

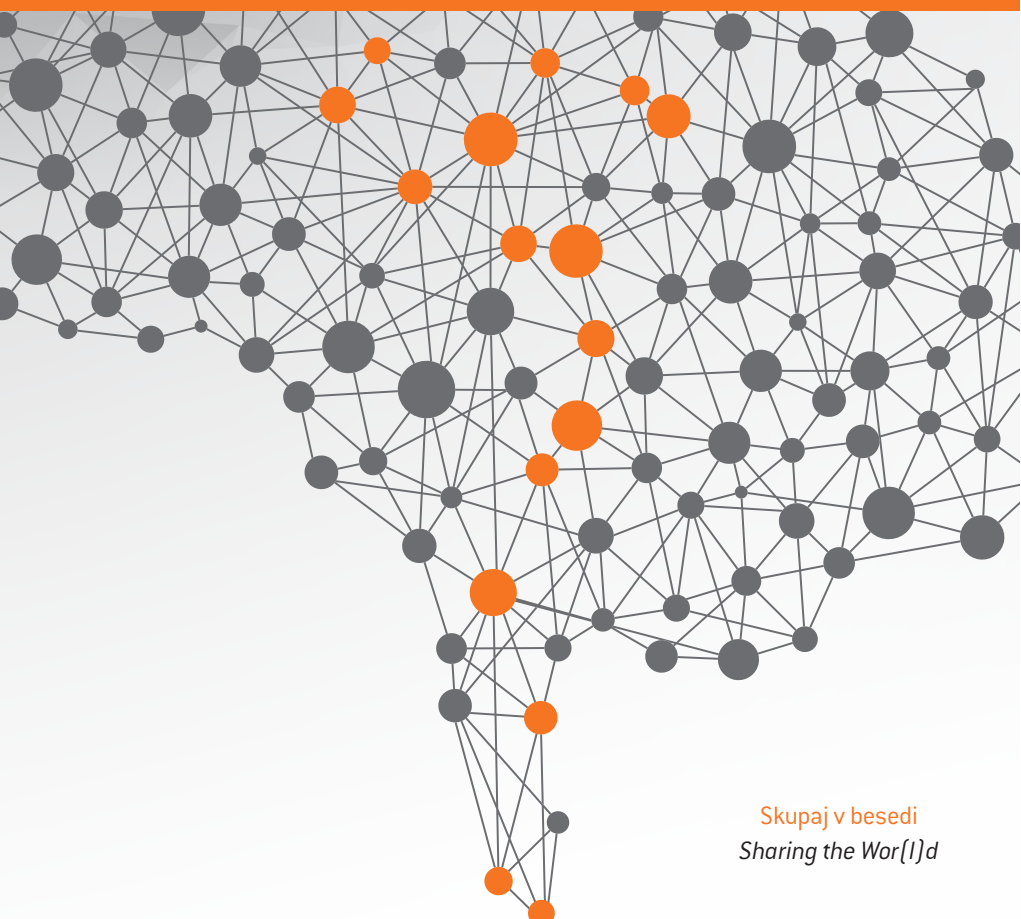
vilenica

31. Mednarodni
literarni festival

31st International
Literary Festival

Literatura in etika

Literature and Ethics



Skupaj v besedi
Sharing the Wor(l)d

vilenica

31. Mednarodni
literarni festival

31st International
Literary Festival

Literatura in etika

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Literature and Ethics

Vilenica, 2016

31. Mednarodni literarni festival Vilenica /
31st Vilenica International Literary Festival

Vilenica 2016

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Kazalo / Contents

Nagrajenka Vilenice 2016 / Vilenica Prize Winner 2016

Dubravka Ugrešić 6

Slovenska avtorica v središču 2016 / Slovenian Author in Focus 2016

Suzana Tratnik 50

Literarna branja Vilenice 2016 / Vilenica Literary Readings 2016

Adisa Bašić 80

Aleš Berger 94

Jana Bodnárová 110

Julja Cimafejeva 126

Patricija Dodič 144

Dana Grigorcea 154

Jovica Ivanovski 168

Katerina Kalitko 182

Cvetka Lipuš 196

Valerio Magrelli 210

Aksinija Mihajlova 230

Carlos Pascual 242

Ülar Ploom 258

Gábor Schein 282

Robert Schindel 300

Korana Serdarević 318

Mariusz Sieniewicz 336

Bogdan Suceavă 354

Kateřina Tučková 368

Gostje Vilenice 2016 / Vilenica Guests 2016

Alexandre Bergamini 384

Martin Dyar 396

Les Wicks 404

Mlada Vilenica 2016 / Young Vilenica Award 2016

Miša Gregorič 418

Nejka Vratnik 420

Ekaterina Mihajloska 422

Aljaž Primožič 424

Lara Ružič Povirk 426

Alja Tursunović 428

Eric Renzi 430

Lota Martinjak 432

Tomi Petek 434

Dosedanji udeleženci in nagrajenci Vilenice /

Previous Participants and Vilenica Prize Winners 438

Člani žirije / Jury Members 456

Konzultanti / Advisory Panel 457

Nagrajenka

Vilenice 2016

Vilenica

Prize Winner 2016



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Dubravka Ugrešić

Dubravka Ugrešić se je rodila leta 1949 v Kutini na Hrvaškem. Na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Zagrebu je končala študij primerjalne književnosti in rusistike in bila vse do leta 1993 sodelavka Zavoda za literarno teorijo Univerze v Zagrebu, kjer se je ukvarjala predvsem z rusko literaturo. Ob izbruhu vojne v Jugoslaviji leta 1991 je zaradi pokončne protivojne držbe ter javnega nasprotovanja hrvaški in srbski nacionalistični politiki še z nekaterimi pisateljicami in novinar-kami postala tarča domačega desn-čarskega tiska, politikov in tudi pisa-teljskih kolegov. To je bil čas, kot piše v enem svojih esejev, ko se je izvajal »knjižgocid« (v 90-ih so na Hrvaškem uničili kar 2,8 milijona knjig!), njo pa so razglasili za »feministko, ki pošiljuje Hrvaško«. Ker se pritiski niso nehali, se je leta 1993 izselila in si novi dom ustvarila v Amsterdamu, kjer živi še danes. Od takrat ne piše več le v hrvaščini in, kot pravi, »obstaja v medprostoru, živi v nikogaršnji coni«. Ugrešićeva je na pisateljsko pot stopila leta 1971 z mladinskim delom *Mali plamen* (Mali plamen), nato pa je leta 1981 izšel v Jugoslaviji kultni roman *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* (*Štefica Cvek v krempljih življenja*, 1981), postmodernistična pa-rodija trivialnih ljubezenskih romanov, s katero je dosegla širšo prepoznavnost. Roman je bil prenesen tudi na filmsko platno. V enako humornem, ironič-nem in postmodernem slogu sta napi-

sani tudi njeni naslednji deli: kratko-prozna zbirka *Život je bajka* (Življenje je pravljica, 1983) in roman *Forsira-nje romana-reke* (*Forsiranje romana reke*, 1988). Po izkušnji eksila, ki jo je globoko zaznamovala, se je deloma odmaknila od fikcijske literature in pričela pisati predvsem literarizirane eseje. V esejistični zbirki *Kultura laži* (*Kultura laži*, 1996) v ospredje sto-pijo druge teme: vojna, begunstvo, vprašanje identitete, razgaljanje ne-varnosti nacionalizma in izpraševanje vpliva totalitarnega režima na družbo in kolektivni spomin. V zadnjih letih je svoje ostro pero usmerila tudi v nebrzdano in nekritično potrošništvo, značilno za sodobno družbo in kul-turo, ki je postala »velikanski blesteč supermarket«, kot pravi v eseju *Kara-oke kultura* (*Karaoke kultura*, 2015). Dubravka Ugrešić je svetovno znana pisateljica in esejistka, njena dela pa so prevedena v več kot dvajset jezikov. Za svoje ustvarjanje je prejela več naj-pomembnejših literarnih nagrad: leta 2016 t. i. ameriško Nobelovo nagrado Neustadt International Prize for Lite-rature, ki je bila prvič podeljena Evro-pejki, in nagrado Vilenica.¹

¹ Ker so imena nagrad lastna imena, je uredništvo festivala Vilenica sprejelo odločitev, da so v zborniku zapisana z veliko začetnico.

Izbrane nagrade in priznanja

- 1988 NIN-ova nagrada (Srbija) za roman *Forsiranje romana-reke* (*Forsiranje romana reke*). Leta 1988 je bila nagrada podeljena za najboljši jugoslovanski roman.
- 1988 Nagrada Meše Selimovića (Srbija) za roman *Forsiranje romana-reke*. Leta 1988 je bila nagrada podeljena za najboljši jugoslovanski roman.
- 1988 Nagrada Ksaverja Šandorja Gjalskega (Hrvaška) za roman *Forsiranje romana-reke*.
- 1996 Nagrada Prix européen de l'essai Charles Veillon (Švica) za zbirko esejev *Kultura laži* (*Kultura laži*).
- 1999 Avstrijska državna nagrada za evropsko literaturo.
- 2000 Nagrada Heinricha Manna (Nemčija) za esejistična dela.
- 2002 Nagrada Centra PEN Bosne in Hercegovine za ohranitev dostojanstva literature v času balkanskih vojn (1991–1995).
- 2010 Nagrada Jamesa Tiptreeja ml. (ZDA) za roman *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje* (*Jaga baba je znesla jajce*).
- 2012 Nagrada Jeana Améryja za evropsko esejistiko. Nagrado podeljujeta nemška založba Klett-Cotta in evropska fundacija Allianz Kulturstiftung.
- 2016 Nagrada Neustadt International Prize for Literature (ZDA).

Izbrana izvirna bibliografija

Romani

Štefica Cvek u raljama života (*Štefica Cvek v krempljih življenja*); Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1981.

Forsiranje romana-reke (*Forsiranje romana reke*); August Cesarec, Zagreb 1988.

Muzej bezuvjetne predaje (*Muzej brezpogojne predaje*); Konzor, Zagreb 2002 in Samizdat B92, Beograd 2002. Roman je najprej izšel v nizozemskem jeziku z naslovom *Museum van onvoorwaardelijke overgave*; Nijgh & Van Ditmar, Amsterdam 1997.

Ministarstvo boli (*Ministrstvo za bolečino*); Faust Vrančić, Zagreb 2004 in Fabrika knjiga, Beograd 2004.

Baba Jaga je snijela jaje (*Jaga baba je znesla jajce*); Vuković-Runjić, Zagreb 2008 in Geopoetika, Beograd 2008.

Zbirke kratkih zgodb

Poza za prozu (*Poza za prozo*); CDD, Zagreb 1978.

Život je bajka (*Življenje je pravljica*); Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1983.

Esejistična dela

Američki fikcionar (Ameriški fikcionar); Durieux, Zagreb 1993.

Kultura laži (*Kultura laži*); Arkzin, Zagreb 1996. Zbirka esejev je najprej izšla v nizozemskem jeziku z naslovom *De cultuur van leugens*; Nijgh & Van Ditmar, Amsterdam 1995.

Zabranjeno čitanje (Brati prepovedano); Književna radionica Omnibus, Sarajevo 2001 in Geopoetika, Beograd 2001.

Nikog nema doma (Nikogar ni doma); Faust Vrančić, Zagreb 2005 in Fabrika knjiga, Beograd 2005.

Napad na minibar (Napad na mini bar); Fraktura, Zaprešić 2010 in Fabrika knjiga, Beograd 2010.

Europa u sepiji (Evropa v sepiji); Fabrika knjiga, Beograd 2013.

Karaoke kultura (Karaoke kultura); Kulturtreger & Multimedijalni institut, Zagreb 2015 (esej *Karaoke kultura* je bil prvič objavljen v delu *Napad na minibar* leta 2010).

Dela za otroke

Mali plamen (Mali plamen); Mladost, Zagreb 1971.

Filip i Srećica (Filip in Srećica); Mladost, Zagreb 1976.

Kućni duhovi (Hišni duhovi); August Cesarec, Zagreb 1988.

Strokovna dela

Nova ruska proza (Nova ruska proza); Sveučilišna naklada Liber, Zagreb 1980.

Književnost – Avangarda – Revolucija (Književnost – Avantgarda – Revolucija); sourednica z Aleksandrom Flakerjem; Hrvatsko filološko društvo, Zagreb 1981.

Pojmovnik ruske avangarde, 1–9 (Pojmovnik ruske avantgarde, 1–9); sourednica z Aleksandrom Flakerjem; Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1984.

Pljuska u ruci (Klofuta v roki); August Cesarec, Zagreb 1989.

Avtoričini prevodi

Boris Pilnjak, *Gola godina*, *Mečava* (*Голый год*, *Метелинка*); prevod iz ruščine; Sveučilišna naklada Liber, Zagreb 1980.

Daniil Harms, *Nule i ništice* (Nule in ničle); prevod iz ruščine; Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1986.

Scenarij za film

U raljama života (V žrelu življenja), režija Rajko Grlić, 1984.

Prevodi v tuje jezike

Dela Dubravke Ugrešić so bila prevedena v številne jezike, med drugim v albanščino, angleščino, arabščino, bolgarščino, danščino, estonščino, finščino, francoščino, italijanščino, japonsščino, litovščino, madžarščino, nemščino, nizozemščino, norveščino, poljščino, portugalsščino, romunščino, ruščino, slovaščino, slovenščino, španščino, švedščino in turščino.

Knjižni prevodi v slovenščino

Forsiranje romana reke; prevedel Denis Poniž; Lumi, Ljubljana 1992.

Ministrstvo za bolečino; prevedla Klarisa Jovanović; Založba Meander, Izola 2005.

Kultura laži; prevedli Maja Brodschneider Kotnik, Gregor Butala, Jurij Hudolin, Andrej Jaklič, Jana Unuk, Ivana Williams; Študentska založba, Ljubljana 2006.

Štefica Cvek v krempljih življenja; prevedla Višnja Fičor; Sanje, Ljubljana 2010.

Jaga baba je znesla jajce; prevedla Sonja Polanc; VBZ, Ljubljana 2010.

Dubravka Ugrešić was born in 1949 in the town of Kutina, Croatia. She graduated in comparative literature and Russian from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb, the same university where she worked till 1993 at the Institute of Literary Theory, focusing on Russian literature. With her uncompromising anti-war stance and public opposition to the conservative Croatian and Serbian nationalist politics at the outbreak of the Yugoslav war in 1991, she – as well as some other women writers and journalists – exposed herself to attacks by the right-wing press, politicians, and even her fellow writers. This was a time which, according to one of her essays, witnessed a “bibliocide” (as many as 2.8 million books were destroyed in Croatia in the 1990s!), while she was proclaimed to be a “feminist raping Croatia”. As the pressures never slackened, she moved out in 1993 and settled in Amsterdam, where she has lived to the present day. No longer writing in Croatian alone, she “exists in an in-between place” and “lives in a no-man’s land”, as she puts it. Her writing career began in 1971 with a young adult book, *Mali plamen* (Little Flame), and was followed by a cult Yugoslav novel, *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* (*In the Jaws of Life*, 1981), a postmodernist parody of trivial love novels, which established her fame. The novel was adapted into a film as well. The same humorous, ironic, postmodern style informs her next two works: a short fiction collection, *Život je bajka*

(*Life Is a Fairy Tale*, 1983), and the novel *Forsiranje romana-reke* (*Fording the Stream of Consciousness*, 1988). After her harrowing experience of exile, her focus shifted from fiction to literarised essays. Her collection of essays, *Kultura laži* (*The Culture of Lies*, 1996), foregrounds other themes: war, refugees, the issue of identity, dangers of nationalism, the influence exercised by a totalitarian regime on society and collective memory. Over the recent years, she has directed her incisive criticism at the unbridled, uncritical consumerism typical of contemporary society and culture, which has, according to her essay collection *Karaoke kultura* (*Karaoke Culture*, 2015), become “a giant glittering supermarket”. Dubravka Ugrešić is a world-renowned writer and essayist, whose works have been translated into more than twenty languages. Her oeuvre has been recognised with major literary prizes: in 2016, for example, she has been the first European woman writer to receive the “American Nobel Prize” – the Neustadt International Prize for Literature – which was complemented by the Vilenica Prize.

