se nam je približalo. Nova površina nas dvigne
proti zvezdam, nit, ki nas drži dol.

*

In vemo, da dež ne bo spet padel,
da se prst pod nami ne bo nikoli več spremenila v blato.

Vemo, da se bo nebo skrčilo, dokler se tisto, kar leži onkraj,
ne približa in se lahko povzpne. Redkejša nebo na dosegu

tako močno utripa, da ne slišimo sape,
ki se tvori v blatu, najprej glasen vdih, nato kašelj.

In vemo, da je zdaj zemlja polna, prepolna in mrtva, da bi poplavila.

*

Zvezde so bile zbrisane z neba.

Le drobec meseca, okrušen, zablodel zob,
en ugriz stran, da izpade iz umirajočih ust, visi tam.

Opravičilo. Alibi. Vse stvarjenje
prizorišče zločina. Vse živo žrtev.

Zobu sledimo do jutra, nato pa splezamo
spat v lobanje dreves. Rahel spanec.

Po potem

Črne proge so premazale sonce. Zob neba
se je odvezal, plava v smeri prsti, stran od nas.

Sledimo mu, laku noči, dokler se sonce ne razpoči
črno prek obzorja tako hitro, da nas pol zgleni,

preden najdemo drevesa, da ga ustavimo.

*

Težko obzorje vleče zemljo hitreje,
sonce izgine v uri. Zdaj je noč brezzoba.

Mesec najdemo kasneje tiste noči. Bolj rožnat
kot bel je v naših rokah mehak – moker pesek.

Raztrgamo ga, raztrgamo že zlomljen mesec
na koščke. Za v usta. Za v žepe in luknje.

Nekdo od nas (si bil ti?) odkrije, da stiskanje
meseca kot vratu daje tekočino. Pogasimo žejo.

*

Sonce se ves dan bori na robu, ves dan se dani,
a se ne more dvigniti na nebo. Ni svita ali poldneva,

ni mraka. Končno se obzorje osvobodi
in sonce pade nazaj izven našega pogleda.

Jemo, kar je ostalo od polmrtvih in umirajočih dreves,
hodimo v temi in v temi spimo na tleh.

*

Ko ni kaj jesti, hodimo. Ko ni najti kaj drugega.

Odločimo se, da ostanemo na črnikasti prsti
pod črnikavim, z luknjami posejanim nebom.

Ko ni kaj gledati, čakamo. Nikamor ni mogoče
iti, nikamor ni vredno iti.

Spimo, in ko spimo, obzorje nabrekne
na vseh straneh. Kar ostane, se skrči.

*

Preostali prostor merimo s spanci.
Rob je zdaj štiri, zdaj tri spance stran.

Dva. Celo nebo je stisnjeno, nekoč raztresene luknje
se zblížajo, nato združijo. Nov mesec.

Nekdo od nas (smo bili to vsi?) ga skuša doseči, splezati
skozenj in ven. A predaleč je in preutrujeni smo.

Obzorje se sesede na nas,
ko drsimo v spanec. V spanje.

Veliki načrt

Vemo,
da ni nobenega velikega načrta,
nobene postave,
iz katere smo izšli
že pokopani,
ali nepokopani
kot rojeni,
nobenega polja,
kamor so vsi
vabljeni
(k igri) (da prinesejo
svojo žogo besed,
svojo vrečo mitov).
Ni reda, nobene
oblike,
ki bi držala vse
skupaj,
nikogar,
ki bi karkoli
držal skupaj.
A nekaj je
(nekaj je):
ti, jaz,
ta kolaž
partikularnosti,
večjih, nekako,
od poznanega vesolja,
ki se, kot smo slišali,
širi.

Stolp

Prispeli smo v pričakovanju edifikacije,
a namesto tega našli zgradbo.
Odsevala je vse, kar je stalo
pred njo, tudi nebo in drevesa,
če bi bila tam drevesa, ki bi se lahko odsevala.
Rekla si, da so oblaki kot krošnje,
čeprav so se premikali in bili beli, ne zeleni.

Zunaj se je vse zdelo temnejše –
oblaki skoraj črni, človeški obrazi zamaskirani,
telesa stebri pepela. Nekaj jih je šlo mimo
skozi vrtljiva vrata in v notranjost –
pozlačena nebesa, smo slišali, vsaka površina
kor. Svetloba tam notri, so rekli,
je laskava, brezupna in brez konca.

Prevedla Petra Meterc



Foto © osebni arhiv

Stuart Ross

Stuart Ross se je rodil leta 1959 v Torontu v Kanadi, danes pa živi v bližnjem manjšem mestu Cobourg. Na kanadski literarni sceni je dejaven od sredine sedemdesetih; na začetku je na ulici prodajal doma zvezane knjižice svoje poezije. Prvo knjigo je izdal pri 16-ih, odtlej pa je ves čas vpet v različne projekte, običajno kar v več hkrati: piše, prevaja, urednikuje, izdaja knjige, poučuje kreativno pisanje in prireja različne literarne dogodke. Je velik podpornik neodvisne založniške scene, pravijo mu tudi »založniški gverilec«, ustanovitelj in urednik založbe Proper Tales Press, v kateri poleg lastnih izdaja tudi dela še neuveljavljenih in manj znanih avtorjev. Leta 1987 je soustanovil Toronto Small Press Book Fair, prvi kanadski knjižni sejem, namenjen malim založbam. Je avtor 20 knjig poezije, proze in esejev, med zadnjimi so izšli: roman iz pesmi v prozi *Pockets* (Žepi, 2017), pesniška zbirka *A Sparrow Came Down Resplendent* (Vrabc se je spustil blesteč, 2016), za katero je prejel Kanadsko judovsko nagrado za poezijo, in zbirka kratkih zgodb *Buying Cigarettes for the Dog* (Kupovanje cigaret za psa, 2009), za katero je prejel kanadsko nagrado ReLit za kratko prozo. V ustvarjanju rad eksperimentira in improvizira, več del je napisal tudi v soavtorstvu. V tem pogledu posebej izstopa zbirka *Our Days in Vaudeville* (Naši dnevi v vodvilu, 2013), ki jo je napisal z 29 avtorji, vsako pesem z drugim. Zadnja leta v živo izvaja zvočno poezijo z glasbenimi skupinami. Gostoval je na več festivalih v tujini, med drugim v ZDA, Nikaragvi, Čilu in Veliki Britaniji.