Selected Prizes and Awards

- 1988 NIN Award (Serbia) for the best newly published novel in Yugoslav literature, for the novel *Forsiranje romana-reke* (*Fording the Stream of Consciousness*).
- 1988 Meša Selimović Prize (Serbia) for the best new novel from Yugoslavia, for the novel *Forsiranje romana-reke*.
- 1988 Ksaver Šandor Gjalski Award (Croatia) for the novel *Forsiranje romana-reke*.
- 1996 Prix Européen de l'Essai Charles Veillon (Switzerland) for the best European book of essays, for the collection *Kultura laži* (*The Culture of Lies*).
- 1999 Österreichischer Staatspreis für europäische Literatur.
- 2000 Heinrich-Mann-Preis (Germany), for essays.
- 2002 Award of the Bosnian PEN Centre, for preserving the dignity of literature during the Balkan wars (1991–1995).
- 2010 James Tiptree Jr. Award (USA), for the novel *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje* (*Baba Yaga Laid an Egg*).
- 2012 Jean-Améry-Preis für europäische Essayistik, conferred by the German publisher Klett-Cotta and the European cultural foundation Allianz Kulturstiftung.
- 2016 Neustadt International Prize for Literature (USA).

Selected Bibliography of Original Works

Novels

Štefica Cvek u raljama života (*In the Jaws of Life*); Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1981.

Forsiranje romana-reke (*Fording the Stream of Consciousness*); August Cesarec, Zagreb 1988.

Muzej bezuvjetne predaje (*The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*); Konzor, Zagreb 2002, and Samizdat B92, Belgrade 2002. First published in Dutch under the title *Museum van onvoorwaardelijke overgave*; Nijgh and Van Ditmar, Amsterdam 1997.

Ministarstvo boli (*The Ministry of Pain*); Faust Vrančić, Zagreb 2004, and Fabrika knjiga, Belgrade 2004.

Baba Jaga je snijela jaje (*Baba Yaga Laid an Egg*); Vuković-Runjić, Zagreb 2008, and Geopoetika, Belgrade 2008.

Short Story Collections

Poza za prozu (*A Pose for Prose*); CDD, Zagreb 1978.

Život je bajka (*Life Is a Fairy Tale*); Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1983.

Essay Collections

Američki fikcionar (*Have a Nice Day: From the Balkan War to the American Dream*); Durieux, Zagreb 1993.

Kultura laži (*The Culture of Lies*); Arkzin, Zagreb 1996. First published in Dutch under the title *De cultuur van leugens*; Nijgh and Van Ditmar, Amsterdam 1995.

Zabranjeno čitanje (*Thank You for Not Reading*); Književna radionica Omnibus, Sarajevo 2001, and Geopoetika, Belgrade 2001.

Nikog nema doma (*Nobody's Home*); Faust Vrančić, Zagreb 2005, and Fabrika knjiga, Belgrade 2005.

Napad na minibar (*Attack on the Minibar*); Fraktura, Zaprešić 2010, and Fabrika knjiga, Belgrade 2010.

Europa u sepiji (*Europe in Sepia*); Fabrika knjiga, Belgrade 2013.

Karaoke kultura (*Karaoke Culture*); Kulturtreger & Multimedijalni institut, Zagreb 2015 (the essay 'Karaoke kultura' was first published in the collection *Napad na minibar* in 2010).

Books for Children

Mali plamen (*Little Flame*); Mladost, Zagreb 1971.

Filip i Srećica (*Filip and Little Joy*); Mladost, Zagreb 1976.

Kućni duhovi (*House Spirits*); August Cesarec, Zagreb 1988.

Scholarly Books

Nova ruska proza (*New Russian Prose*); Sveučilišna naklada Liber, Zagreb 1980.

Književnost – Avangarda – Revolucija (*Literature – Avant-garde – Revolution*); co-editor with Aleksandar Flaker; Hrvatsko filološko društvo, Zagreb 1981.

Pojmovnik ruske avangarde, 1–9 (*Glossary of Russian Avant-garde*, 1–9); co-editor with Aleksandar Flaker; Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1984.

Pljuska u ruci (*A Slap in the Hand*); August Cesarec, Zagreb 1989.

Translations by Dubravka Ugrešić

Daniil Kharms, *Nule i ništice* (*Zeros and Nils*); selection and translation from the Russian; Grafički zavod Hrvatske, Zagreb 1986.

Boris Pilnyak, *Gola godina, Mečava* (*Голый год, Метелинка*); translation from the Russian; Sveučilišna naklada Liber, Zagreb 1980.

Screenplay

U raljama života (*In the Jaws of Life*), directed by Rajko Grlić, 1984.

Translations of Dubravka Ugrešić's Work

Works by Dubravka Ugrešić have been translated into many languages, including Albanian, Arabic, Bulgarian, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish.

Book Format Translations into Slovenian

Forsiranje romana reke; translated by Denis Poniž; Lumi, Ljubljana 1992.

Ministrstvo za bolečino; translated by Klarisa Jovanović; Založba Meander, Izola 2005.

Kultura laži; translated by Maja Brodschneider Kotnik, Gregor Butala, Jurij Hudolin, Andrej Jaklič, Jana Unuk, Ivana Williams; Študentska založba, Ljubljana 2006.

Štefica Cvek v krempljih življenja; translated by Višnja Fičor; Sanje, Ljubljana 2010.

Jaga baba je znesla jajce; translated by Sonja Polanc; VBZ, Ljubljana 2010.

Od mehčanja žanrskih oblik do jedke esejistike

Durda Strsoglavac

Dubravka Ugrešić (1949) je literarna zgodovinarica, prozaistka, jedka in lucidna esejistka brez dlake na jeziku, občasna prevajalka (npr. Daniil Harms, Boris Pilnjak), odmevna in prevajana avtorica, pisateljica, ki je »sešila« kultni hrvaški roman *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* (*Štefica Cvek v krempljih življenja*, 1981), po katerem so leta 1984 posneli ravno tako kultni film *U raljama života* (*V žrelu življenja*, režija Rajko Grlić), dobitnica svetovnih literarnih nagrad ter gostujoča predavateljica evropskih in ameriških univerz, ki od leta 1993 ne živi več na Hrvaškem, ne piše zgolj v hrvaščini ter »obstaja v medprostoru« in »živi v nikogaršnji coni«, »s priimkom *with those little guys above the letters*«, kot pravi sama. Diplomirala je iz rusistike in primerjalne književnosti na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Zagrebu, kjer je bila v obdobju 1974–1993 sodelavka Zavoda za literarno teorijo in se ukvarjala predvsem z rusko literaturo (in kulturo). Ugrešićeva je avtorica študije *Nova ruska proza* (Nova ruska proza, 1980), sourednica (z Aleksandrom Flakerjem) devetih zvezkov svojevrsne enciklopedije *Pojmovnik ruske avangarde* (Pojmovnik ruske avantgarde, 1984–1993) in urednica antologije alternativne ruske proze *Pljuska u ruci* (Klofuta v roki, 1989).

Leta 1971 je izšla njena prva literarna knjiga *Mali plamen* (Mali plamen), nato leta 1976 *Filip i Srećica* (Filip in Srećica), obe mladinski, ko pa je leta 1978 napisala prozno zbirko s pomenljivim naslovom *Poza za prozu* (Poza za prozo), se je začela uspešna in med bralci priljubljena serija zbirk in romanov, v katere je kot avtonomni del literarnega dogajanja vpeto razkrivanje literarnega postopka. S kolažiranim romanom oziroma literarno krpanko *Štefica Cvek u raljama života*, z medbesedilno zbirko kratkih zgodb *Život je bajka* (*Življenje je pravljica*, 1983) in meddiskurzivnim romanom *Forsiranje romana-reke* (*Forsiranje romana reke*, 1988) je v 80-ih letih prejšnjega stoletja spletla prozno mrežo, v kateri so na zelo berljiv način razgaljene in tematizirane pripovedne strategije, po katerih na eni strani iz realnih, življenjskih dejstev nastane fikcija, po drugi strani pa, kako iz fikcije včasih nastane falcija, uresničena metafora. Pozneje se je veliko bolj posvečala esejizirani prozi in literarizirani esejistiki (npr. *Američki fikcionar* (Ameriški fikcionar, 1993); *Kultura laži* (*Kultura laži*, 1996 – esejistična zbirka je najprej izšla v

nizozemščini (*De cultuur van leugens*) leta 1995; *Zabranjeno čitanje* (Brati prepovedano, 2001) – esejistična zbirka je najprej izšla v nizozemščini (*Verboden te lezen*) istega leta; *Nikog nema doma* (Nikogar ni doma, 2005); *Napad na minibar* (Napad na mini bar, 2010); *Europa u sepiji* (Evropa v sepiji, 2013); *Karaoke kultura* (Karaoke kultura, 2015) – samostojna objava eseja, ki je sicer izšel v zbirki *Napad na minibar*, manj pa prozi (*Muzej bezuvjetne predaje* (Muzej brezpogojne predaje), 2001–2002 – roman je najprej izšel v nizozemščini (*Museum van onvoorwaardelijke overgave*) leta 1997; *Ministarstvo boli* (Ministrstvo za bolečino, 2004); *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje* (*Jaga baba je znesla jajce*, 2008.)

Značilnosti proze Dubravke Ugrešić (npr. prepletanje zasebnega in javnega, Vzhoda in Zahoda, politike in kulture, visoke in nizke književnosti, žanrski sinkretizem, avtopoetičnost, avtoreferenčnost, medbesedilnost, metabesedilnost, meddiskurzivnost), kot smo jih poznali pred njeno ekskomunikacijo iz hrvaške družbe in posledično kulture (v začetku devetdesetih let zaradi kritičnih odzivov na takratno hrvaško ultranacionalistično politiko), so očitne tudi v njeni esejistiki. Najbolj znana esejistična zbirka Dubravke Ugrešić *Kultura laži* je zbirka antipolitičnih esejev, ki je izšla leta 1995 v nizozemščini, dopolnjena pa leta 1996 v Zagrebu, in sicer pri založbi Arkzin v zbirki Bastard. Delno literarizirani eseji v tej zbirki zastavljajo vprašanja in terjajo odgovore o lastni odgovornosti za vojno ob razpadu skupne države in za vse, kar je vojna prinesla, o identiteti, ki smo jo nekoč imeli, zdaj pa se vse bolj sprašujemo, ali je bila prava, in odgovarjamo, da najbrž ne, o strupenih posledicah nacionalistične propagande in zveličanja ubijanja, uničevanja in radiranja z obličja sveta vsega, kar je drugačno in drugo, o »meji med *before* in *after*, med enim in drugim časom, eno in drugo resničnostjo, med eno in drugo utopijo, med preteklostjo in prihodnostjo«. Okusa esejev v *Kulturi laži* sta trpko in grenko. Takšna sta tudi okusa v ustih vsakogar, »ki bo v teh strašnih vojnih časih pripovedoval neko svojo resnico. Strašni časi so običajno časi Kolektiva. Resnica je samo tisto, kar se skladno vpisuje v sliko, ki jo Kolektiv sprejema kot resnico.«

O tem, kako pride do tega, da laž postane vrhovna resnica, lahko beremo tudi v esejistični zbirki *Zabranjeno čitanje* (2001), ki je rezultat notranjega boja med dvojim: avtorji si ne bi smeli dovoliti ukvarjati se z »umazanim perilom« svoje obrti in avtorji si ne bi smeli zatiskati oči pred »umazanim perilom« svoje obrti. Avtorica Ugrešićeva si jih ne zatiska nikoli, pred ničimer. V nekaj zadnjih zbirkah

esejev si jih ne zatiska predvsem pred vsesplošno standardizacijo oziroma unifikacijo kulturnega in vsakršnega drugega okusa, pred poneumljanjem, pred slepim in nekritičnim sprejemanjem vzorcev vedenja in razmišljanja, pred posnemanjem in drugorazrednostjo, pred manipuliranjem. Pred kulturo karaok in kulturo narcizma, kot metaforično označi čas, v katerem smo namesto individualne in osebne svobode, ki smo jo hoteli doseči, dobili svobodo posnemanja, ki jo uresničujemo v intelektualno zoženem svetu.

Trpkost in grenkoba prelevata tudi poznejšo prozo Dubravke Ugrešić, tisto, ki je nastala po odhodu iz Hrvaške, po »brezpogojni predaji«, če si izposodimo del naslova romana, ki tematizira eksil kot usodo in eksil kot izbiro, vzpostavljanje identitete, ki bo všečna drugim, tj. »gostiteljem«, tavanje v sedanjosti in iskanje vsaj nekakšne utehe v preteklosti, v svojevrstnem muzeju, kamor so pospravljena montažna življenja pregnancev in beguncev, medtem ko životarijo.

V slovenščini lahko Ugrešićevo beremo od leta 1992, ko je izšel prevod romana *Forsiranje romana-reke* (prev. Denis Poniž), potem pa dolgo nič (če ne štejemo redkih prevodov v periodiki); šele leta 2005 je znova izšel prevod kakšnega njenega dela, in sicer romana *Ministarstvo boli* (prev. Klarisa Jovanović), leta 2006 prevod pomembne zbirke antipolitičnih esejev *Kultura laži* (prev. Maja Brodschneider Kotnik, Andrej Jaklič, Jana Unuk, Gregor Butala, Jurij Hudolin, Ivana Williams), leta 2010 pa dva prevoda – njene še vedno najbolj znane proze *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* (prev. Višnja Fičor) in romana *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje* (prev. Sonja Polanc).

Ob izidu romana *Forsiranje romana-reke* v slovenščini je Andrej Blatnik zapisal, da dejstvo, da je »v letu 1992 najpomembnejše delo iz sodobne svetovne književnosti, prevedeno v slovenščino, prišlo iz Zagreba, daje misliti. Težko bom prebolel, da je Lumi izdal to knjigo, preden smo jo zmogli uvrstiti v zbirko XX. stoletje.« Kontinuirana kakovost – to pa lahko zapišemo leta 2016, saj kompleksna, neposredna, izvirna in prepoznavna pisava Dubravke Ugrešić z leti in preizkušnjami, ki ji jih je na pot postavilo življenje, ni (z)bledela, temveč je postala »energična verbalna aerobika« (kot pravi v predgovoru k esejem v zbirki *Zabranjeno čitanje*), ki ne prizanaša ne bralcu ne avtorici te pisave in od obeh zahteva, da se opredelita, da zavzameta stališče, da povzdigneta glas – četudi kdaj boli.

From the Dissolution of Genres to Caustic Criticism

Durda Strsoglavec

Dubravka Ugrešić is a literary historian, a sharp and lucid essayist who doesn't mince words, an influential and much translated author, an occasional translator (for example, of Daniil Kharms and Boris Pilnyak), a prose writer who "sewed together" the cult Croatian novel *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* (*In the Jaws of Life*, 1981), adapted in 1984 into the equally popular film *U raljama života* (*In the Jaws of Life*, director Rajko Grlić), the recipient of many international literary awards, and a guest lecturer at European and American Universities. Since 1993, she has lived in the Netherlands, writing in Croatian, among other languages. She "exists in an in-between place," "lives in a no-man's land" and has "a surname with those little guys above the letters," as she put it. She received a bachelor's degree in Russian and comparative literature from the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences where she also worked from 1974 to 1993 in the Institute of Literary Theory, engaged above all in Russian literature and culture. Ugrešić is the author of the study *Nova ruska proza* (*New Russian Prose*, 1980), the co-editor with Aleksandar Flaker of a unique nine-volume encyclopedia, *Pojmovnik ruske avangarde* (*Glossary of the Russian Avant-garde*, 1984–1993), and the editor of an anthology of Russian prose, *Pljuska u ruci* (*Slap in the Hand*, 1989).

In 1971, Ugrešić's first literary creation, *Mali plamen* (*Little Flame*), was published, and then *Filip i Srećica* (*Filip and Little Joy*) in 1976, both for young adults. In 1978, she published a collection of fiction with the noteworthy title *Poza za prozu* (*A Pose for Prose*), and this work launched a successful series of short story collections and novels in which the exploration of a number of innovative literary processes became an autonomous part of Ugrešić's literary creation: the patchwork novel *In the Jaws of Life*, the intertextual short stories in *Život je bajka* (*Life Is a Fairy Tale*, 1983), and the interdiscursive novel *Forsiranje romana-reke* (*Fording the Stream of Consciousness*, 1988). With these three works, she created a fictional world in which new narrative strategies were presented in a very readable way. On the one hand, fiction emerged from real life facts; on the other hand, faction, or the actualized metaphor, sometimes emerged from fiction. Later, she increasingly turned towards non-fiction and

the literary essay: for example, *Američki fjkcionar* (*Have a Nice Day: From the Balkan War to the American Dream*, 1993), *Kultura laži* (*The Culture of Lies*, 1996), a collection of essays that was first published in Dutch in 1995 (*De cultuur van leugens*), *Zabranjeno čitanje* (*Thank You for Not Reading*, 2001), a collection of essays that was first published in Dutch (*Verboden te lezen*) in the same year, *Nikog nema doma* (*Nobody's Home*, 2005), *Napad na minibar* (*Attack on the Minibar*, 2010); *Europa u sepiji* (*Europe in Sepia*, 2013); *Karaoke kultura* (*Karaoke Culture*, 2015, also the name of the independent essay that was first published in the collection *Attack on the Minibar*). During this period, she also published fiction: *Muzej bezuvjetne predaje* (*The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, 2001–2002), which first came out in Dutch (*Museum van onvoorwaardelijke overgave*) in 1997; *Ministarstvo boli* (*The Ministry of Pain*, 2004), and; *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje* (*Baba Yaga Laid an Egg*, 2008).

The characteristics of Dubravka Ugrešić's prose (the intermingling of the personal and the public, East and West, politics and culture, high and low literature, the syncretism of genres, autopoetics, autoreferentiality, intertextuality, and interdiscursivity) with which we became acquainted before her ex-communication from Croatian society and culture (this occurred at the beginning of the 1990s because of the critical response of then ultranationalist policies of Croatia) are also evident in her essays. *The Culture of Lies* is a collection of anti-political essays published in the Netherlands in 1995 and a year later in Croatia by the publishing house Arkzin and its imprint Bastard. The partly literarized essays in this collection pose questions and demand answers about our own responsibility for the Yugoslav Wars of Secession and the disintegration of Federal Yugoslavia, for everything the war brought, and the loss of the identity we once had. Now we must ask ourselves about whether that identity was real – and the answer is probably no – about the poisonous consequences of nationalist propaganda and the redemption of killing, destruction, about cleansing the world of everything other and different, and about “the border between before and after, between one and another time, one and another reality, one and another utopia, between the past and the future.” The taste of the essays in *The Culture of Lies* is acrid and bitter. It is the same taste that is in the mouth of “all those who tell their own truth in these terrible war times. Terrible times are usually collective times. The truth is only what may be smoothly built into the picture which the collective accepts as the truth.”

We also discover how we get to the point where a lie becomes the highest truth in Ugrešić's collection of essays *Thank You for Not Reading* (2001), a book that emerged from the internal struggle between the following duality: that writers should not be involved with the "dirty laundry" of their craft, and that writers should not close their eyes to the "dirty laundry" of their craft. The writer Dubravka Ugrešić never closes her eyes to anything. In recent collections, she has refused to close her eyes in particular to the general standardization or the unification of culture and other tastes, to dumbing down, to blind and uncritical acceptance of patterns of behaviour and reflection, to second-rate imitations and manipulation; to the culture of karaoke and cultural narcissism, a metaphorical sign of the times, in which, instead of the individual and personal freedom that we once strived for, we get the freedom to imitate, which is realized only in an intellectually constricted world.

Vitriol and bitterness is also present in Ugrešić's prose works written after her departure from Croatia, after her "unconditional surrender", to borrow a phrase from the title of one of her novels, which thematizes exile as fate and exile as a choice as well as the establishment of an identity that will please others, the so-called "hosts," and wandering through the present while searching for some kind of consolation in the past, in a museum where a montage of the lives of the persecuted and the refugees as they attempt to scrape together an existence is the main exhibition.

Ugrešić has been available in Slovenian since 1992, when her novel *Fording the Stream of Consciousness* was published in Denis Poniž's translation. This was followed by a long hiatus (if you do not count occasional translations in magazines) that lasted until 2005, when another Ugrešić novel came out, this one *The Ministry of Pain* (trans. Klarisa Jovanović) immediately followed by an important collection of anti-political essays entitled *The Culture of Lies* (trans. Maja Brodschneider Kotnik, Andrej Jaklič, Jana Unuk, Gregor Butala, Jurij Hudolin, and Ivana Williams). In 2010, two more of Ugrešić's works came out in Slovenian – her most well known novels *In the Jaws of Life* (trans. Višnja Fičor) and *Baba Yaga Laid an Egg* (trans. Sonja Polanc).

When the novel *Fording the Stream of Consciousness* was published in Slovenian translation, Andrej Blatnik wrote that the fact that "the most important work in contemporary international literature translated into Slovenian in 1992 came from Zagreb is something to

think about. It will be hard to get over the fact that Lumi published this book before we were able to place it in the *XX. stoletje* collection.” Given the complex, direct, and distinctly original writing of Dubravka Ugrešić, the continuation of quality – something we can strive for in 2016 – does not pale with the years and experience that she has gathered on her path through life, but rather becomes “energetic verbal aerobics” (to use a phrase from an essay in *Thank You for Not Reading*). This is writing that acts without restraint on both the reader and the author, and demands from both a definition, a stance, a raised voice – even when it hurts.

Translated by Erica Johnson Debeljak

Doba kože

Mnogo je vremena Snjeguljica tako proležala u lijesu i nije venula, činilo se da je samo usnula: ostala joj sva ljepota, bijaše sveudilj bijela kao snijeg, rumena kao ruža, crnokosa kao ebanovina.

Braća Grimm, *Snjeguljica i sedam patuljaka*

1.

Uvijek se naoštrim kada čujem izlisanu (a pritom ambiciozniju neko ikada prije) repliku da *život piše romane*. Da se razumijemo: kada bi život pisao romane, književnosti ne bi bilo. Možda je književnost na izdisaju, ali njezina opća slabost nije se dogodila zbog historijske pobjede života nad književnošću, već zbog književna samouništenja na kome su predano radili sami participanti književnih procesa: izdavači gladni novca, lijeni urednici, potkupljivi kritičari, neambiciozni čitaoci i netaleantirani autori gladni slave. A što se odnosa književnosti i života tiče, stvari ugrubo stoje ovako: u temelju književne priče stoji trač. Svi mi volimo znati što se događa drugima, čak i kada se radi o tome što su drugi imali za ručak. Jesu li se stvari promijenile s novim medijima? Ne, glad za tračem samo se pojačala. Tračeri tvitaju, tekstaju, lajkaju, fejsbukiraju. Socijalne mreže njihov su prirodni okoliš. Reality književnost, književnost koja se bavi privatnim životom u njegovim najsitnijim detaljima, dostigla je danas svoj vrhunac. Nekadašnje hagiografije o svecima u međuvremenu su žanrovski evoluirale u biografije, autobiografije i memoare. Jednom induciranu glad za tračem teško je zaustaviti, a i svi smo u međuvremenu postali svecima. Razapinjemo vlastitu kožu, spremno pokazujemo unutrašnje organe, svatko je izložak u izlogu svoje mesnice.

2.

Slaveni imaju priličan broj jezičnih fraza vezanih uz kožu. Imati *debelu kožu*, *iskočiti iz kože*, *istjerati koga iz kože*, *iznijeti cijelu kožu*, *biti krvav ispod kože*, *odratiti nekome kožu*, *osjetiti na vlastitoj koži*, *platiti kao vuk kožom*, *zaći nekome pod kožu*, *ticati se nečije kože*, *skupo prodati kožu*, *biti u nečijoj koži*, *učiti na vlastitoj koži*, *biti vuk u janjećoj koži*, *dobro se potkožiti*, *svući (se) do gole kože*... Koža je nešto veoma intimno i, što se intimnosti tiče, dominira nad metaforom srca. Dok je naše srce spremno da voli cijelo čovječanstvo, nas voli samo naša koža.

U slavenskim jezicima ne postoje dvije riječi za dvije vrste koža, kao u engleskome (*skin, leather*), njemačkome (*Haut, Leder*), holandskome (*huid, leer*), španjolskome (*piel, cuero*) ili talijanskome (*pelle, cuoio*), na primjer. Slaveni upotrebljavaju istu riječ za kožu koja pokriva naše tijelo i kožu od koje se prave cipele. Možda je odsustvo razlike u jeziku civilizacijsko pitanje? Možda otuda, iz civilizacijske neistančanosti, proizlazi očaranost siromašaka *pravom* kožom?

Tako su bivši Jugoslaveni u drugoj polovici 20 stoljeća putovali po cipele, torbice i jakne (dakako, od *prave* kože) u susjednu Italiju, u Trst. Kasnije su skakali u jeftiniji Istanbul i dovlačili kožne odjevne predmete na jugoslavenske buvljake. Tip sa zlatnim lančićem oko vrata, odjeven u kožnu jaknu, spadao je u opće poželjnog partnera za parenje. U vrijeme popularnosti *prave* kože smatralo se da muškarac u kožnoj jakni može sve. Ubrzo su jeftine imitacije neutralizirale privlačnost prave kože, a ljudski mužjaci i ženke odjeveni u kožne jakne skliznuli su na neko vrijeme u socijalno stigmatiziranu ljudsku grupaciju (tzv. "ljudsko smeće"). A ona, koža, kliznula je u kožnu subkulturu i ondje je postala "carica", fetiš, kult.

3.

Kao i svi humanistički orijentirani intelektualci pred znanošću padam na ponizna koljena. Nitko me ne može impresionirati više od matematičara, fizičara, astronoma, liječnika i statističara; nitko, naime, nije u stanju staviti stvari na pravo mjesto kao oni. Tako je u hrvatskim novinama nedavno objavljen članak s uzbudljivim naslovom *Države debelih, poput Hrvatske, teret su za Zemlju*. Ispada da među deset najtežih zemalja na svijetu Amerika zauzima prvo mjesto, Hrvatska, odmah iza Kuvajta, treće. Najlakše su azijske i afričke zemlje, od kojih prvo mjesto po lakoći zauzima Sjeverna Koreja. U članku se citira najnovija studija objavljena u časopisu *BMC Public Health*, koja tvrdi da je prosječna masa odraslih stanovnika zemaljske kugle 62 kilograma (U SAD je ona znatno viša, 80.7 kg). Kad se sve zbroti, odraslo stanovništvo teži 287 milijuna tona, od čega 15 milijuna tona otpada na pretjeranu težinu, a 3,5 milijuna tona na pretilost. Debljina je nepravilno raspoređena: Amerikanci čine samo pet posto svjetske populacije i pritom trećinu viška svjetske tjelesne težine. Prof. Ian Roberts kaže da znanstvenici danas ne razmišljaju koliko usta treba prehraniti već koliko mesa. "Svi su shvatili činjenicu da porast broja stanovnika ugrožava globalnu održivost okoliša,

a naše istraživanje pokazuje da je i debljina velika prijetnja. Ako ne smanjimo i natalitet i debljinu, imamo slabe izgleda”, rekao je profesor Roberts. Problem je u mesu, u ljudetini.

Stigmatizacija debelih našla je podršku u znanostima poput demografije i ekologije, medicine i socio-ekonomije. Otuda, iz medicinskih znanosti, dolazi uvjerenje da su debeli zarazni (otkrivaju virusa Ad36), te da će onaj tko se druži s debelima i sam postati debeat. Adele, krupna britanska pjevačica, doživjela je nakon svoje američke turneje kritiku na nekoj lokalnoj američkoj TV stanici. Lokalna fitness instruktorka, puna pravedničkog gnjeva kakav znaju imati samo fitness instruktorki, ustvrdila je da je Adele opasnost za američko društvo jer američkim djevojčicama šalje poruku da je biti debeat I biti pritom pjevačica moguće, što uopće nije točno. Tko zna, možda će u skoroj budućnosti slična poruka otvoriti sezonu lova i promptno vratiti neku buduću Adele tamo odakle se drznula pustiti svoj božanski glas, u geto siromašnih, debelih i talentiranih.

4.

Muškarci u crnim kožnim kaputima u jednom povjesnom trenutku zaista su mogli sve, samo što se na njih u međuvremenu zaboravilo. Knjiga “Lenjinovi balzameri” (*Lenin’s Embalmers*¹) neobično je svjedočenje o koži slavnoga revolucionara, simbola jednoga od najvećih, najzujbudljivijih i najkatastrofalnijih socijalnih eksperimenata u povijesti čovječanstva. Ilja Zabarski bio je sin Borisa Zabarskoga, sovjetskoga biokemičara koji je (zajedno s prof. Vorobjovim) balzamirao Lenjina. Ilja Zabarski, i sam biokemičar, radio u timu stručnjaka Lenjinova Mauzoleja u Moskvi gotovo dvadeset godina. Njegova ispovijest fantastičan je uvid u dugi život mumije, ali i život ljudi zaposlenih oko njezina održavanja.

U knjizi najviše plijene pažnju opisi spašavanja Lenjinove kože, te stalne napetosti oko njezina mogućeg raspadanja. Možemo samo zamišljati kako se cio tim vrhunskih stručnjaka osjećao kada je samo dva mjeseca nakon (prvog) balzimiranja Lenjina specijalno formirana komisija za utvrđivanje stanja Lenjinova leša (krajem marta 1924) ustvrdila otprilike sljedeće:

“Koža je požutjela, a oko očiju, nosa, ušiju i sljepoočica pojavila se diskolorizacija. U frontalnom i parijetalnom dijelu lubanje po-

¹ Ilya Zbarsky & Samuel Hutchinson, *Lenin’s Embalmers*, The Harvill Press 1999.

javile su se ljubičaste mrlje. Tamo gdje je lubanja bila otvorena da bi se mogao odstraniti mozak, oko centimetar u promjeru, koža se uvukla. Vrh nosa bio je prekriven tamnim pigmentom, nosnice su postale tanke poput papira; poluotvorene oči utonule su u očne duplje; usnice su se rastvorile tako da su se vidjeli zubi; na rukama su se pojavile smeđe pjege, a nokti su bili poplavljeni.”²

Nakon ovog katastrofalnog izvještaja, Lenjinu su izvađeni pluća, jetra i drugi unutrašnji organi, očne jabučice zamijenjene su umjetnicima, unutrašnjost tijela isprana destiliranom vodom i moćnim anti-septikom, tijelo tretirano formalinom, acetinskom kiselinom, alkoholom, glicerinom, kloridom i nekim drugim sastojcima. Lenjinova koža ovoga puta bila je spašena, a ujedno i životi znanstvenoga tima, iako ne svih njegovih članova. Među mnogim nerazjašnjenim smrtima toga vremena nalazi se i ona prof. Vorobjova, glavnog izumitelja sovjetske metode balzimiranja.

Jedan od najbizarnijih detalja u knjizi odnosi se na Nadeždu Krupsku (Lenjinovu suprugu) koja je prilikom jedne od posjeta Mauzoleju 1938 godine sa ženskom gorčinom priznala da je Lenjin ostao jednako mladim (!), dok se ona u međuvremenu vidno postarala.

Tim znanstvenika nakon 1945 godine pojačan je, znanstveni uvjeti su poboljšani, a tim je od samo četiri, koliko ih je bilo 1939, povećan na trideset i pet vrhunskih znanstvenika, histologa, anatoma, biokemičara, liječnika. Svi oni bavili su se prije svega istraživanjima strukture kože i potkožnog staničnog tkiva, te autolitičkih faktora koji uzrokuju raspad tkiva. Između 1949–1995 institut Lenjinova Mauzoleja internacionalizirao je svoju djelatnost i balzamirao tijela Georgija Dimitrova, Klementa Gottwalda, Ho Ši Mina, Agostinha Neto, Lindon Forbes Burnhama, Kim Il Sunga, te mongolskoga diktatora Horlogina Čojbalsana. Do devedesetih godina prošloga stoljeća većina slavnih mumija je spaljena. Staljin, koji je ležao uz Lenjina punih devet godina (1953–1961), također je spaljen.

Tim Lenjinova Mauzoleja nije raspušten nego je nastavio s radom, ali sada kao visoko specijalizirani pogrebni zavod. Korisnici skupih

² *Isto*, str. 79.

pogrebnih usluga danas su ruski bogataši, uglavnom mafijaši. Balzameri i danas upotrebljavaju isti sastav tekućine koja je bila korištena prilikom balzimiranja Lenjina i uštrcavaju u mrtve arterije istih osam litara balzama. Balzam je toliko efikasan da tijela ostaju u istom stanju i godinu dana nakon pokapanja. Ilja Zabarski tvrdi da nakon injektiranja balzama u arterije koža mrtvaca promptno mijenja modru mrtvačku boju u boju slonovače.

Tim bivšeg Lenjinova Mauzoleja danas, kao visoko specijalizirani pogrebni zavod, prodaje i lijesove. Najtraženiji su lijesovi s oznakom "Made in USA". Najskuplji su ekskluzivno ruski lijesovi izrađeni od skupocjenog kristala, a najpopularniji model lijesa je "Al Capone", rađen prema lijesu viđenome u filmu "Kum".³

A što se Lenjinove mumije tiče njezina sudbina rješava se već dvadesetak godina i još nije riješena. Neke ruske novine i on-line portali podsjetu na problem povremeno otvarajući javnu raspravu: održavati mumiju i dalje "u životu" ili je pokopati. Rezultati tih rasprava uvijek su neriješeni: obično posve zanemariv postotak glasova prevagne na ovu ili onu stranu.