Born in 1959 in Toronto, Canada, today Stuart Ross lives close by, in the small town of Cobourg. He has been active in the Canadian literary scene since the middle of the 1970s, having started his literary career by selling chapbooks of his poetry. He published his first book at 16 and he has been involved in various projects ever since, usually many at a time: he writes, translates, edits, publishes, teaches creative writing, and organizes literary events. He is a big supporter of the independent publishing scene and is often called "the publishing guerrilla." Ross is the founder and the editor of the Proper Tales Press, publishing his own works as well as the works of not yet established and lesser-known authors. In 1987, he cofounded the Toronto Small Press Book Fair, the first Canadian book fair dedicated to small presses. He is the author of 20 poetry, fiction, and essay collections, the latest being the novel in prose poems *Pockets* (2017), the poetry collection *A Sparrow Came Down Resplendent* (2016), for which he received the Canadian Jewish Literary Award for Poetry, and the short story collection *Buying Cigarettes for the Dog* (2009), which was awarded the ReLit Prize for Short Fiction. He likes to experiment and improvise and has written several collaborative books. In this view, *Our Days in Vaudeville* (2013), written with 29 other authors in acts of collaboration, stands out. In the last years, he has been performing sound poetry with musical ensembles. He has been a guest of many festivals abroad, including in the US, Nicaragua, Chile, and the UK.

I step into the crowd

I step into the crowd. I am both more distinct from and more like everyone else.

I step into the crowd. Shoulders rub against my shoulders.

I step into the crowd. My talents are put to use by people with talents I don't have.

I step into the crowd. Our words disappear but our voices become one big voice.

I step into the crowd. We form committees, but some of the committees never meet because there is a flamenco competition, or possibly a flamingo competition, my hearing's not so good.

I step into the crowd. We all look up suddenly into the roaring clouds.

I step into the crowd. I am astonished to discover we are all reading the same novel, *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick*, by Peter Handke.

I step into the crowd. I put my hands over my pockets to deter thieves.

I step into the crowd. We are all thinking something different.

I step into the crowd. We are kettled.

I step into the crowd. We stretch and yawn, then set off in different directions.

I step into the crowd. I pull dollar bills from my pocket and hand them out to children with birthdays.

I step into the crowd. Someone is watching us through a telescope, from that planet right over there.

I step into the crowd, and the crowd steps out of me.

Poem beginning with a line by Matthea Harvey

There were girls waiting at the gate.
There were dogs waiting with the girls.
The gate waited in front of the cemetery.
The dead waited in their graves.

Have you written the girls a letter?
Have you read the books they're reading?
Did you read books when you were a girl?
Why do girls like to read?

I know a dog who reads about dogs.
I know a dog who loves a girl.
Most dogs read to the girls they love.
Most of the dead walk dogs past gates.

A girl climbs up on another girl's shoulders.
Another girl scales the girls, then another.
A girl can see beyond the gate.
The dead are asleep on the horizon.

The hanging

My grandfather yells his Polish English
as my pyjama top swings
from the banister above
and his sewing machine
is silent in his dark room
and my mother puts her hand
on the back of my head,
tells me, "He saw the pyjama
and thought it was you,
that you had hanged yourself,"
and I went to my room,
gazed out at the snow
blanketing the Nefskys' roof
and pictured myself hanging
from the banister,
my pyjama sleeve tight
around my throat,
my grandfather pushing my feet aside
as he lumbers up the stairs
to eat his lumpy porridge.

After Pierre Reverdy

Look,
only one alarm clock is left.
It rings. There is no one to read
the time. Even the rodents
are dead. The wind searches
for a leaf to twang. All is dark.
The earth no longer bothers
turning. What difference
would it make anyway?
Lakes and ravines can't
tell themselves apart.
The books are full of words
but what's a word?
The night disappears
with a breath.

Stopim v množico

Stopim v množico. Hkrati sem bolj različen od vseh in bolj podoben vsem drugim.

Stopim v množico. Ramena se drgnejo ob moja ramena.

Stopim v množico. Moje sposobnosti uporabijo ljudje s sposobnostmi, ki jih sam nimam.

Stopim v množico. Naše besede izginejo, a naši glasovi postanejo en velik glas.

Stopim v množico. Ustanavljamo odbore, a nekateri odbori se nikoli ne srečajo zaradi tekmovanja v flamenku ali morda tekmovanja flamingov, moj sluh ni tako dober.

Stopim v množico. Naenkrat vsi pogledamo navzgor v razbesnjene oblake.