5.

Peter van der Helm, vlasnik salona tetovaže u Amsterdamu, došao je na ideju da otkupljuje komade tetovirane kože. "Svi provode svoj život u potrazi za besmrtnošću, a ovo je jednostavan način da dio toga dobiju", izjavio je Peter van der Helm. Salon se zove "Zidovi i koža", a već tridesetak Peter van der Helmovih klijenata oporučno je ostavilo svoju kožu novoosnovanoj zakladi, i svatko je platio za postupak nekoliko stotina eura. Kada klijenti umru, patolog će im izrezati kožu s tetovažom i poslati je na daljnju obradu. Klijent Floris Hirschfeld kaže: "Ljudi drže punjene životinje u svojim kućama, zašto onda ne bi i kožu. (...) Ako ja mogu biti sačuvan na taj način,

³ Čini se da su nakon smrti komunizma neki ljudi postali neobično kreativni u sferi grobljanskih poslova. Tako se Poljak Zbigniew Lindner dosjetio da osvježi poslovni image svoje firme za izradu lijesova s kataloškim fotografijama golih ljepotica i lijesova, što je užasnulo religijski osjetljive Poljake. "Namjera nam je bila poručiti ljudima da lijes ne bi trebao biti sveti objekt. Riječ je o komadu namještaja, to je posljednji krevet na kojemu ćete spavati. To nije religijski simbol. To je proizvod", rekao je Zbigniew i dodao: "Odlučili smo predstaviti ljepotu Poljakinja i naših lijesova. Toliko je truda uloženo u njih, a vidite ih samo prilikom pogreba."

da, molim, zašto da ne”. Osim toga, “neki ljudi mi toliko znače da želim da zauvijek budu sa mnom, i ovo je način da se to i ostvari”, rekao je Hirschfeld, koji si je na leđima dao istetovirati portret pokojne majke. “Vincent van Gogh bio je siromašan čovjek kada je umro. Vi i ja ne možemo si priuštiti Van Gogha. Tetovaža je umjetnost običnih ljudi”, dodao je.

Ova vijestica pojavila se u holandskim i drugim novinama nakon Willem-Alexandrova govora holandskim građanima sredinom rujna 2013. Televizijski gledaoci pratili su tradicionalnu vožnju zlatne kraljevske kočije do palače, gdje su na zlatne tronove u Ridderzaalu sjeli jedni od najpotkoženijih predstavnika europskih kraljevskih loza, Willem Alexander i njegova žena Maxima. Holandski kralj objavio je svojim podanicima da je socijalna država mrtva te da na njezino mjesto stupa “društvo participacije”, u kojem će holandski podanici morati preuzeti punu odgovornost za svoju budućnost, sami stvoriti svoje “socijalne i financijske mreže”, drugim riječima sami se pobrinuti za svoju kožu.

6.

Kada promatramo kulturni pejzaž koji nas trenutno okružuje čini nam se da smo od šarenila i oblika malo što u stanju jasno razabrati. Pa ipak, ako se pomnije zagledamo i ako, naravno, ne frkćemo s prezirom na sveprisutnu popularnu kulturu, onda bismo mogli reći da u tom pejzažu, lišenom božje hijerarhije, dominira ljudetina, ljudsko meso. Tema ugrožene ljudetine i inače je omiljena tema popularne kulture: svoje zube u ljudsku kožu zarivali su “stranci”, vanzemaljci, vampiri, zombiji i kanibali. Ova tema pojavljuju se u žanrovskim romanima, stripovima, video-igramama i filmovima i, zajedno s mnogo tanjim korpusom ozbiljnih djela, složno gradi moderno mitsko polje za otčitavanje suvremenih ljudskih strahova, straha za vlastitu kožu, prije svega. Trilogija *The Hunger Games* Suzanne Collins (američki pandan ranije nastalog romana *Battle Royale* Koushuna Takamija) zahvaljuje svoju popularnost krajnje zaoštreno poruci: da bi ljudska jedinka danas sačuvala vlastitu kožu ona mora ubiti drugu ljudsku jedinku. Sličnu poruku varira Kazuo Ishiguro u romanu *Never Let Me Go* (zajedno s filmskom verzijom), gdje je svijet podjeljen na klonove, odnosno “donore” i “normalne ljude”. Sličnu poruku variraju i junaci filma *The Island*, Ewan McGregor i Scarlett Johansson. Njih dvoje glume “harvestable beings”, ljudske klonove predviđene za “žetvu organa”.

Većina ljudi u temama popularne kulture očitava svoju trenutnu okružujuću realnost i predviđa svoju skorbu budućnost. Lov na ljudske organe, na primjer, zamotan u protektivni religiozno-filantrop-ski staniol, zaista postoji, a granice dopustivoga na tome polju svakim danom sve se više pomiču. Tako se granica od organa ubranih s mrtvih donora – praksa koja više nikoga ne uzbuđuje – pomakla na žive donore, a zatim na ilegalnu prodaju vlastitih organa (od krvi pa nadalje) u svrhu preživljavanja. U mitskoj priči o organima samo je davalac (djelomično) otkriven, primalac ostaje skrivenim. Anonimni primalac preko svojih ilegalnih dilera kupuje ili otima organ koji mu treba ne propitujući vlastitu etičku poziciju. Tako se granice dopustivoga pomiču na morbidnu pljačku, na recentnu vijest o kineskom dvogodišnjaku koji je nestao da bi koji sat kasnije bio nađen kako leži u prašini, s izvađenim rožnjačama. Vješti kradljivci organa ne dolaze više iz svemira. Danas su oni možda naši prvi susjedi koji će za sitan novac pokazati prstom na svježe i lako dohvatljive bubrege ili rožnjače. Granice pomiče i sama medicinska praksa koja produžujući život bogatima ubija siromašne i tako se bavi golim vampirizmom. Jer kako drukčije zvati praksu zamjene stare krvi mladom, koju na skupim klinikama za podmlađivanje prakticiraju bogati klijenti?

Popularna kultura – novo mitološko polje – pomaže svojim konzumentima da svare nesvarljivu realnost, da se pomire, da je prihvate, da je registriraju, da je izbjegnu, da se eventualno pobune protiv nje, kako već tko. Popularna kultura čini to na neusporedivo efikasniji način od bilo koga ili bilo čega drugoga. Hannibal Lecter – junak romana Thomasa Harrisa, koji svoju popularnost zahvaljuje ponajviše brilijantnoj glumačkoj izvedbi Anthony Hopkinsa – izgubio je tokom svoga tridesetogodišnjeg života duboko odbojne i zadobio gotovo romantične crte. Junak istoga filma, Buffalo Bill, kojega opsjeda ideja da je ljudska koža savršena tkanina od koje se mogu sašiti odjevni predmeti, ima danas svoje umjetničke “sljedbenike” u radovima Jessice Harrison, na primjer, umjetnice koja u svojoj seriji “Handheld” izlaže minijaturne komade namještaja koji staju na dlan, a izgledaju kao da su izrađeni od prave ljudske kože. Umjetnički projekt umjetnice Shelley Jackson “Skin” – koji poziva na sudjelovanje sve one koji su spremni da trajno utetoviraju na svojoj koži neku (englesku) riječ i potvrde da su vlasnici tetovaže – preokreće mračnu Buffalovu opsesiju ljudskom kožom u glorifikaciju umjetničkog kolektiviteta i smrtnosti umjetnosti (*mortal art*).

7.

Granice su izbljebile, i nije više jasno što je umjetnost, a što zbilja, što je imitacija života, a što sam život, i što imitacija imitacije. Pa ipak, čini se da je najjadnija situacija ona u kojoj naš život počinje sličiti na jeftine horror filmove. U siječnju 2014 bila sam promatrač scene koja se odigrala u zagrebačkom tramvaju. Zagreb je glavni grad Hrvatske. Hrvatska je novoprimiteljena članica Evropske Zajednice i, prema časopisu *BMC Public Health*, "teret za Zemlju". Sve u svemu, četirilmilijunska zemljica s pola milijuna nezaposlenih, i zastrašujućim brojem siromašnih.

Na tramvajskom sjedištu umorno je sjedila skromno odjevena krupna žena kasnih srednjih godina. Pored nje stajao je onizak muškarac i mjerio je ostrim, nervoznim pogledom.

"Dobro se živi, ehe..." – rekao je neodređeno muškarac i zapiljio u ženu pogled koji kao da je prolazio kroz ušicu revolvera.

"Molim?" rekla je tiho žena.

"Dobro se živi..." , ponovio je glasnije i oštrije muškarac.

"Ne razumijem što želite reći..." , ponovila je žena iako je izraz njezina lica bilo jasno da naslućuje što muškarac želi reći.

"Kažem samo da neki ljudi dobro žive..." , nije odustajao muškarac.

Žena je pognula glavu i kao da se unutrašnje upela da se tjelesno smanji.

"Ja imam četrdeset kila, inženjer sam po struci i nemam posla..." , muškarac je šibao ženu riječima. Pritom očito nije imao ništa protiv da ga čuju i drugi putnici u tramvaju.

"Zar sam ja za to kriva?! Zašto se ne obratite vlastima..." , tiho je dobacila uboga žena i ustala da izađe iz tramvaja.

Bila je to mučna scena. Ljudsko meso teško četrdeset kila optuživalo je ljudsko meso teško devedesetak kila, uvjereno da meso od devedeset kila ne može biti gladno. I iako je putnica prema svojoj dobi mogla ojađenom muškarcu biti starija sestra ili čak majka, i iako bi se ojađeni muškarac mogao zakleti da mu takvošto nije na pameti, istančanije uho moglo je u njegovu protestu uloviti i ton seksualne neadekvatnosti. Žena u tramvaju očito je ni kriva ni dužna uzrujala muškarca, bila je poput prikaze iz najdublje podsvijesti, banalni simbol njegova gubitništva (debeli su bogati, mršavi siromašni). On bi je rado bio udario, rado bi joj zavrnuo šiju, pustio joj krv, rado bi zario zube u to meso duplo teže od njegovoga, zarezao bi u tu

tjelesinu koja se razvalila na tramvajskom sjedištu, ravnodušna (*“Zar sam ja za to kriva?! Zašto se ne obratite vlastima...”*) prema njegovoj mucu.

8.

Mnoga post-komunistička, tranzicijska društva pretvorila su svoje građane u zombije. U dvadeset i prvom stoljeću očekuje nas “društvo participacije”, rekao bi holandski kralj Willem Alexander. “Self-management”, rekli bi spretni na jeziku pratiodci suvremenih trendova. I “participacija” i “self-management” eufemizmi su za poruku oštru poput skalpela: čovjek je danas sveden na vlastitu, голу kožu.

Cio tim stručnjaka-balzamera godinama se predano brinuo za svoje remek-djelo, za svoju mumiju. Najslavnija moderna mumija na svijetu godinama je hranila i štitila cio tim stručnjaka, i neko vrijeme simbolizirala vjeru da je društvo jednakosti, bratstva i slobode moguće. Današnji saloni tetovaže – minijaturne replike Lenjinova mauzoleja – držat će za svega par stotina eura svoje klijente u vjeri da je njihova istetovirana koža umjetničko djelo koje zaslužuje vječnost.

Da, živimo u doba kože. Naše doba – lešina uz koju smo se stisli – nije u najboljem stanju. Koža lešine sve više tamni, pojavljuju se ljubičaste mrlje, lubanja, iz koje je odstranjen mozak, napukla je i povukla za sobom kožu, posvuda se širi prijeteći tamni pigment, nokti su posve poplavljeli... Iscrpljujemo se, balzama nikad dosta, prekrivamo mrtvačke mrlje tekućim puderom i – vlastitim tijelima. Posvuda se širi zadah, koji se uvlači u našu odjeću, u našu kosu, u naša pluća, ničim se ne da istjerati. Ima nas kao žutih mrava, nezamislivo mnogo, a nismo u stanju odrediti veličinu lešine koju opslužujemo. Možda se treba ostaviti uzaludna posla, možda smo odavno odslužili svoje. Možda je vrijeme da rastvorimo vrata i izvučemo lešinu na sunce. Možda sunčana zraka spretno padne i zapali iskrnu, možda lešina bukne sama od sebe. Vatra je, kažu, moćno dezinfekcijsko sredstvo.

Siječanj 2014.

Čas kože

Tako je Sneguljčica dolgo dolgo ležala v krsti in ni strohnela, temveč je bila videti, kakor da spi, še vedno vsa bela kot sneg, rdeča kot kri in črnolasa kot ebenovina.

Jacob in Wilhelm Grimm, *Sneguljčica*

1.

Vedno postanem našpičena, kadar slišim obrabljeno (pri tem pa ambicioznejšo kot kdajkoli prej) repliko, *da življenje piše romane*. Da se razumemo: če bi življenje pisalo romane, književnosti ne bi bilo. Književnost je mogoče na smrtni postelji, vendar do njene splošne nemoči ni prišlo zaradi zgodovinske zmage življenja nad književnostjo, temveč zaradi književnega samouničenja, h kateremu so predano pripomogli sami udeleženci književnih procesov: založniki, lačni denarja, leni uredniki, podkupljivi kritiki, neambiciozni bralci in nenadarjeni avtorji, lačni slave. Kar pa zadeva razmerje med književnostjo in življenjem, so zadeve v grobem takšne: literarna zgodba temelji na čenči. Vsi radi vemo, kaj se dogaja drugim, tudi če gre za to, kaj so drugi imeli za kosilo. So se zadeve z novimi mediji spremenile? Ne, lakota po čenčah se je samo povečala. Čenčachi *tvitajo, esemesajo, všečkajo, fejsbukajo*. Družbena omrežja so njihovo naravno okolje. Resničnostna književnost, književnost, ki se ukvarja z zasebnim življenjem v njegovih najdrobnejših podrobnostih, je danes dosegla vrh. Nekdanje hagiografije o svetnikih so se medtem žanrsko razvile v biografije, avtobiografije in memoare. Ko je lakota po čenčah enkrat vpeljana, jo je težko ustaviti, pa tudi vsi smo medtem postali svetniki. Razpenjamo lastno kožo, brez omahovanja razkazuujemo notranje organe, vsakdo je razstavni predmet v izložbi svoje mesnice.

2.

Slovani imajo precejšnje število jezikovnih fraz, povezanih s kožo. *Imeti debelo kožo, skočiti iz kože, da(ja)ti koga iz kože, odnesti celo kožo, biti krvav pod kožo, odreti komulčemu kožo, občutiti na lastni koži, nositi svojo kožo naprodaj, zlesti komu pod kožo, biti pisano na kožo, drago prodati svojo kožo, biti v koži koga, izkusiti kaj na lastni koži, biti volk v ovčji koži, premočiti do kože ...* Koža je nekaj zelo intimnega in, kar zadeva intimnost, prevladuje nad metaforo srca. Naše srce je pripravljeno ljubiti celotno človeštvo, nas pa ljubi samo naša koža.

V slovanskih jezikih ne obstajata dve besedi za dve vrsti kože kakor v angleščini (*skin, leather*), nemščini (*Haut, Leder*), nizozemščini (*huid, leer*), španščini (*piel, cuero*) ali italijanščini (*pelle, cuoio*), na primer.* Slovani uporabljajo isto besedo za kožo, ki pokriva naše telo, in za kožo, iz katere se izdelujejo čevlji. Mogoče je odsotnost razlike v jeziku civilizacijsko vprašanje? Mogoče od tod, iz civilizacijske nepretanjenosti, izhaja očaranost revežev nad *pravo* kožo?

Tako so nekdanji Jugoslovani v drugi polovici 20. stoletja potovali po čevlje, torbice in jakne (iz *prave* kože, seveda) v sosednjo Italijo, v Trst. Pozneje so skakali v Carigrad in od tam vlačili usnjena oblačila na jugoslovanske boljše trge. Tip z zlato verižico okrog vratu, oblečen v usnjeno jakno, je sodil med splošno zaželenega partnerja za paritev. V času popularnosti usnja je veljalo mnenje, da lahko moški v usnjeni jakni naredi vse. Kmalu so cenene imitacije nevtralizirale privlačnost usnja, človeški samci in samice, oblečeni v usnjene jakne, pa so za nekaj časa spolzeli v družbeno stigmatizirano človeško skupino (t. i. izmečki človeške družbe). *Prava* koža pa je spolzela v kožno subkulturo in tam postala »carica«, fetiš, kult.

3.