Stopim v množico. Osupel ugotovim, da vsi beremo isti roman, *Vratarjev strah pred enajstmetrovko* Petra Handkeja.

Stopim v množico. Roke položim na žepe, da odvrnem tatove.

Stopim v množico. Vsak razmišlja nekaj drugega.

Stopim v množico. Stisnjeni smo v kot.

Stopim v množico. Pretegnemo se in zazehamo, nato se odpravimo v različne smeri.

Stopim v množico. Iz žepa izvlečem dolarske bankovce in jih razdelim otrokom, ki imajo rojstni dan.

Stopim v množico. Nekdo nas gleda skozi teleskop, s tistega planeta prav tam čez.

Stopim v množico in množica stopi iz mene.

Pesem, ki se začne z verzom Matthee Harvey

Dekleta so čakala pred vrati.
Z dekleti so čakali psi.
Vrata so čakala pred pokopališčem.
Mrtvi so čakali v svojih grobovih.

Si dekletom napisala pismo?
Si prebrala knjige, ki jih berejo?
Si brala knjige, ko si bila sama dekle?
Zakaj dekleta rada berejo?

Poznam psa, ki bere o psih.
Poznam psa, ki ljubi dekle.
Večina psov bere dekletom, ki jih ljubijo.
Večina mrtvih sprehaja pse onkraj vrat.

Dekle spleza na rame drugega dekleta.
Še eno dekle se povzpne na dekleti, nato še eno.
Dekle lahko vidi preko vrat.
Mrtvi spijo na obzorju.

Obešanje

Moj stari oče kriči svojo poljsko angleščino,
ko zgornji del moje pižame niha
s stopniščne ograje zgoraj,
in njegov šivalni stroj
je nem v njegovi temni sobi
in moja mama položi glavo
na moje zatilje,
reče mi: »Videl je pižamo
in mislil, da si to ti,
da si se obesil,«
in šel sem v sobo,
strmel ven v sneg,
ki prekriva streho Nefskyjev,
in si predstavljal sebe, kako visim
s stopniščne ograje,
rokav svoje pižame, ki me tesno
stiska okoli vratu, in dedka, ki odriva moje noge vstran,
ko se po stopnicah opoteka
jest svojo grudasto ovseno kašo.

Po Pierru Reverdyju

Poglej,
ostala je le še ena budilka.
Zvoni. Nikogar ni, ki bi znal gledati na
uro. Celo glodavci
so mrtvi. Veter išče
list, skozi katerega bi zašuštel. Vse je temno.
Zemlja se ne trudi več z
vrtenjem. Bi bilo
sploh kaj drugače?
Jezera in globeli
se ne razlikujejo.
Knjige so polne besed,
a kaj je beseda?
Noč izgine
z dihom.

Prevedla Petra Meterc

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udeleženci in
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KRISTAL VILENICE 1990 / 1990 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Aleš Debeljak*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1990* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1990* and took part in the literary readings:

Alexandra Berková, Andrej Blatnik, Leon Briedis, Miroslav Červenka, Aleš Debeljak, Nedjeljko Fabrio, András Fodor, Branko Gradišnik, Niko Grafenauer, Reinhardt P. Gruber, Maja Haderlap, Paweł Huelle, Anton Hykisch, Eugenius Ignatavičius, Antanas Jonynas, Lubomir Jurík, Diana Kempff, Michael Köhlmeier, Tomas Saulius Kondrotas, György Konrád, Miroslav Košuta, Stelio Mattioni, Libuše Moniková, Péter Nádas, Gáspár Nagy, Boris Pahor, Miodrag Pavlović, Giorgio Pressburger, Eva Schmidt, Knuts Skujenieks, Jože Snoj, Andrzej Szycpiorski, Ján József Szczepański, Susanna Tamaro, Ladislav Tažký, Goran Tribuson, Božena Trilecová, Ludvík Vaculík, Joachim Walter, Anka Žagar

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Veno Taufer: Izziv ali zgaga? / Challenge or Hassle?*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1991 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 1991 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Zbigniew Herbert

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Niko Jež*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1991 / 1991 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Lajos Grendel*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1991* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1991* and took part in the literary readings:

Ladislav Ballek, Andrej Brvar, Lenka Chytilová, Heinz Czechowski, István Eörsi, Lajos Grendel, Fabjan Hafner, Reto Hännny, Ivanka Hergold, Andrej Hieng, Alois Hotschnig, Viťazoslav Hronec, Anna Jókai, Donaldas Kajokas, Milan Kleč, Mirko Kovač, Lojze Krakar, Vít Kremlička, Bronisław Maj, Laura Marchig, Štefan Moravčík, Luko Paljetak, Oskar Pastior, Jure Potokar, Hans Raimund, Rolandas Rastauskas, György Somlyó, Mario Suško, Ivo Svetina, Susanna Tamaro, Arvo Valton, Szabolcs Várady, Bite Vilimaitė, Alena Vostrá, Joachim Walther, Ernest Wichner, Josef Winkler

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Vlado Gotovac: Skica o Atlasu / Sketch of the Atlas*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1992 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 1992 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Milan Kundera

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jaroslav Skrušný*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1992 / 1992 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Endre Kukorelly*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1992* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1992* and took part in the literary readings:

Alexandra Berková, Vytautas Bložė, Branko Ćepec, 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, Drahošlav Machala, Vytautas Martinkus, Ivan Minatti, Libuše Moníková, Boris A. Novak, Lajos Parti Nagy, Aarne Puu, Gerhard Roth, Štefan Strážay, Jana Štrobová, Marjan Tomšič, Miloslav Topinka, Dragan Velikić, Jani Virk, Peter Waterhouse

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1993 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 1993 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Libuše Moníková

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Neva Šlibar*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1993 / 1993 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Francesco Micieli*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1993* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1993* and took part in the literary readings:

Zsófia Balla, Józef Baran, Roberto Dedenaro, Helmut Einsendle, Alojz Ihan, Dževad Karahasan, Matjaž Kocbek, Vlastimil Kovalčík, Marko Kravos, Zvonko Maković, László Márton, Robert Menasse, Francesco Micieli, Marjeta Novak Kajzer, Paul Parin, Denis Poniž, Daina Prancietytė, Carlo Scgorlon, Arvo Valton, Michal Viewegh, Piotr Woiciechowski, Ifigenija Zagoričnik Simonović

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Georges-Arthur Goldschmidt, Vlado Gotovac, László*

Krasznahorkai, Antonin J. Liehm: Edvard Kocbek: Palica / Edvard Kocbek: The Stick

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1994 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
AWARDED THE 1994 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Josip Osti

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Denis Poniž*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1994 / 1994 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Slavko Mihalić*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1994* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1994* and took part in the literary readings:

Marjorie Agosin, Edoardo Albinati, Arni Bergmann, Miloš Biedrzycki, Christa Dericum, Janko Ferk, Antonio Fian, Antanas Gailius, Vlado Gotovac, Egid Gstättnner, Gunnar D. Hansson, Daniel Hevier, Viťazoslav Hronec, Paweł Huelle, Richard Jackson, Goran Ignjatije Janković, Dževad Karahasan, Lubor Kasal, Thomas Kling, Majda Kne, Miklavž Komelj, Jurgis Kunčinas, Feri Lainšček, Phillis Levin, Svetlana Makarovič, Giuseppe Mariuz, János Marno, Mateja Matevski, Andrej Medved, Slavko Mihalić, Dušan Mitana, Grzegorz Musiał, Aleksander Peršolja, György Petri, Juan Octavio Prenz, Lenka Procházková, Gianfranco Sodomaco, Matthew Sweeney, Tomaž Šalamun, Igor Škamperle, Jachým Topol, Urs Widmer, Uroš Zupan

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Alain Finkielkraut: Intelektualci, politika in vojna / Intellectuals, Politics and War*

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AWARDED THE 1995 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Adolf Muschg

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Vesna Kondrič Horvat*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1995 / 1995 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD –
Marzanna Bogumiła Kielar

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1995* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1995* and took part in the literary readings:

Jovica Aćin, Kurt Aebli, Marjorie Agosin, Eugenijus Ališanka, Marcin Baran, Arni Bergmann, Krzysztof Bielecki, Dariusz Bittner, Loredana Bogliun, Berta Bojetu-Boeta, Tereza Boučková, Lucas Cejpek, Róža Domašcyna, Erik Groch, Gunnar D. Hansson, Nora Ikstena, Richard Jackson, Marzanna Bogumiła Kielar, Rade Krstić, Phillis Levin, Tonko Maroević, Manfred Moser, Danielius Mušinskas, Radovan Pavlovski, Tone Perčič, Sibila Petlevski, Juan Octavio Prenz, Raoul Schrott, Zorko Simčič, Rudolf Sloboda, Andrzej Stasiuk, Matthew Sweeney,

Tomaž Šalamun, Ján Štrasser, Zsuzsa Tákács, Dezső Tandori, Jaromír Typlt, Miloš Vacík, Saša Vegri, Pavel Vilikovský, Ernest Wichner, Ćiril Zlobec, Vlado Žabot, Aldo Žerjal

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1996 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 1996 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Adam Zagajewski

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Niko Jež*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1996 / 1996 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Kača Čelan*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1996* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1996* and took part in the literary readings:

Lothar Baier, Uldis Berzinš, Petr Borkovec, Magda Carneci, Karol Chmel, Claude Michel Cluny, Branko Ćeĝec, Kača Čelan, Zita Ćepaitė, Stefano Dell'antonio, Ljiljana Dirjan, Dušan Dušek, Milan Đorđević, Menna Elfyn, János Háý, Ann Jäderlund, Antanas A. Jonynas, Julian Kornhauser, András Ferenc Kovács, Vladimír 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, Mårtiniš Zelmenis

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1997 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 1997 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Pavel Vilikovský

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Andrej Rozman*

KRISTAL VILENICE 1997 / 1997 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Nicole Müller*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1997* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1997* and took part in the literary readings:

Attila Balázs, Pauls Bankovskis, Peters Bruveris, Stefan Chwin, Gillian Clarke, Vittorio Cozzoli, Vera Čejkowska, Liutauras Degėsys, Evald Flisar, Franjo Frančič, Niko Grafenauer, Marianne Gruber, Aime Hansen, Jože Hudeček, Hanna Johansen, Vanda Juknaitė, Mila Kačič, Doris Kareva, István Kovács, Katja Lange-Müller, Kristina Ljaljko, Peter Macssovský, Herbert Maurer, Neža Maurer, Christopher Merrill, Nicole Müller, 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 Zawadzki

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Daimon zapeljevanja / Daimon of Temptation:*
Rainer Maria Rilke: Orfej • Evridika • Hermes / Orpheus • Eurydike • Hermes