Kakor vsi humanistično usmerjeni intelektualci padem pred znatnostjo na ponižna kolena. Nihče me ne more navdušiti bolj kot matematiki, fiziki, astronomi, zdravniki in statistiki; nihče drug namreč ni sposoben stvari postaviti na pravo mesto kakor oni. Tako je bil v hrvaških časopisih pred kratkim objavljen članek z vznemirljivim naslovom *Države debelih, kakršna je Hrvaška, so breme za Zemljo*. Videti je, da med desetimi najtežjimi državami na svetu Amerika zaseda prvo mesto, Hrvaška, takoj za Kuvajtom, tretje. Najlažje so azijske in afriške države, med katerimi prvo mesto v lahkosti zaseda Severna Koreja. V članku je citirana najnovejša študija, objavljena v reviji *BMC Public Health*, ki trdi, da je povprečna masa odraslih prebivalcev zemeljske krogle 62 kilogramov (v ZDA je znatno višja, 80,7 kg). Ko se vse sešteje, odraslo prebivalstvo tehta 287 milijonov ton, pri čemer se 15 milijonov ton nanaša na prekomerno težo, 3,5 milijona pa na debelost. Debelost je razporejena nesorazmerno: Američani zavzemajo samo pet odstotkov svetovnega prebivalstva in pri tem tretjino presežka svetovne telesne teže. Prof. Ian Roberts

* Tudi v slovenščini obstaja razlikovanje: *koža* in *usnje* (pogovorno *prava koža*). Zaradi sloga izvirnika v prevodu sobivajo izrazi *koža*, *usnje* in *prava koža*. Op. prev.

pravi, da znanstveniki danes ne premišlujejo, koliko ust je treba prehraniti, temveč koliko mesa. »Vsi so dojeli dejstvo, da porast števil prebivalcev ogroža globalno trajnostno okoljsko ureditev, naša raziskava pa kaže, da je tudi debelost velika grožnja. Če ne bomo zmanjšali tako rodnosti kot debelosti, nam slabo kaže,« je rekel profesor Roberts. Težava je v mesu, v človešcini.

Stigmatizacija debelih je našla podporo v znanostih, kakršne so demografija in ekologija, medicina in socioekonomija. Od tod, iz medicinskih znanosti, prihaja prepričanje, da je debelost nalezljiva bolezen (odkritje virusa Ad-36) in da bo tisti, ki se druži z debelimi, tudi sam postal debel. Adele, zajetna britanska pevka, je bila po ameriški turneji deležna kritike na neki lokalni ameriški TV-postaji. Lokalna inštruktorica fitnesa, polna pravičniškega gneva, kakršnega znajo imeti samo inštruktorji fitnesa, je zatrdila, da Adele predstavlja nevarnost za ameriško družbo, ker ameriškim deklicam sporoča, da je biti debel in hkrati biti pevka mogoče, kar sploh ne drži. Kdo ve, mogoče bo v bližnji prihodnosti podobno sporočilo odprlo sezono lova in promptno vrnilo kakšno prihodnjo Adele tja, od koder si je drznila oglasiti se z božanskim glasom, v geto revnih, debelih in nadarjenih.

4.

Moški v črnih usnjenih plaščih so v nekem zgodovinskem trenutku resnično lahko naredili vse, le da se je medtem nanje pozabilo. Knjiga Leninovi balzamerji (*Lenin's Embalmers*¹) je nenavadno pričevanje o koži slavnega revolucionarja, simbola enega največjih, najvznemirljivejših in najkatastrofalnejših družbenih poskusov v zgodovini človeštva. Ilja Zbarski je sin Borisa Zbarskega, sovjetskega biokemika, ki je (s prof. Vorobjovom) balzamiral Lenina. Ilja Zbarski, tudi sam biokemik, je delal v skupini strokovnjakov Leninovega mavzoleja v Moskvi skoraj dvajset let. Njegova izpoved je fantastičen uvid v dolgo življenje mumi-je, pa tudi v življenje ljudi, zaposlenih z njenim vzdrževanjem.

V knjigi so najboljši opisi reševanja Leninove kože in nenehne napetosti zaradi njenega mogočega razpada. Samo predstavljamo si lahko, kako se je počutila celotna skupina vrhunskih strokovnjakov, ko je samo dva meseca po (prvem) balzamiranju Lenina posebej oblikovana komisija za ugotavljanje stanja Leninovega trupla (konec marca 1924) zatrdila približno naslednje:

¹ Ilya Zbarsky & Samuel Hutchinson: *Lenin's Embalmers*. The Harvill Press 1999.

»Koža je porumenela, okrog oči, nosu, ušes in senc pa se je pojavila razbarvanost. Na sprednjem in temenskem delu lobanje so se pojavile vijoličaste pege. Tam, kjer je bila lobanja odprta, da bi lahko odstranili možgane, približno centimeter v premeru, je bila koža vpotegnjena. Konica nosu je bila prekrita s temnim pigmentom, nosnice so postale tanke kot papir; napol zaprte oči so potonile v očesne votline; ustnice so se razprle, tako da so se videli zobje; na rokah so se pojavile rjave pege, nohti pa so pomodreli.«²

Po tem katastrofalnem poročilu so Leninu odstranili pljuča, jetra in druge notranje organe, očesna zrkla so zamenjali z umetnimi, notranjost telesa so sprali z destilirano vodo in močnim antiseptikom, truplo so obdelali s formalinom, očetno kislino, alkoholom, glicerinom, kloridom in nekimi drugimi sestavinami. Leninova koža je bila to pot rešena, hkrati pa tudi življenja znanstvene skupine, čeprav ne vseh njenih članov. Med mnogimi nepojasnenimi smrtmi tistega časa je tudi smrt prof. Vorobjova, glavnega izumitelja sovjetske metode balzamiranja.

Ena najbizarnjših podrobnosti v knjigi se nanaša na Nadeždo Krupsko (Leninovo soprogo), ki je ob nekem obisku mavzoleja leta 1938 z žensko grenkobo priznala, da je Lenin ostal enako mlad (!), sama pa se je medtem vidno postarala.

Po letu 1945 so skupino strokovnjakov povečali, znanstvene pogoje izboljšali, skupino pa so z zgolj štirih članov, kolikor jih je bilo leta 1939, povečali na petintrideset vrhunskih znanstvenikov, histologov, anatomov, biokemikov, zdravnikov. Vsi ti so se ukvarjali predvsem z raziskavami strukture kože in podkožnega celičnega tkiva ter avtolitičnih dejavnikov, ki povzročajo razpadanje tkiva. Inštitut Leninevega mavzoleja je v letih 1949–1995 svojo dejavnost internacionaliziral in balzamiral trupla Georgija Dimitrova, Klementa Gottwalda, Ho Ši Minha, Agostinha Neta, Lindna Forbesa Burnhama, Kima Il Sunga in mongolskega diktatorja Horlogijna Čojbalsana. Do devetdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja so večino slavnih mumij sežgali. Tudi Stalina, ki je ob Leninu ležal celih devet let (1953–1961), so sežgali. Skupine Leninevega mavzoleja niso razpustili, temveč je nadaljevala delo, vendar poslej kot visoko specializiran pogrebni zavod. Danes so uporabniki dragih pogrebnih storitev ruski bogataši, v glavnem

² Prav tam, str. 79.

mafijci. Balzamerji tudi danes uporabljajo enako sestavo tekočine, kot je bila uporabljena pri balzamiranju Lenina, in v mrtve arterije vbrizgavajo enako osem litrov balzama. Balzam je tako učinkovit, da trupla ostanejo enaka tudi leto po pokopu. Ilja Zbarski trdi, da koža mrtveca po vbrizganju balzama v arterije takoj spremeni modrikasto mrtvaško barvo v slonokoščeno.

Skupina nekdanjega Leninovega mavzoleja danes – kot visoko specializiran pogrebni zavod – prodaja tudi krste. Najbolj iskane so krste z oznako *Made in USA*. Najdražje so ekskluzivno ruske krste, izdelane iz dragocenega kristala, najpopularnejši model krste pa je Al Capone, narejen po krsti, videni v filmu *Boter*.³

Kar pa zadeva Leninovo mumijo, se njena usoda ureja že kakšnih dvajset let in še vedno ni urejena. Kakšni ruski časopisi in spletni portali spomnijo na težavo, ko občasno sprožijo javno razpravo: ali mumijo še naprej vzdrževati »pri življenju« ali jo pokopati. Rezultati teh razprav so vedno neodločeni: po navadi povsem zanemarljiv odstotek glasov prevesi jeziček na tehtnici na to ali na ono stran.

5.

Peter van der Helm, lastnik salona za tetoviranje v Amsterdamu, je prišel na idejo, da bo odkupoval kose tetovirane kože. »Življenje vseh poteka v iskanju nesmrtnosti, to pa je preprost način, da del tega dobijo,« je izjavil Peter van der Helm. Salon se imenuje *Zidovi in koža* in že kakšnih trideset strank Petra van der Helma je oporočilo svojo kožo novoustanovljenemu skladu in vsaka je za postopek plačala nekaj sto evrov. Ko bodo stranke umrle, jim bo patolog izrezal kožo s tetovažo in jo poslal v nadaljnjo obdelavo. Stranka Floris Hirschfeld pravi: »Ljudje imajo doma nagačene živali, zakaj ne bi imeli tudi kože. (...) Če sem lahko ohranjen na ta način, da, prosim, zakaj pa ne.« Poleg tega »mi nekateri ljudje pomenijo tako veliko, da si želim, da so za vedno z mano, in to je način, da se to

³ Zdi se, da so po padcu komunizma nekateri ljudje postali nenavadno ustvarjalni na pogrebem področju. Tako se je Poljak Zbigniew Lindner domislil, da bi poslovni imidž svojega podjetja za izdelavo krst osvežil s kataloškim fotografijami nagih lepotic in krst, na kar so se zgroženo odzvali versko občutljivi Poljaki. »Naš namen je bil ljudem sporočiti, da krsta naj ne bi bila sveti objekt. Gre za kos pohištva, to je zadnja postelja, v kateri boste spali. To ni verski simbol. To je izdelek,« je rekel Zbigniew in dodal: »Odločili smo se predstaviti lepoto Poljakinj in naših krst. Toliko truda je vloženega vanje, vidite pa jih zgolj na pogrebu.«

tudi uresniči,« je rekel Hirschfeld, ki si je dal na hrbtu vtetovirati portret pokojne matere. »Vincent van Gogh je bil revež, ko je umrl. Vi in jaz si ne moreva privoščiti van Gogha. Tetovaža je umetnost navadnih ljudi,« je dodal.

Ta novička se je pojavila v nizozemskih in drugih časopisih po govoru Willema-Alexandra Nizozemcem septembra 2013. Televizijski gledalci so spremljali tradicionalno vožnjo zlate kraljevske kočije do palače, kjer sta na zlata prestola v Ridderzaalu sedla ena najbolje preskrbljenih predstavnikov evropskih kraljevskih rodbin, Willem-Alexander in njegova žena Maxima. Nizozemski kralj je svojim podanikom sporočil, da je socialna država mrtva in da na njeno mesto prihaja »družba participacije«, v kateri bodo morali nizozemski podaniki prevzeti polno odgovornost za svojo prihodnost, sami ustvariti svoje »socialne in finančne mreže«, z drugimi besedami, sami poskrbeti za svojo kožo.

6.

Ko opazujemo kulturno krajino, ki nas trenutno obdaja, se nam zdi, da smo zaradi pisanosti in oblik malokaj sposobni jasno razbrati. Pa vendar, če pogledamo pozorneje in če, seveda, ne vihamo nosu zaradi prezira nad vsenavzočo popularno kulturo, bi lahko rekli, da v tej krajini, ki ji je odvzeta božja hierarhija, prevladuje človeščina, človeško meso. Tema ogrožene človeščine je tudi sicer priljubljena tema popularne kulture: v človeško kožo so zobe zarivali »tujci«, vesoljci, vampirji, zombiji in kanibali. Ta tema se pojavlja v žanrskih romanih, stripih, videoigrah in filmih ter – s precej manjšim korpusom resnih del – složno oblikuje moderno mitsko polje za odčitavanje sodobnih človeških strahov, predvsem strahu za lastno kožo. Trilogija *Igre lakote* Suzanne Collins (ameriški pendant prej nastalemu romanu *Battle Royale* Koushuna Takamija) je popularna po zaslugi skrajno zaostrenega sporočila: da bi človeški posameznik danes ohranil lastno kožo, mora ubiti drugega človeškega posameznika. Podobno sporočilo variira Kazuo Ishiguro v romanu *Ne zapusti me nikdar* (s filmsko inačico), kjer je svet razdeljen na klone oziroma »darovalce« in »normalne ljudi«. Podobno sporočilo variirata tudi junaka filma *Otok* Ewan McGregor in Scarlett Johansson. Igrata »harvestable beings«, človeška klona, predvidena za »žetev organov«.

Večina ljudi v temah popularne kulture odčitava svojo trenutno realnost, ki jih obdaja, in predvideva svojo bližnjo prihodnost. Lov

na človeške organe, na primer, ovit v zaščitni religiozno-filantropski staniol, resnično obstaja, meje dopustnega na tem polju pa se vsak dan vse bolj širijo. Tako se je meja z organov, nabranih z mrtvih darovalcev – praksa, ki nikogar več ne vznemirja –, premaknila na žive darovalce, nato pa na ilegalno prodajo lastnih organov (od krvi naprej) z namenom preživetja. V mitski zgodbi o organih je samo dajalec (delno) razkrit, prejemnik ostaja skrit. Anonimni prejemnik prek svojih ilegalnih dilerjev kupi ali odtuji organ, ki ga potrebuje, ne da bi problematiziral lastni etični položaj. Tako se meje dopustnega premaknejo na morbidno ropanje, na recentno novico o kitajskem dvoletniku, ki je izginil, čez uro pa so ga našli ležati v prahu, brez roženic. Vešči tatovi organov ne prihajajo več iz veselja. Danes so mogoče naši najbližji sosede, ki bodo za drobiž s prstom pokazali na sveže in zlahka dosegljive ledvice ali roženice. Meje premika tudi sama medicinska praksa, ki s podaljševanjem življenj bogatim ubija revne in se tako ukvarja z golim vampirizmom. Kajti kako drugače imenovati zamenjavo stare krvi z mlado, kar na dragih klinikah za pomlajevanje prakticirajo bogate stranke?

Popularna kultura – novo mitološko polje – pomaga svojim potrošnikom prebaviti neprebavljivo realnost, se sprijazniti, jo sprejeti, jo registrirati, se ji izogniti, se ji eventualno upreti, kakor komu. Popularna kultura to počne na neprimerljivo učinkovitejši način kot kdorkoli drug ali karkoli drugega. Hannibal Lecter – junak romana Thomasa Harrisa, čigar popularnost je zasluga predvsem briljantne filmske izvedbe Anthonyja Hopkinsa – je v svojem tridesetletnem življenju izgubil globoko odbijajoče in pridobil skoraj romantične črte. Junak istega filma Buffalo Bill, ki ga obseda ideja, da je človeška koža popolna tkanina, iz katere je moč sešiti oblačila, ima danes na primer umetniške »privržence« v delih Jessice Harrison, umetnice, ki v svoji seriji *Handheld* razstavlja miniaturne kose pohištva, velike za dlan, ki so videti, kot da so narejeni iz prave človeške kože. Umetniški projekt *Skin* umetnice Shelley Jackson – ki k sodelovanju vabi vse, ki so si pripravljeni na kožo trajno vtetovirati kakšno (angleško) besedo in potrditi, da so lastniki tetovaže – obrača temachno Buffalovo obsedenost s človeško kožo v glorifikacijo umetniške kolektivnosti in smrtnosti umetnosti (*mortal art*).

7.

Meje so zbledele in ni več jasno, kaj je umetnost, kaj pa resničnost, kaj je imitacija življenja, kaj pa življenje samo, in kaj je imitacija

imitacije. Pa vendar se zdi, da je najbednejša situacija tista, v kateri začne naše življenje postajati podobno cenanim grozljivkam. Januarja 2014 sem bila opazovalka scene, ki se je dogajala v zagrebškem tramvaju. Zagreb je glavno mesto Hrvaške. Hrvaška je novosprejeta članica Evropske unije in, po reviji *BMC Public Health*, »breme za Zemljo«. Kakorkoli, štirimilijonska državnica s pol milijona nezaposlenih in zastrašujočim številom revnih.

Na tramvajskem sedežu je utrujeno sedela skromno oblečena zajetna ženska poznih srednjih let. Poleg nje je stal nižji moški in jo premerjal z ostrim, živčnim pogledom.

»Dobro se živi, aha ...« je nedoločeno rekel moški in zavrtal v žensko pogled, ki kakor da je bil izstreljen iz revolverja.