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
 PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1998 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
 AWARDED THE 1998 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Péter Nádas

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Orsolva Gállos*
 KRISTAL VILENICE 1998 / 1998 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Peter Semolič*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1998* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1998* and took part in the literary readings:

Amanda Aizpuriete, Andrei Bodi, Jan Čikvin, France Forstnerič, Natasza Goerke, Felicitas Hoppe, Zoë Jenny, Arne Johnsson, Jiří Kratochvíl, 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 / DISPUTATION: *Timothy Garton Ash: Konec stoletja, začetek tisočletja / The End of the Century, the Beginning of the Millennium*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
 PISATELJEV ZA LETO 1999 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
 AWARDED THE 1999 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Erica Pedretti

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Vesna Kondrič Horvat*
 KRISTAL VILENICE 1999 / 1999 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Angelo Cherchi*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 1999* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 1999* and took part in the literary readings:

Neringa Abrutyte, Angelo Cherchi, Lelo Cjanton, Richard Flanagan, Marius Ivaškevičius, Richard Jackson, Jana Juráňová, Jaan Kaplinski, Dražen Katunarič, Taja Kramberger, Ryszard Krynicki, Franco Loi, Miha Mazzini, Miloš Mikeln, Mimmo Morina, Andrej Morovič, Amir Or, Răzvan Petrescu, Asher Reich, Christopher Reid, Kathrin Röggla, Ljudmila Rubljévska, Anna Santoliquido, Armin Senser, Sande Stojčevski, Vojo Šindolič, Adriana Škunca, Ottó Tolnai, Bogdan Trojak, Nenad Veličković, Karen Volkman, Dane Zajc

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Trst na začetku 20. stoletja: futuristična utopija ali možni model za nadnacionalno in ustvarjalno sožitje v združenih (srednji) Evropi / Trieste at the Beginning of the 20th Century: A Futuristic Utopia or Realistic Model of Trans-National and Creative Coexistence of People in the Common (Central) Europe*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSkih PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2000 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2000 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Slavko Mihalic

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veno Taufer*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2000 / 2000 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *István Vörös*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2000* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2000* and took part in the literary readings:

Zoran Ančevski, Peter Božič, Uke Bucpapaj, Aleš Čar, Primož Čučnik, Jacques Darras, Lidija Dimkowska, Mircea Dinescu, Michael Donhauser, Janis Elsberg, Leopold Federmair, Mila Haugova, Željko Ivanković, Liudvikas Jakimavičius, Urs Karpf, Georgiu Konstantinov, Hasso Krull, Gary Lawless, Umberto Mangani, Erik Menkveld, Jaume Perez Montaner, Imre Oravecz, Silvana Paletti, Katherine Pierpoint, Angelina Polonskaya, Milorad Popović, Ana Ristović, Sudeep Sen, Marcin Sendeki, Ronny Someck, Marjan Strojjan, Brina Švigelj Mérat, Yórgos Veis, Istvan Vörös, Gerald Zschorsch

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2001 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
AWARDED THE 2001 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Jaan Kaplinski

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veno Taufer*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2001 / 2001 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Natalka Bilocerkevica*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2001* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2001* and took part in the literary readings:

Esad Babačić, Mohammed Bennis, Natalka Bilocerkevica, Casimiro De Brito, Richard Burns, Peteris Cedrinš, Robert Davis, Michel Deguy, Ferida Duraković, Andreas Ehin, Hans Eichhorn, Mauro Faccioni Filho, Michael Farrell, László Garaczi, Greg Gatenby, Adam Globus, Adela Greceanu, Petr Hruška, Valdo Immovilli, Dragan Jovanović Danilov, Laurynas Katkus, Vladimir Kavčič, Katica Kjulavkova, Barbara Korun, Maruša Krese, Roman Ludva, Sonja Manojlović, Narlan Matos, Marián Milčák, Ban'ya Natsuisshi, Claudio Pozzani, Matthew Rohrer, Erik Stinus, Franco Supino, Vivienne Vermes, Thor Vilhjálmsson, Hans Van De Waarsenburg, 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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2002 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
AWARDED THE 2002 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Ana Blandiana

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Lidija Dimkowska*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2002 / 2002 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Pál Závada*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2002* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2002* and took part in the literary readings:

Jorge Enrique Adoum, Dritëro 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 Odegård, Justo Jorge Padron, Monika Van Paemel, Ratimir Pavlović,

Janis Rokpelnis, 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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2003 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2003 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Mirko Kovač

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Josip Osti*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2003* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2003* and took part in the literary readings:

Constantin Abăluță, Hana Andronikova, Kostas Assimacopoulos, Vladimir Balla, Marek Bieńczyk, Boris Biletić, Gordana Mihailova Bošnjakoska, 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 Vouk, 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, Agata Venier*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2004 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2004 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Brigitte Kronauer

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Neva Šlibar, Vesna Kondrič Horvat*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2004 / 2004 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Valžina Mort*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2004* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2004* and took part in the literary readings:

Jan Balabán, Muharem Bazdulj, Eric Brogniet, Ștefan Caraman, Daša Drndić, Martin Fahrner, Edward Foster, Georgi Gospodinov, Gintaras Grajauskas, Daniela Kapitáňová, Vojislav Karanović, Artjom Kavalevski, Juris Kronbergs, Alain Lance, Sydney Lea, Vasyl Makhno, Katarina Marinčič, 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 Kocbek in svoboda izražanja danes / The Edvard Kocbek Case and the Freedom of Expression Today*

MLADA VILENICA 2004 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2004: *Eva Renner, Brigita Berčon*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2005 STA PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2005 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Ilma Rakusa in Karl-Markus Gauß

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Vesna Kondrič Horvat, Drago Jančar*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2005 / 2005 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Vladas Braziunas*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2005* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2005* and took part in the literary readings:

Carlos A. Aguilera, Veljko Barbieri, Juras Barisevič, Vladas Braziunas, Anna Maria Carpi, Theodora Dimova, Jure Jakob, Janez Kajzer, Viliam Klimáček, Olivera Korvezirovska, Cvetka Lipuš, Jaan Malin, Jim McGarragh, Anna Mitgutsch, Sinead Morrissey, Duško Novaković, Gregor Papež, Leung-Ping Kwan, Jean Portante, Zsuzsa Rakovszky, 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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2006 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2006 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Miodrag Pavlović

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veno Taufer*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2006 / 2006 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Mojca Kumerdej*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2006* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2006* and took part in the literary readings:

Inga Abele, Michál Ajvaz, Venko Andonovski, Lindita Arapi, Alhierd Bacharević, 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, Tõnu Õnnepalu, Claudio Pozzani, Gabriel Rosenstock, Goran Samardžić, Ostap Slyvynsky, Breda Smolnikar, 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?"

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Simona Škrabec*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2006 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2006: *Goce Smilevski, Makedonija / Macedonia*

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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2007 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2007 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Goran Stefanovski

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Lidija Dimkova*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2007 / 2007 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Piotr Sommer*

SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2007 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2007 – *Milan Dekleva*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2007* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2007* and took part in the literary readings:

David Albahari, Attila Bartis, Ataol Behramoğlu, Balša Brković, Gentian Çoçoli, Dumitru Crudu, Vytautas Dekšnys, Dagnija Dreika, Kristiina 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, Edi Shukriu, Piotr Sommer, Igor Stiks, Ján Štrasser, Sami Tchak, Tomas Tranströmer, Christina Viragh, Matjaž Zupančič, Barys Žančak

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"

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Alenka Puhar*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2007 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2007:

Marianna Kijanovska / Marianna Kiyonovska, Ukrajina / Ukraine

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 Stóimín, 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 DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2008 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2008 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Andrzej Stasiuk

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jana Unuk*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2008 / 2008 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Andrej Hadanovič*
SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2008 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2008 –
Svetlana Makarovič

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2008* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2008* and took part in the literary readings:

Jurij Andruhovič, Laslo Blašković, Cvetanka Elenkova, Iztok Geister, Andrej Hadanovič, Kica Kolbe, Florin Lăzărescu, Arian Leka, Yang Lian, Diego Marani, Jean-Michel Maulpoix, Irina Neki, Imre Oravec, 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 tekstom in kontekstom« / "The Author between Text and Context"

MODERATOR: *Marko Uršič*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2008 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2008: *Ivana Sajko, Hrvaška / Croatia*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Sodobna litovska književnost / Contemporary Lithuanian Writing: Eugenijus Ališanka, Birutė Jonuškaitė, Sigitas Parulskis, Kornelijus Platelis, Tomas Venclova*

MLADA VILENICA 2008 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2008: *Liam Visentin, Ana Šemrov*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2009 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2009 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Claudio Magris

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veronika Simoniti*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2009 / 2009 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Luljeta Lleshanaku*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2009 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2009 –
Boris Pahor

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2009* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2009* and took part in the literary readings:

Jana Beňová, Ines Cergol, Kalin Donkov, Umberto Galimberti, Forrest Gander, Andrea Grill, Miljenko Jergović, Štefan Kardoš, Yasmina Khadra, Herkus Kunčius, Alejandra Laurencich, Luljeta Lleshanaku, Dan Lungu, Tone Partljič, Jana Putrle Srdić, Peter Rezman, Víctor Rodríguez Núñez, Maria Šlehtiči, Ewa Sonnenberg, Vlada Urošević, Oksana Zabuzko

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:
»Izbina med svobodo in zapovedjo: literarna avtonomija in mehanizmi izbora« / «Choice between Freedom and Command: Literary Autonomy and the Mechanics of Choice»

MODERATOR: *Andrej Blatnik*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2009 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2009:

Dragan Radovančević, Srbija / Serbia

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Flandrija na Vilenici / Flanders at Vilenica: Miriam Van Hee, Štefan Hertmans, Monika Van Paemel, Peter Verhelst*

MLADA VILENICA 2009 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2009: *Jana Stekar, Gaja Rupnik Caruso*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2010 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2010 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Dževad Karahasan

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jana Unuk*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2010 / 2010 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Goran Vojnović*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2010 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2010 –
Tomaž Šalamun

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2010* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2010* and took part in the literary readings:

Max Blaeulich, Jacek Dehnel, Kristin Dimitrova, Veronika Dintinjana, Aris Fioretos, Ludwig Hartinger, Enes Karić, Blaže Minevski, Salvatore Niffoi,

Radoslav Petković, Taras Prohasko, Viktória Radics, Maja Razboršek, Joachim Sartorius, Illja Sin, Octavian Soviany, Veronika Šikulova, Jáchym Topol, Suzana Tratnik, Goran Vojnović, C.D. Wright, Agnė Žagrakalytė

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:

»O branju: bralna izkušnja in njene oblike v sodobnem času« / "On Reading: Reading Experience and its Forms in Modern Times