»Prosim?« je tiho rekla ženska.

»Dobro se živi ...« je glasneje in ostreje ponovil moški.

»Ne razumem, kaj bi radi povedali ...« je ponovila ženska, čeprav je bilo po izrazu na njenem obrazu jasno, da sluti, kaj bi moški rad povedal.

»Pravim samo, da nekateri ljudje dobro živijo ...« ni odnehal moški.

Ženska je sklonila glavo in kakor da se je notranje trudila, da bi se telesno zmanjšala.

»Jaz tehtam štirideset kil, po poklicu sem inženir in nimam službe ...« je moški z besedami šibal žensko. Ob tem očitno ni imel nič proti, da ga slišijo tudi drugi potniki v tramvaju.

»A sem jaz kriva za to?! Zakaj se ne obrnete na oblasti ...« je tiho navrgla uboga ženska in vstala, da bi izstopila.

To je bila mučna scena. Človeško meso, težko štirideset kilogramov, je obtoževalo človeško meso, težko kakšnih devetdeset kilogramov, prepričano, da devetdesetkilogramsko meso ne more biti lačno. In četudi bi potnica glede na svoja leta lahko bila starejša sestra ali celo mati vznejevoljenega moškega in četudi bi vznejevoljeni moški lahko prisegel, da ni mislil nič takšnega, je bolj pretanjeno uho v njegovem protestu lahko ujelo tudi ton spolne neustreznosti. Ženska v tramvaju je očitno ne kriva ne dolžna razburila moškega, bila je kakor prikazen iz najgloblje podzvesti, banalni simbol njegovega izgubarstva (debeli so bogati, suhi revni). Z veseljem bi jo bil udaril, z veseljem bi ji zavil vrat, ji puščal kri, z veseljem bi zaril zobe v tisto meso, dvakrat težje od njegovega, zarezal bi v tisto zajetno telo, ki se

je razlezlo po tramvajskem sedežu, ravnodušno (»A sem jaz kriva za to?! Zakaj se ne obrnete na oblasti ...«) do njegovega trpljenja.

8.

Mnogo postkomunističnih, tranzicijskih družb je svoje državljane spremenilo v zombije. V enaindvajsetem stoletju nas čaka »družba participacije«, bi rekel nizozemski kralj Willem-Alexander. »Self-managment«, bi rekli jezikovno okretni sledilci sodobnih trendov. Tako »participacija« kot »self-managment« sta evfemizma za sporočilo, ostro kot skalpel: človek je danes zveden na lastno, golo kožo.

Cela skupina strokovnjakov je leta predano skrbela za svojo mojstrovino, za svojo mumijo. Najslavnejša moderna mumija na svetu je leta preživljala in ščitila celo skupino strokovnjakov in nekaj časa simbolizirala vero, da je družba enakosti, bratstva in svobode mogoča. Stranke današnjih salonov za tetoviranje – miniaturnih replik Leninovega mavzoleja – bodo za vsega nekaj sto evrov živele v veri, da je njihova tetovirana koža umetniško delo, ki si zasluži večnost.

Da, živimo v času kože. Naš čas – mrhovina, h kateri smo se stisnili – ni v najboljšem stanju. Koža mrhovine vse bolj temni, pojavljajo se vijoličaste pege, lobanja, iz katere so odstranjeni možgani, je počila in za sabo potegnila kožo, povsod se širi grozeč temen pigment, nohti so povsem pomodreli ... Izčrpavamo se, balzama nikoli zadositi, mrliške pege prekrivamo s tekočim pudrom in – lastnimi telesi. Povsod se širi smrad, ki se vpija v naša oblačila, v naše lase, v naša pljuča, z ničimer se ga ne da odstraniti. Kot rumenih mravelj nas je, nepredstavljivo veliko, nismo pa sposobni določiti veličine mrhovine, ki ji strežemo. Mogoče se je treba nehati ukvarjati z jalovim delom, mogoče smo že zdavnaj odslužili. Mogoče je čas, da na stečaj odpremo vrata in potegnemo mrhovino na sonce. Mogoče bo sončni žarek spretno padel in zanetil iskro, mogoče bo mrhovina vzplamtela sama od sebe. Ogenj je, pravijo, močno dezinfekcijsko sredstvo.

januar 2014

Prevedla Durda Strsoglavec

The Age of Skin

“Now, for a long while Snow White lay in the coffin and never changed, but looked as if she were asleep, for she was still as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair was as black as ebony.”

Brothers Grimm, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*

1.

I always recoil when I hear that withered (yet more rapacious than ever) line about *life writing novels*. Let's get one thing straight: if life really wrote novels, there wouldn't be any literature. Literature might be on its deathbed, but its pervasive frailty can't be ascribed to any historical victory of life over literature – taking that honor is the destruction so beautifully wrought by those invested in the literary enterprise: publishers with rapacious appetites for money, indolent editors, backscratching critics, unambitious readers, untalented writers with rapacious appetites for fame. As far as the relationship between literature and life goes, this is how things stand: the underlying premise of every literary act is gossip. We all want to know what others are doing, even if it's just what they had for breakfast. Has anything changed in the time of new media? Ah, no, our appetite for gossip has only increased. Reality literature, literature that records the minutest details of one's private life has today reached its apex. In terms of genre – once the hagiographies of saints – have, over time, evolved into biography, autobiography, and memoir. Once induced, an appetite for gossip is hard to sate. And besides, over time we've all become saints. We sling our skin on hooks, our internal organs on ready display, each of us an exhibit in the window of our own butchery.

2.

Like other linguistic communities, the Slavs have a respectable number of phrases connected with skin. *One can have thick skin, slip one's skin, drive someone out of their skin, or save one's skin; one can be of flesh and blood beneath the skin, can skin someone alive, or feel something on one's own skin; one can pay like a wolf with its skin (hide), get under somebody's skin, sell one's skin, or be in someone's skin; one can be a wolf in sheep's skin (clothing), pack on the skin (pounds), or else strip to one's bare skin...* Skin is something so very intimate, and in terms of intimacy, lords it over metaphors of the heart. While our heart may readily love all of humanity, only our skin loves us.

In Slavic languages one doesn't have two words for the two types of skin that one has in English (*skin, leather*), German (*Haut, Leder*), Dutch (*huid, leer*), Spanish (*piel, cuero*), or Italian (*pelle, cuoio*). Slavs use the same word for the skin that covers one's body and the leather from which shoes are made. Perhaps this absent difference is a question of civilization – or perhaps even explains the poor man's fascination with *real* leather?

In the second half of the twentieth century, former Yugoslavs traveled to Trieste, in neighboring Italy, for shoes, handbags, and jackets (of *real* leather, of course). Later they hotfooted it to cheaper Istanbul, hauling leather sartorial goods back to Yugoslav flea markets. The guy with the gold cross and leather jacket was quite the catch. But it wasn't long until cheap imitations dimmed the shine of real leather. The wee men and women in leather jackets took a slide down into the so-called "trash," before leather slipped even further down, into subculture, whence it rose again to become a "czaress," a fetish, a cult.

3.

Like all humanistic orientated intellectuals, at the feet of hard science I fall to my knees in genuflection. No one impresses me more than a mathematician, a physicist, an astronomer, or a statistician; unlike the rest of us, they're folk who know their stuff. And so it was when a Croatian newspaper recently ran a story with the curious headline "Countries of fatties like Croatia are a burden on the planet." It turns out that among the heaviest countries in the world, America takes top spot, while Croatia, tucked in behind Kuwait, takes third. Leanest are the African and Asian countries, North Korea first among flyweights. The article cited a new study published in the journal *BMC Public Health*, which claims that the average earthling weighs 62 kilograms (with the average American earthling hitting the scales at a significantly heavier 80.7 kilograms). All told, the population of adult earthlings weighs 287 million tones, of which 15 tones is classed as excess weight, and 3.5 tones as obese weight. Fatness is unevenly distributed: Americans make up only six percent of the world's population, but account for a third of earthlings' excess body mass. Professor Ian Roberts says that today researchers are as worried about the amount of flesh to feed as they are the number of mouths. "Everyone accepts that population growth threatens global environmental sustainability – our study shows that population fatness is also a major threat. Unless we tackle both overpopulation and

fatness – our chances are slim,” said Professor Roberts. The problem, thus, is body mass – human flesh.

Disciplines such as demography, ecology, medicine, and socio-economics have all lent their weight to the stigmatization of the fat. With the discovery of the AD-36 virus, modern medicine would have us believe that the fat are contagious. In the wake of her U.S. tour, plus-sized British singer Adele came in for criticism on a regional American TV channel. A fitness instructor, full of the kind of righteous rage fitness instructors specialize in, claimed that Adele was a danger to American society because she was sending little American girls the message that it's OK to be fat. Who knows, maybe sometime in the near future a similar message will declare it open season on the fat, and send some future Adele back to where she had the audacity to let her divine voice first sing – in the ghetto of the poor, who are all fat because they're poor, and poor because they're fat.

4.

In a particular historical moment, men in black leather jackets were capable of anything, it's just that they've since been forgotten. The book *Lenin's Embalmers*¹ is an unusual testimony to the skin of the famous revolutionary, a symbol of one of the greatest, most fascinating, and certainly most catastrophic social experiments in human history. Ilya Zbarsky was the son of Boris Zbarsky, the Soviet biochemist who (together with a fellow scientist named Vorobyov) embalmed Lenin's corpse. For almost twenty years, Ilya Zbarsky, himself a biochemist, worked in the specialist team at Lenin's mausoleum in Moscow. His account is a fantastic glimpse into the long life of a mummy, and the lives of those employed to preserve it.

The descriptions of saving Lenin's skin are most compelling, as is the pervasive anxiety that it might disintegrate. We can but imagine what the squadron of experts felt when in late March 1924, barely two months after Lenin's first embalming, a specially formed commission asserted that

[t]he corpse had turned sallow, with more marked discoloration around the eyes, nose, ears and temples. Wrinkles and a purplish stain had appeared over the frontal and parietal lobes of brain.

¹ Ilya Zbarsky and Samuel Hutchinson, *Lenin's Embalmers* (The Harvill Press, 1999).

The skin had sunk in over an area roughly a centimeter in diameter, at the place where the skull had been opened to extract the brain. The tip of the nose was covered in dark pigments, and the walls of the nostrils had become paper thin; the eyes were half open and sinking into their sockets; the lips had parted, leaving the teeth clearly visible; brown spots had appeared on the hands, and the fingernails were tinged with blue.²

After this catastrophic report, Lenin's lungs, liver, and other internal organs were extracted, and his eyeballs replaced with artificial ones. The interior of the body was cleansed with distilled water and a powerful antiseptic, and then treated with a solution of formalin, potassium acetate, alcohol, glycerin, and chloride. This time around they managed to save Lenin's skin, and with it, their own, although one didn't make it. Among the many unresolved deaths of the era is that of comrade Vorobyov, the pioneer of Soviet embalming.

One of the most bizarre details in the book relates to Nadezhda Krupskaya (Lenin's wife), who, visiting the mausoleum in 1938, admitted with a woman's bitterness that Lenin remained as youthful as ever (!), while in the meantime she had visibly aged.

With the end of the Second World War, the team of scientists was bolstered, research conditions improved, and the 1939 team of four was increased to 35 leading scientists, medical historians, anatomists, biochemists, and medical doctors, their research centered on skin structure, subcutaneous cell tissue, and the auto-decomposing factors that cause cell disintegration. Between 1949 and 1995 the Lenin mausoleum internationalized its activities, embalming the bodies of Georgi Dimitrov, Klement Gottwald, Ho Chi Minh, Agostinho Neto, Lindon Forbes Burnham, Kim Il-Sung, and the Mongolian dictator Khorloogiin Choibalsan. By the end of the last decade of the previous century these mummies had all been cremated. Stalin, who had lain beside Lenin a full nine years (1953–1961), had gone the same way.

Even with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the mausoleum team continued its work, but was soon transformed into a high-end undertaker, offering pricey mortuary services to the Russian nouveau riche, for the most part, mafiosi. The same Stalin-era concoction of

² Ibid., p. 79.

fluids is used, the same eight liters of “balsam” injected into the dead arteries. The balsam is so effective that the body remains in perfect condition up to a year after burial. Ilya Zbarsky claims that following a balsam injection the dead man’s skin miraculously changes from the pale blue hue of a corpse to an ivory white.

Today the Lenin mausoleum sells wooden “Made in the USA” coffins, and Russian models crafted from precious crystal. The most popular model is the “Al Capone,” a coffin based on a mausoleum staff member’s recollection of something he saw in *The Godfather*.

As for Lenin’s mummy, Russians have been squabbling over its fate for the past twenty years, the debate over whether the mummy should be buried, or kept “alive,” reignited on slow news days. Things always seem to hit a deadlock, with only a slim minority ever in favor of one or the other option.

5.

Peter van der Helm, the owner of an Amsterdam tattoo parlor, has figured out a way to monetize the skin of the dead. Around thirty of van der Helm’s clients have bequeathed their inked skin to his company “Walls and Skin.” In the hope that their skin may one day adorn an art collector’s walls, each client has even paid a few hundred euro to be involved in the project. When they die, a pathologist will remove the skin bearing a designated tattoo, before sending it on to a laboratory for processing. “Everyone spends their lives in search of immortality and this is a simple way to get a piece of it,” said van der Helm. One client, Floris Hirschfeld, who has an image of his deceased mother tattooed on his back, explained his involvement with the rhetorical “people have stuffed animals in their house, so why not skin?” And added “Vincent van Gogh was a poor man when he died. You and me can’t buy a Van Gogh. Tattooing is the people’s form of art.”

This story appeared in Dutch and other news media sometime in the wake of King Willem-Alexander’s address to the Dutch citizenry in mid-September 2013. Television viewers followed the royal coach’s traditional journey to the palace, where on the golden thrones of the *Ridderzaal* sat Willem-Alexander and his wife Máxima, two “fleshier” representatives of the European royal houses. The Dutch

king announced to his subjects that the welfare state was dead, and was to be replaced with the “society of participation.” In this new society, Dutch subjects will assume full responsibility for their futures and need to create their own “social and economic networks.” In other words, they need to save their own skins.

6.

Given the plethora of forms and shades coloring the contemporary cultural landscape, seeing the wood from the trees is no mean feat. But if we look a little more carefully, holding our snippiness about the omnipresence of popular culture in check, we’d have to confess that in this landscape, one stripped of divine hierarchies, human flesh predominates. The human-body-in-danger has long been a staple of popular culture: all kinds of “foreigners” sink their teeth into human skin – aliens, vampires, zombies, cannibals. It’s a staple in genre novels, comics, video games, and film, and in alongside the more svelte corpus of serious work, constructs a modern mythological field within which one can clearly decipher contemporary human fears. Suzanne Collins’s trilogy *The Hunger Games* (an American version of Koushun Takami’s novel *Battle Royale*) owes its popularity to its extreme message: if the human subject wishes to survive, he or she must kill another human subject. In a world divided into clones known as “donors,” and “normal people,” Kazuo Ishiguro’s novel *Never Let Me Go* (along with its cinematic adaption) offers a similar message. The protagonists of the film *The Island* offer yet another iteration, Ewan McGregor and Scarlett Johansson playing “harvestable beings,” human clones being prepared for “organ harvesting.”

Most people are able to discern their present lived reality in the themes of popular culture, and many also foresee their coming futures. Packaged in a protective religious-philanthropic cellophane, the hunt for human organs is well underway. Out in the field, the borders of the permissible are shifting on a daily basis. Once demarcated by the harvesting of organs from deceased donors, the border has shifted to encompass the culling of organs from living donors and, if survival is at stake, selling one’s own. In most cases of organ harvesting, only the donor is (partially) revealed, the recipient remaining concealed. Via their illegal fixers and dealers, the anonymous recipient buys or steals an organ that he or she needs, untroubled by ethical doubts. The borders of the permissible shifted again in the recent case of a

Chinese two-year-old found lying in the dust with his corneas removed. Stories about organ theft no longer come from outer space. Today it could be one's next-door neighbor, who, for a little cash, might finger a fresh kidney or cornea in easy reach. Medical practice itself is shifting the borders, aiding and abetting the rich in their vampiric bleeding of the poor. Vampirism – by what other name should one call the blood transfusions offered at expensive clinics?

Popular culture, which represents a new mythological field, helps its consumers weld an unweldable reality, to reconcile themselves with it, accept it, register it, avoid it, or possibly even, rebel against it – each to their own. As always, popular culture does this incomparably more efficiently than anyone or anything else. Some thirty years on, Hannibal Lector, the antagonist of Thomas Harris's novel (which owes much of its popularity to Anthony Hopkins's brilliant screen performance) has lost his repugnant hue and gained an almost romantic one. His fellow antagonist, Buffalo Bill, he who was besotted with human skin as tailoring fabric, today has his own artistic "followers," Jessica Harrison among them. In her *Handheld* series, Harrison exhibits pieces of furniture that can be held in the palm of one's hand, the pieces as if crafted from real human skin. In her *Skin* project, Shelley Jackson invited participants to permanently tattoo a word of a story she was writing, a kind of reversal of Buffalo Bill's morbid obsession, all in the glorification of an artistic collective – and the glorification of mortal art. Yes, "mortal art."

7.

Borders have dissipated: what is art and what is reality, what is the imitation of life, and what is life (not to mention the imitation of imitation) is no longer clear. Whatever the case may be, few fates appear more wretched than when our everyday lives play like B-grade horrors. On a day in February 2014, I was witness to a scene that played out in a Zagreb tram. Zagreb is the capital of Croatia. Croatia is a new member of the European Union, and, a "burden on planet earth." All in all, it's a tiny country of four and a half million people, with that final half being unemployed.

A fuller-figured woman in late middle age sat slumped in the tram, her clothing somewhat dowdy. Beside her stood a slip of a man, taking her measure with a snarled and twitchy gaze.

"Some folk are living it up, eh..." said the man noncommittally, his glare ugly and with ill intent.

"I don't understand..." said the woman quietly.

"Some folk are living it up..." the man repeated, turning the volume and aggression up.

"I don't understand what you're trying to say..." the woman repeated, although from the expression on her face it was clear she knew exactly what the man wanted to say.

"Just saying that some folk are living it up..." the man insisted

The woman lowered her head, as if trying to shrink from the inside out.

"I'm forty kilos, a qualified engineer, and I'm unemployed..." the man giving the woman a right tongue lashing now, unconcerned as to whether other passengers could hear him.

"It's not my fault. Why don't you talk to the authorities?" the poor woman murmured and stood up to get out.

It was a torturous scene. Forty kilos of human flesh was attacking ninety kilos of human flesh, convinced that the ninety kilos of flesh couldn't possibly be hungry. And though the woman's age probably made her the embittered man's older sister, or perhaps even his mother, and though I'm sure he'd swear that there was nothing of the sort involved, in his protest the discerning ear would have caught an undertone of sexual inadequacy. The innocent woman in the tram obviously irritated the man, like an apparition from his deepest subconscious, a banal symbol of his loserdom (the fat are rich, the thin poor). He would have gladly beat her, have gladly snapped her neck, watched her blood flow, gladly wounded that the ninety kilos of flesh, twice as heavy as his own, lacerated that hulking body slumped in the seat of the tram, indifferent to his suffering. (*It's not my fault. Why don't you talk to the authorities?*)

8.

Many postcommunist transitional societies have turned their citizens into zombies. As Dutch king Willem-Alexander put it, in the twenty-first century we await the "society of participation." "Self-management" is probably what linguistically inventive followers of contemporary trends would say. Both "participation" and "self-management" are euphemisms for a message that is as sharp as a scalpel: today, the individual has been reduced to his or her bare skin.

For years a team of experts conscientiously preserved their masterpiece, their mummy. For years the most celebrated modern mummy in the world was nourished and protected by this team, and for a time symbolized the belief that a society of liberty, equality, and fraternity was possible. Today, for all of a few hundred euro, tattoo parlors – miniature replicas of Lenin’s mausoleum – have their customers believe that their tattooed skin is a work of art deserving of eternity.

Yes, we live in the age of skin. Our age – the corpse to which we are pressed – isn’t in the greatest shape. The corpse’s skin grows darker, new purple blotches surfacing, the cranium, from which the brain has been extracted, has shattered and taken the skin with it, threatening dark pigment spreading everywhere, the nails turned completely blue... We exhaust ourselves, there is never enough balsam, we cover the dead spots with liquid foundation, and our bodies too. There’s an odor spreading everywhere, seeping into our clothes, our hair, our lungs, there’s nothing that will get it out. There are so many of us, we’re like ants, our number inconceivable, in no state to determine the size of the corpse we serve. Perhaps we should abandon a thankless task; perhaps we’ve long done our duty. Perhaps it’s time to open the door and drag the corpse out into the sun. Perhaps the sunlight will faithfully find its target and light a spark, the corpse bursting into flames of its own accord. Fire, they say, is the most efficient means of disinfection.

January 2014

Translated by David Williams

**Slovenska avtorica
v središču 2016**

***Slovenian Author
in Focus 2016***



Foto © Nada Žgank

Suzana Tratnik

Suzana Tratnik se je rodila leta 1963 v Murski Soboti. Ena od najvidnejših sodobnih slovenskih avtoric je diplomirala iz sociologije na Fakulteti za družbene vede in magistrirala iz antropologije spolov na Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis. Kot aktivistka in organizatorica kulturnih dogodkov je ves čas dejavna tudi na LGBT sceni, prav tako je avtorica strokovnih del o lezbičnem gibanju v Sloveniji in o lezbični literaturi. Čeprav ji je najbližje pisanje proze, se pogosto znajde tudi v vlogi publicistke in prevajalke ameriške in britanske literature. Izdala je šest kratkoproznih zbirk, zadnjo z naslovom *Rezervat* leta 2012, dva romana: *Ime mi je Damjan* (2001) in *Tretji svet* (2007) ter slikanico *Zafuškana Ganca* (2010). Mladinski roman *Ime mi je Damjan* je bil že ob izidu deležen velike pozornosti, njegova osrednja tema – transspolnost – pa ostaja aktualna še danes. Njena literarna dela so prevedena v več kot dvajset jezikov, leta 2007 pa je za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Vzporednice* prejela nagrado Prešernovega sklada. Suzana Tratnik je lucidna in ostra opazovalka sveta z jasnim slogom, ki je kljub

resnim temam prežet s humorjem in ironijo. Poleg vprašanja identitete v svojih delih »posoja glas« vsem mogočim obstrancem in družbenim manjšinam ter izpostavlja zakoreninjene predsodke in vrednote tradicionalnega sveta, v katerem mora biti vse popredalčkano. V zborniku objavljena kratka zgodba *Mrtve stvari* bo izšla jeseni 2016 v kratkoprozni zbirki *Noben glas*.

Izbrane nagrade in priznanja

- 2007 Nagrada Prešernovega sklada za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Vzporednice*.
2007 Nominacija za nagrado Fabula za najboljšo zbirko kratkih zgodb za delo *Vzporednice*.
2008 Nominacija za nagrado Kresnik za najboljši slovenski roman za delo *Tretji svet*.
2009 Nominacija za nagrado Fabula za najboljšo zbirko kratkih zgodb za delo *Česa nisem nikoli razumela na vlaku*.
2010 Nominacija za nagrado Fabula za najboljšo zbirko kratkih zgodb za delo *Dva svetova*.
2011 Nominacija za nagrado Desetnica za najboljše otroško in mladinsko delo za slikanico *Zafuškana Ganca*.

Izbrana izvirna bibliografija

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Romani

- Ime mi je Damjan*; ŠKUC, Ljubljana 2001. Ponatis: Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana 2014. Knjiga je pri isti založbi izšla tudi v okviru nacionalnega projekta *Rastem s knjigo* za spodbujanje bralne kulture pri osnovnošolcih in srednješolcih.
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Strokovne monografije

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Ponatis: Arhipelag, Beograd 2014.

Jmenuju se Damián, v češčino prevedla Alena Šamonilová; One Woman Press, Praga 2005.

Mein Name ist Damian, v nemščino prevedel Andrej Leben; Milena, Dunaj 2005.

Zu zweit nirgendwo: neue Erzählungen aus Slowenien (antologija), uredila Aleš Šteger in Mitja Čander; Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 2006.

A lazy Sunday afternoon: a collection of short stories by Slovene writers born after 1960 (antologija), izbrala Damijan Šinigoj in Lenart Zajc, uredila Lela B. Njatin; Slovene Writers' Association, Slovene PEN, Association of the Slovene Literary Translators, Ljubljana 2007.

Volám sa Damián, v slovaščino prevedla Stanislava Repar; Literárne informačné centrum, Bratislava 2008.

Massima discrezione, v italijanščino prevedel Luka Pieri; Zoe, Forli 2009.

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U svojem dvorištu, v hrvaščino prevedla Ksenija Habek; Lezbijska grupa Kontra, Zagreb 2011.

Třetí svět, v češčino prevedel Petr Mainuš; Větrné mlýny, Brno 2013.

Vo svojoj dvor, v makedonščino prevedla Dragana Evtimova; Templum, Skopje 2013.

Posiciones geográficas, v španščino prevedla Barbara Pregelj; Dos Bigotes, Madrid 2014.

Párhuzamosok, v madžarščino prevedel Imre Szijártó; Libri Kiadó, Budimpešta 2014.

Mutavazijat, v arabščino prevedla Margit P. Alhady in Mohsen Alhady; Sefsafa Publishing House, Kairo 2015.

Games with Greta & Other Stories, v angleščino prevedli Michael Biggins, Tamara Soban, Špela Bibič, Mojca Šoštarko in Elizabeta Žargi; Dalkey Archive Press, Victoria, TX / McLean, IL / Dublin / London 2016.

Suzana Tratnik was born in 1963 in Murska Sobota and is one of Slovenia's most prominent contemporary writers. She graduated in sociology and obtained her MA in gender anthropology. An activist and organiser of cultural events, she has been continually active on the LGBT scene and has authored two treatises: on the lesbian movement in Slovenia and on lesbian literature. Despite her preference for fiction, she often assumes the role of publicist and translator of American and British literature. She has published six short story collections, the latest being *Rezervat* (Reservation, 2012), two novels, and a children's picture book. Her young adult novel *Ime mi je Damjan* (My Name Is Damian, 2001) attracted attention immediately on publication, and its central theme – transgenderism – remains topical to this day. Her work has been translated into over twenty languages, and her short story collection *Vzporednice* (Parallels, 2005) won the national Prešeren Foundation Award in 2007. Tratnik is a lucid

and sharp observer with a clear-cut style, infused with humour and irony despite the seriousness of her themes. In addition to exploring identity, she 'lends her voice' to outsiders and social minorities, exposing the prejudices and values of the traditional world, which demands neat classification. The short story 'Mrtve stvari' (Dead Things), featured in this year's *Vilenica Almanac*, is slated for publication in the short story collection *Noben glas* (No Voice) this autumn.

Selected Prizes and Awards

- 2007 The Prešeren Foundation Prize, for the short story collection *Vzporednice* (Parallels).
- 2007 Nomination for the Fabula Prize, conferred for the best short story collection of the previous two years, for *Vzporednice* (Parallels).
- 2008 Nomination for the Kresnik Prize, conferred for the best Slovenian novel of the previous year, for the novel *Tretji svet* (Third World).
- 2009 Nomination for the Fabula Prize, for the short story collection *Česa nisem nikoli razumela na vlaku* (Things I've Never Understood on the Train).
- 2010 Nomination for the Fabula Prize, for the short story collection *Dva svetova* (Two Worlds).
- 2011 Nomination for the Desetnica Prize, conferred for the best children's or young adult work of the past three years, for the picture book *Zafuškana Ganca* (The Hany Rattie).

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L, zbornik o lezbičnem gibanju na Slovenskem 1984–1995 (L, The Lesbian Movement in Slovenia, 1984–1995: Proceedings), with Nataša S. Segan; ŠKUC, Ljubljana 1995.

Lezbična zgodba: literarna konstrukcija seksualnosti (The Lesbian Story: A Literary Construction of Sexuality); ŠKUC, Ljubljana 2004.

Lezbični aktivizem po korakih (Lesbian Activism Step by Step), memoirs; Založba I*cf, Ljubljana 2013.

Konec strpnosti (The End of Tolerance); ŠKUC, Ljubljana 2013.

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Jmenuju se Damián, translated into Czech by Alena Šamonilová; One Woman Press, Prague 2005.

Mein Name ist Damian, translated into German by Andrej Leben; Milena, Vienna 2005.

Zu zweit nirgendwo: neue Erzählungen aus Slowenien (anthology), eds. Aleš Šteger and Mitja Čander; Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 2006.

A lazy Sunday afternoon: a collection of short stories by Slovene writers born after 1960 (anthology), selected by Damijan Šinigoj and Lenart Zajc, ed. Lela B. Njatin; Slovene Writers' Association, Slovene PEN, Association of the Slovene Literary Translators, Ljubljana 2007.

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Z domačega dvorišča v širni svet

Matej Bogataj

Suzana Tratnik je eno najvidnejših pisateljskih imen z LGBT scene, sama se predstavlja kot aktivistka in organizatorka kulturnih dogodkov. Ne samo njeno pisateljsko, tudi njeno akademsko zanimanje je usmerjeno predvsem v antropološke in sociološke študije spola. V eni svojih zgodb zapiše, da se »večini ni treba ukvarjati z manjšinami, ker je večina že 'vse'«. Njej se je treba, zapiše, in potem na sebi lasten hudomušen in malo ironičen način spregovori, koliko bo namenila v svojih zgodbah po odstotkih posameznim skupinam obstrancev, od istospolnih do transseksualnih, hendikepiranih, odvisnikov ... Njen pisateljski opus to napovedano in humorno manifestativno problematiziranje razmerja med večino, na videz kompaktno, in različnimi razpršenimi manjšinami samo potrjuje. Vseh šest zbirk kratke proze in oba romana – *Ime mi je Damijan* in *Tretji svet* – krožijo okoli travmatičnega razmerja med središčem in nosilci moči ter oblikovalci mnenj na eni, ter tistimi, ki od tega družbeno sprejetega in zapovedanega koda kakorkoli odstopajo, na drugi strani. Njeno pisanje daje glas tistim, ki bi sicer ostali brez njega, intenzivno se posveča upornim in odločnim, ki uspejo zapustiti domače dvorišče in se prebiti do rezervata, torej varno zamejenega in getoiziranega, na vsak način pa družbeno obrobne prostora med svoje somišljenike.

Vendar pisanje Tratnikove, ki je dosledno sestavljeno iz fragmentov, orisov, krokijev, črtic in literarnih anekdot, sprejemajočih se v sugestivnem toku in nizu asociacij, spominov, in ki se tudi pri pisanju v tretji osebi napaja v doživetem in izkustvenem, ostaja na strani literature. Nikoli ne postane deklarativno in manifestativno, ni namenjeno samo tistim znotraj, temveč nagovarja najširšo bralno publiko. Tudi zato, ker se zna njena pripovedovalska pozicija odmakniti od neposrednosti in dogajanje komentirati, včasih tudi hudomušno in distancirano; med dogajalnim trenutkom in časom zapisa je namreč obdobje, ki je prvotno izkušnjo predelalo in reflektiralo. Njena bolj opazovalka kot akterka, ki pripoveduje, zna biti enako nepopustljiva do napak in preračunljivosti tistih, ki prebivajo v njenem svetu, v njenem rezervatu, kot je naslov zgodbe in zbirke, in so sicer pod udarom večine, družbeno izpostavljeni in izvrženi na rob. Zdi se, da je v njenem svetu avtentičnost in resnicoljubnost privilegij redkih, s tem pa se navezuje na svoje prekmurske rojake, pri

katerih je pisanje o dobrih ljudeh skoraj pravilo. Vendar je Tratnikova usmerjena v popise izločenih in tako ali drugače posebnih: zaradi spolne usmeritve, socialno šibkih, klatežev, v kar nekaj zgodbah pa tudi zaradi odvisnosti, zaradi psihiatrične obravnave ali bolj benignih psihičnih težav, ki so enkrat osmešeno megalomanske, drugič gre za samoizgrajene uspešneže, ki jih vidimo blago karikirane, da bi bolj spregledali njihove družbene igre in laži.

Za pisanje Tratnikove je značilna prvoosebna, ki zlahka prehaja v na videz bolj odmaknjeno tretjo osebo. Vendar je očitno, da se ta proza giblje okoli istih in včasih z različnih zornih kotov obdelanih travmatičnih jeder. Ne zato, ker bi izčrpala motive ali bi jih zmanjkalo, temveč zato, ker se z njihovim variiranjem in popisovanjem istih oseb in dogodkov pokažejo travmatične družbene točke, prostori preloma in nesporazuma. Kot da s ponovitvami tipa za razrešitvijo in pomiritvijo, ki se kaže kot postopna omilitev in vse večja mera spravljive dobrodušnosti. Kar je prej bolelo, je lahko po nekaj obkroženjih predmet sprijaznjenega pogleda in rahlo ironizirane ubeseditve. Tratnikova nasploh pripelje teme nevsiljivo, njen pripovedni tok drsi med osebami in dogodki, vendar ostaja pogosto nevpneten, največkrat gre za pozicijo izločenega in brezčustvenega. Drugi, za njeno prozo specifičen odmik je epska distanca; s časovne oddaljenosti piše o propadlih partnerskih razmerjih, o nezvestobi in tistih, ki o ljubezni več govorijo, kot so potem sposobni uresničiti, ki se ustavijo, ko je treba zastaviti telo. Njeno pisanje o razočaranjih in osvoboditvah je navzven brez večjih čustvenih oscilacij, skoraj hladno, vendar lahko nekdanjo intenzivnost občutimo le kot podzemni in prikrit tok pripovedi.