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Tanja Lesničar Pučko*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2010 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2010: *Maja Hrgović, Hrvaška / Croatia*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Wales na Vilenici / Wales at Vilenica: Lloyd Jones, Siân Melangell Dafydd, Wiliam Owen Roberts, Angharad Price*

MLADA VILENICA 2010 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2010: *Nina Rozman, Rok Muhič, Lidija Magdevska*

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MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2011 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2011 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Mircea Cărtărescu

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Lidija Dimkowska*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2011 / 2011 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Dan Coman*

SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2011 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2011 – *Drago Jančar*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2011* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2011* and took part in the literary readings:

Pavel Brycz, Pierluigi Cappello, Sarah Clancey, Dan Coman, Ivan Dobnik, György Dragomán, Jean-Michel Espitallier, Xavier Farré Vidal, Guy Helmingier, Stanka Hrastelj, Ljiljana Jokić Kaspar, Gorazd Kocijančič, Tatjana Komissarova, Alain Lance, Vesna Lemaić, Vladimir Levčev, Nikola Madžirov, Alberto Manguel, Aleksander Peršolja, Edo Popović, Angelika Reitzer, Tomasz Różycki, Lubica Somolayová, Ognjen Spahić, Agron Tufa, Arturas Valionis, Jan Wagner

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:

»Beri me v živo« / "Read Me Live"

MODERATOR: *Gregor Podlogar*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2011 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2011: *Ognjen Spahić, Črna gora / Montenegro*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Turčija na Vilenici / Turkey at Vilenica: Nazli Eray, Nedim Gürsel, Mehmet Yaşin*

MLADA VILENICA 2011 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2011: *Julija Železnik, Teja Gerjovič, Lara Ružič Povirk*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2012 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2012 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

David Albahari

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Andrej Blatnik*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2012 / 2012 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Rumen Leonidov*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2012 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2012 –
Boris A. Novak

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2012* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2012* and took part in the literary readings:

Antonia Arslan, Miljana Cunta, László Darvasi, Dimitré Dinev, Dušan Dušek, Zineb El Rhazoui, Maja Haderlap, Petr Hruška, Igor Isakovski, Erica Johnson Debeljak, Colm Keegan, Rumen Leonidov, Dorota Mastowska, Indrek Mesikepp, Miroslav Mićanović, Paul Muldoon, Ioana Nicolaie, Tom Petsinis, Sebastijan Pregelj, Pino Roveredo, Monique Schwitter, Bekim Sejranović, Dmitrij Strocev, Kárlis Vērdiņš, Gian Mario Villalta, Jiixin Wang, Aldo Žerjal

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:
»Avtorji nomadi« / "Nomadic Writers"

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Iva Kosmos*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2012 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2012: *Alja Terzić*,
Bosna in Hercegovina / Bosnia and Herzegovina

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Hebrejska književnost na Vilenici / Hebrew literature at Vilenica: Hana Amichai, Sami Michael, Hava Pinhas-Cohen, Nurit Zarchi*

MLADA VILENICA 2012 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2012: *Tilka Namestnik, Marta Radić, Veronika Martinčič*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2013 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2013 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Olga Tokarczuk

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jana Unuk*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2013 / 2013 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Tanja Maljarčuk / Tania Malyarchuk*

SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2013 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2013 –
Florjan Lipuš

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2013* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2013* and took part in the literary readings:

Anna Auziņa, Mauro Covacich, Silvija Čoleva, Radka Denemarková, Rodica Draghinescu, Miriam Dreu, Katharina Hacker, Olli Heikkinen, Brian Henry, Ignacy Karpowicz, Vladimir Kopicl, Tone Kuntner, Gerry Loose, Tanja Maljarčuk, Alan McMonagle, Tomislav Osmanli, Vanja Pegan, Ana Pepelnik, Katja Perat, Milan Rakovac, Zhao Si, Martin Solotrak, Brita Steinwendtner

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:
»Nadih meja« / "Inspiration of Borders"

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Vesna Humar*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2013 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2013: *Artem Čapaj / Artem Chapeye, Ukrajina / Ukraine*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Švica na Vilenici / Switzerland at Vilenica: Lukas Bärfuss, Arno Camenisch, Pietro De Marchi, Michel Layaz, Ilma Rakusa*

MLADA VILENICA 2013 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2013: *Ajda Furlan, Jerneja Rupnik, Eva Salopek*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2014 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2014 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

László Krasznahorkai

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jutka Rudaš*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2014 / 2014 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Liliana Corobca*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2014 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2014 –
Marko Sosič

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2014* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2014* and took part in the literary readings:

Ivan Antić, Gabriela Babnik, Marica Bodrožić, Liliana Corobca, Artem Čapaj, Patrick deWitt, Ivana Dobrakovová, Enes Halilović, Elsa Korneti, Asko Künnap, János Lackfi, Fiston Mwanza Mujila, Andrej Nikolaidis, Tomislav Osmanli, Ioana Pârvulescu, Tone Peršak, Alek Popov, Stanislava Repar, Jaroslav Rudiš, Roman Simić Bodrožić, Linda Spalding, Dimitra Xidou, Visar Zhiti

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:
»Iz jezika v jezik« / "From Language to Language"

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Erica Johnson Debeljak*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2014 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2012: *Mirko Božić*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Luksemburg na Vilenici / Luxembourg at Vilenica: Alexandra Fixmer, Guy Helminger, Nico Helminger, Pol Sax*

MLADA VILENICA 2014 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2014: *Lota Martinjak, Patricija Kavčič, Lara Ružič Povirk*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2015 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2015 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Jáchym Topol

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Alenka Jensterle-Doležal*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2015 / 2015 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Blerina Rogova Gaxha in Polona Glavan*

SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2015 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2015 – *Milan Jesih*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2015* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2015* and took part in the literary readings:

Claire-Louise Bennett, Stefano Benni, Mirko Božič, Sylwia Chutnik, Goran Ferčec, Orfhlaith Foyle, Antanas Gailius, Polona Glavan, Aleksandar Hemon, Karlo Hmeljak, Andrej Hočevar, Etgar Keret, Elke Laznia, Artis Ostups, Blerina Rogova Gaxha, Christoph Simon

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: »*Odzven prostora*« / "Reflections of Place"

MODERATOR / MODERATOR: *Boštjan Narat*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2015 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2015: *Katerina Kalitko*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Indija na Vilenici / India at Vilenica: Sitanshu Yashaschandra, K. Satchidanandan*
MLADA VILENICA 2015 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2015: *David Čop, Kiara Sara Knafelc, Chiara Lepore, Lina Malovič, Špela Zadel*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2016 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2016 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Dubravka Ugrešić

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Durđa Strsoglavac*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2016 / 2016 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Katerina Kalitko*

SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2016 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2016 – *Suzana Tratnik*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2016* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2016* and took part in the literary readings:

Adisa Bašić, Alexandre Bergamini, Aleš Berger, Jana Bodnárová, Julja Cimafejeva, Patricija Dodič, Martin Dyar, Dana Grigorcea, Jovica Ivanovski, Katerina Kalitko, Cvetka Lipuš, Valerio Magrelli, Aksinija Mihajlova, Carlos Pascual, Ūlar

Ploom, Gábor Schein, Robert Schindel, Korana Serdarević, Mariusz Sieniewicz, Bogdan Suceavă, Kateřina Tučková, Les Wicks

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:
»Literatura in etika« / "Literature and Ethics"

MODERATOR / MODERATOR: *Carlos Pascual*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2016 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2016: *Tanja Bakić*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA:
Latvija na Vilenici / Latvia at Vilenica: Ingnāra Balode, Artis Ostups, Arvis Viguls
MLADA VILENICA 2016 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2016: *Miša Gregorič, Nejka Vratnik, Ekaterina Mihajloska, Aljaž Primožič, Lara Ružič Povirk, Alja Tursunović, Eric Renzi, Lota Martinjak, Tomi Petek*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2017 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
AWARDED THE 2017 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Jurij Andruhovič

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Aleš Šteger*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2017 / 2017 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Antonella Bukovaz*

SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2017 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2017 –
Maja Vidmar

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2017* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2017* and took part in the literary readings:

Tanja Bakić, Andrej Blatnik, Antonella Bukovaz, Rumena Bužarovska, Anja Golob, Alenka Jensterle Doležal, Boris Jukić, Esther Kinsky, Vladimir Pištalo, Delimir Rešicki, Samir Sayegh, Fahredin Shehu, Hedi Wjys, Kerrie O'Brien, Iain Reid

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:
»Literatura, ki spreminja svet, ki spreminja literaturo« / "Literature That Changes the World That Changes Literature"

MODERATORICA / MODERATOR: *Iva Kosmos*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2017 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2017: *Andrij Ljubka*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA:
Norveška na Vilenici / Norway at Vilenica: Inger Elisabeth Hansen, Torgeir Schjervén
MLADA VILENICA 2017 / YOUNG VILENICA AWARD 2017: *Rebeka Deželak, Sara Lindič, Una Ljubin, Laura Markič, Nika Mravlja, Vesna Muzek, Laura Vuga*

Člani žirije 2018 / *Jury Members 2018*

Lidija Dimkowska, predsednica žirije, pesnica, prevajalka, esejistka / president of the jury, poet, translator, essayist

Aljoša Harlamov, podpredsednik žirije, urednik, publicist, literarni kritik / vice president of the jury, editor, journalist, literary critic

Ana Geršak, literarna kritičarka, urednica, prevajalka / literary critic, editor, translator

Ludwig Hartinger, prevajalec, esejist, urednik / translator, essayist, editor

Vesna Kondrič Horvat, redna profesorica za nemško književnost na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Mariboru / professor of German literature at the Faculty of Arts in Maribor

Tone Peršak, pisatelj / prose writer

Andrej Pleterski, prevajalec / translator

Jutka Rudaš, izredna profesorica za madžarsko književnost na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Mariboru / assistant Professor of Hungarian literature at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor

Veronika Simoniti, prevajalka, pisateljica / translator, prose writer

Marko Sosič, pisatelj, režiser / writer, director

Aleš Šteger, pesnik, pisatelj / poet, prose writer

Veno Taufer, pesnik, prevajalec, esejist, ustanovni predsednik festivala Vilenica / poet, translator, essayist, founding president of the Vilenica Festival

Jana Unuk, prevajalka / translator

Konzultanti 2018 / Consultants 2018

Lindita Arapi, pisateljica, prevajalka, Albanija, Nemčija / writer, translator, Albania, Germany

Agneszka Będkowska-Kopczyk, prevajalka, docentka na Tehnično-humanistični akademiji v Bielsko-Biali, Poljska / translator, senior lecturer at the Academy of Technology and Humanities in Bielsko-Biała, Poland

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