Eno od osišč te pisave je vprašanje identitete. Ne samo spolne, o kateri govori roman *Ime mi je Damjan*. V njem šele po nekaj poglavjih vidimo, kje je vzrok za pripovedovalčevo agresijo, za spore in probleme z družino in okolico. Namigne nam o starševski spolni zlorabi v otroštvu, zato nefunkcionalno vedenje, pretepanje, popivanje, zato ima transseksualna oseba, ki so ji ob rojstvu pripisali ženski spol, vede pa se kot moški, cel kup problemov, ki so povzeti kot uvodi v poglavja in nam jih izpiše kar vodja njene terapevtske skupine. Vendar Tratnikova tudi v svojih zbirkah kot da izpisuje različice razvojnega romana, ki se začne v ruralnem predmestnem ali celo tradicionalnem vaškem okolju, v katerem odraščajnica živi ob stari materi, ker ima starševska generacija dovolj težav sama s sabo in svojimi partnerstvi. V tem tradicionalnem okolju, kjer so grožnje in

prepovedi normalen in za izvajalce neproblematiziran način vzgoje in podrejanja nabrite mularije, se pokaže vsa kompaktnost in nepopustljivost tega sveta. Njegovi zastopniki so kar cela opravljiva vaška srenja, ki zlahka obsoja, čeprav so odmiki od zapovedanega vidni na vseh ravneh: kot prešuštvo, kot izrinjanje bolnih, drugačnih, posebnih. Tratnikova popisuje včasih okrutno otroško igro, ki mora ostati prikrita, saj je edini prostor, v katerem je mogoča svoboda, hkrati pa je z igro dominacije že tudi trening, priprava na tisto, kar sledi v odraslosti. Vendar je cena za neodvisnost skritost, prikrivanje, v družbi starejših tudi molk, obsojenost na nevidnost in neslišnost. Pogosto se pisava zgošča okoli občutka nemoči, ko otrok ne uspe spregovoriti in artikulirati nečesa, kar je doživel, ker ne zna uporabljati besednjaka odraslih.

Nekako logično sledi, da se v drugem, mladostniško in odraslo obdobje popisujočem sklopu pojavijo uporniki in luzerji vseh vrst. Tisti, ki se uprejo zapovedim okolja in družine in se odzivajo na različne, včasih tudi ekscesne in delinkventne načine. Od kraj do uporabe drog, od zoprvanja starejšim z imidžem in željo po spremembi, z opijanjem in drugimi prekoračenji. Tratnikova tudi tega sveta ne idealizira, bolj gre za skupine, ki omogočajo drugačno iniciacijo ob tisti uradni, šolski in družinski; ta iniciacija razgalja in razkriva družbeno neenovitost, atomizacijo. V zgodbah so pogosto izstopajoči in za mladostnike fascinantni posamezniki tisti, ki z lastnim zgledom sprožijo željo po drugačnem svetu, ki odpirajo vrata v svet, kjer je mogoče polno udejanjiti lastno svobodo. Nosilci tega sklopa zgodb so pogosto tisti, pred katerimi nas starši in vzgojitelji strašijo, takšni, kakršne nam dajejo za negativen zgled. Vendar ohranja treznost in kritičnost tudi do spodrseljavev in vedenjskih kodov teh mladostnikov. Neiskrenost, prevare vseh vrst, laganje in neavtentičnost, vse to, kar Tratnikova zasleduje skozi otroški pogled, zdaj odseva tudi na alternativni sceni. Svet je škatlasto zložen in mali prostori svobode boleajo za istimi simptomi kot celotna družba; počasi se na tej sceni že pojavljajo lezbična razmerja, ki boleajo za enako nedoslednostjo, lažnivostjo, brezbržnostjo kot vsi drugi družbeni segmenti, tudi znotraj rezervata se uveljavljajo podskupine in osrčja moči.

Tretji veliki sklop motivov obkroža vprašanje spolnosti in artikulacije spolnosti, dogajalni prostor so alterklubi in mednarodne konference, tudi mladostna hrepenenja in sramežljivosti, zdi pa se, da po bivanju v različnih oblikah skupnosti, od študentskih sstanovalk do partnerskih odnosov, pripovedovalka vse bolj spoznava

globalno gibanje za pravice istospolnih. Tudi tam najde divje debate in skoraj s predsodki namazana prepričanja o tem in onem, divja zavračanja ali pritrdjevanja istim fenomenom, pač glede na temperament debaterke. Tudi globalna lezbična skupnost je razdeljena in tudi v njej so nekatere bolj zavzete in druge bolj kompromisarske. Ene bolj teoretsko poglobljene, druge bolj frfrasto zaljubljaajoče se in čustveno labilne. Vendar zavzema pripovedovalka tudi v teh zgodbah nekako izločeno, skoraj pasivno spremljevalno držo; ob zaljubljenostih načeloma potegne ta kratko, ostane zapuščena ali pa je odnos prepoznan kot brezperspektiven. Ne nujno zaradi zunanjega pritiska, ne nujno zaradi zaničevalnih pogledov okolice, tudi zaradi značajске različnosti partnerk, zaradi geografske razdalje, kakor koli.

Tratnikova nobene od družbenih leg ne idealizira. Prekmurje v časih socializma in časi odraščanja niso predmet idealizacije, na alternativni sceni osemdesetih popisuje nefunkcionalne in ekscesne oblike vedenja, ki so ovira resnim razmerjem in druženjem, enako se potem začne drobiti lezbična aktivistična scena. Vse to pa zaradi občutljivosti pripovedovalke, ki na videz nevpleteno spregovarja o možnosti bivanja v skupnosti. Občutek izločenosti je podprt z minimalističnim stilom, z jezikovno škrtostjo, ki več pove s svojimi premolki in zamolčanim kot z zapisanim. Pravzaprav nas ta proza ves čas opozarja na partikularnosti, na drobljenje družbe, v kateri je vsaka obvezujoča družbena zaveza že prikrajanje in ukalupljanje. Če se je vse skupaj začelo na domačem dvorišču – ena od zbirk ima naslov *Na domačem dvorišču* in tam babica, izvir tradicionalizma, spregovori o tem, da česa več niti ne potrebuje(mo), da je zunanji svet nepotreben – se podobni vzorci pojavljajo tudi na mednarodnih srečanjih in konferencah; motivacije in načini delovanja so različni in zdi se, da nas ta proza poziva ravno k sprejemanju drugačnosti.

V prozi Tratnikove se v zadnjem času vse bolj sliši klic daljnih svetov; štopanja v Amsterdam in na konference je v romanu *Tretji svet* zamenjala občutljivost za tiste, ki so še bolj izpostavljeni. Za razliko od Slovenije, ki je že v osemdesetih dobila gejevsko gibanje in razvila močno subkulturno sceno, so v nekaterih okoljih homoseksualnost sankcionirali, tudi pravno. Njim se posveti v romanu, ki že napoveduje razpad države, in če je tam še lahko pokroviteljska in se lahko pohvali s stopnjo pridobljenih pravic, se po zadnjem valu tradicionalizacije vse bolj zavedamo, da pravica do drugačnosti ni samoumevna. Če je Tratnikova v nekem trenutku lahko svoje pero preusmerila od frontnega branjenja drugačnosti navznoter, v

popis razmer in kadrovske sestavo rezervata, potem lahko po vzniku raznih gibanj za družine in otroke, ki jih uporabljajo kot živi ščit za discipliniranje in omejevanje pravic drugačnim in istospolnim, z argumenti, ki bi se jim v bolj sproščenih osemdesetih smejali, danes pa jih poslušamo v parlamentu, pričakujemo, pač glede na neugodne družbene razmere, spet več angažmaja in posojanja glasu vsem vrstam drugačnosti.

From the Home Backyard into the Wide World

Matej Bogataj

Suzana Tratnik, who introduces herself as an activist and organiser of cultural events, is one of the most eminent writers on the Slovenian LGBT scene. Her interests, academic no less than literary, focus on the anthropological and sociological studies of gender. According to one of her stories, “the majority has no need to occupy itself with minorities because the majority already is ‘everything’”. She, on the other hand, professes this need and continues, in her idiosyncratic humorous tone tinged with irony, by specifying the percentage allotted in her stories to individual groups of outsiders, ranging from homosexual to transgender people, the disabled, drug addicts... This humorous promise to address the relation between the seemingly compact majority and various scattered minorities is borne out by her oeuvre. All six collections of her short fiction and both novels, *Ime mi je Damjan* (My Name Is Damian) and *Tretji svet* (Third World), revolve around the traumatic relation between the power centre, power holders and opinion makers on the one hand, and those who in any way depart from the socially accepted and prescribed code on the other. Her writings lend voice to those who would otherwise remain voiceless: she is intensely engaged with rebellious and determined characters who succeed in leaving the home backyard to fight their way to the ‘reservation’, that is, to a securely circumscribed and ghettoised margin of society, among their own peers.

Yet Tratnik’s writing, which draws on experience even in the third-person narrative and is consistently composed of fragments, sketches, croquis drawings, vignettes and literary anecdotes clustering in a suggestive flow and a series of associations or memories, always remains on the literary side. Never reduced to a declaration or manifesto, it is targeted not merely at insiders but at the broadest reading public possible. This is partly because her narration can withdraw and comment on the events, sometimes with humour and detachment – between the time of action and time of recording elapses a period which processes and reflects on the initial experience. Her female narrator, more observer than agent, can be just as uncompromising towards the faults and calculations of the inmates of her world, her ‘reservation’, as she names one of her stories and

the entire collection: those who are repressed by the majority, socially exposed and marginalised. With her world, where genuineness and truthfulness seem to be privileges of a select few, she forges a link to her fellow authors from the Prekmurje region, who almost as a rule write about 'good people'. Tratnik, however, concentrates on describing characters who are in one way or another excluded and different, either due to their sexual orientation, social vulnerability, vagrancy, or (in several stories) due to their psyche – to addiction, psychiatric treatment or more benign psychological problems, which may be ridiculed as megalomaniac; the stories may also involve successful self-made men, mildly caricatured to reveal their social games and lies.

Tratnik's writing is characterised by the first-person narrative, which easily slips into the seemingly more distant third person. Nevertheless, her prose obviously revolves around certain traumatic nuclei, sometimes explored from various vantage points. Not because the author has used up all her motifs, but because their variation and descriptions of the same characters and events point to traumatic social points as places of break-up and misunderstanding. Her repetitions appear to grope for resolution and appeasement, which manifest themselves as gradual relaxation and as an increasing measure of good-natured peaceability. After a few revolutions, what used to hurt may become the object of a reconciliatory view and slightly ironic wording. Tratnik tends to introduce her themes inconspicuously: her narrative flow glides among characters and events but often remains uninvolved, most frequently adopting a secluded, unemotional perspective. Another distinctive feature of her prose is epic distance: it is from a distance in time that she writes about failed relationships, infidelity, and people who talk about love more than they are capable of performing – people who baulk when the body is at stake. Her accounts of disappointments and liberations seem devoid of major emotional oscillations, almost cold, but the quondam intensity may be sensed as an underground, hidden flow of narrative.

A pivot of Tratnik's writing is the issue of identity. And not sexual identity alone, which is addressed in her novel *My Name Is Damian*. It is only after several chapters that the reason for the narrator's aggression, for the conflicts and problems with his/her family and environment, becomes apparent. The hint at parental sexual abuse in childhood sheds light on Damjan's dysfunctional behaviour, fighting

and drinking, as well as on the myriad problems experienced by the transgender protagonist, who is assigned the female gender at birth but displays masculine behaviour. These problems are summarised as introductions to the individual chapters by the head of Damjan's therapy group. Even Tratnik's short prose collections appear to develop variants of a Bildungsroman. Set in a rural, suburban, or even traditional village environment, the plot features a growing girl living with her grandmother because her parents' generation is preoccupied with its own problems and partnerships. This traditional environment, where threats and prohibitions are considered a normal and unquestioned method of educating and subjecting unruly youngsters, reveals the full compactness and relentlessness of the world described. Its representatives are the gossipy village community as a whole, which is quick to judge, even though breaches of the requisite conduct occur at all levels: as adultery, as exclusion of those who are ill, different, uncommon. Tratnik depicts the – sometimes cruel – children's play, which must remain secret because it is the only place of freedom, but at the same time provides with its domination game a training for the coming adulthood. The price of independence is secrecy as well as silence, invisibility and inaudibility in the company of older people. The text often focuses on the feeling of powerlessness, with the child being unable to speak up and articulate an experience because it lacks knowledge of the adult vocabulary.

Logically, the second thematic group – descriptions of adolescence and adulthood – features a motley crew of rebels and losers, those who defy the injunctions of their environment and families by reacting in various, sometimes excessive and delinquent ways. These range from theft to drug abuse to challenging the older generations through one's public image and desire to change, through drinking and other transgressions. But this world is not idealised by Tratnik: it simply represents groups enabling another initiation alongside the 'official' one at school and in the family, which lays bare the fragmentation of social unity. The outstanding characters who fascinate adolescents are often those whose example provokes the longing for a different world, opening the door to a world where one's liberty may be fully realised. The protagonists of this thematic group tend to be the subjects of our parents' and educators' warnings, their cautionary examples. Nevertheless, the author maintains a sober and critical attitude to the slips and behavioural codes of these adolescents. Insincerity, various deceptions, lies, phoniness, all

the flaws pursued by Tratnik through a child's gaze, are now mirrored on the alternative scene as well. The world is packed in a succession of boxes, and the little spaces of freedom suffer from the same symptoms as society as a whole. This scene gradually witnesses the emergence of lesbian relationships, which suffer from the same inconsistency, mendacity and negligence as all other segments of society: the 'reservation', too, is a field of consolidating subgroups and power cores.

The third major thematic group, with its setting of alternative clubs and international conferences, tackles the issue of sexuality and its articulation, including youthful longings and shyness. Living in various types of relationship, from those between campus roommates to partners, the narrator becomes increasingly aware of the global movement for the rights of homosexuals. Again she encounters passionate debates and prejudiced convictions, fierce opposition or assent to the same phenomena, depending on the debater's character. The global lesbian community is divided, too, for it includes women who are deeply committed and women who settle for compromises, in-depth theoretical reflections and emotionally unstable infatuations. Yet even in these stories the narrator adopts a secluded, almost passive accompanying attitude: falling in love, she is usually abandoned or the relationship is recognised to be a dead end. This is not necessarily due to outside pressures or to the contemptuous looks of the environment: it may be caused by the character differences between the partners, by geographic distance, anything.

None of these social positions is idealised. This applies to Prekmurje and the growing-up years under socialism, as well as to the alternative scene of the 1980s with its dysfunctional and excessive forms of behaviour, which hamper serious relationships and communication. Finally, a similar fragmentation occurs on the lesbian activist scene. This may be attributed to the sensitivity of the narrator, who addresses in a seemingly uninvolved way the possibility of living in a community. The feeling of exclusion is reinforced by the minimalist style, a sparseness of language which says more through its silences and suppressions than through overt speech. In fact, Tratnik's prose constantly reminds us of the particulars, the fragmentation of a society in which every binding social covenant is already an adaptation and conformity. Everything may have begun 'in the home backyard' – the grandmother, a fount of traditionalism, maintains in the collection of the same title that nothing more

is needed and that the outside world is unnecessary – but similar patterns recur at international meetings and conferences as well; there is a wide range of motivations and modes of functioning, and Tratnik's prose is evidently an appeal to accept the differences.

What increasingly resounds in Tratnik's more recent prose is the call of faraway worlds. Her latest novel, *Third World*, replaces hitchhiking to Amsterdam and to conferences with a sensitive treatment of those who are even more exposed. In contrast to Slovenia, which had developed a gay movement and a strong subcultural scene as early as the 1980s, there were certain milieus which exercised sanctions against homosexuality, including legal ones. These milieus are the focus of Tratnik's latest novel, which prefigures the disintegration of Yugoslavia. But while this book can still afford a patronising attitude and takes pride in the degree of the rights acquired, the latest wave of traditionalisation has enhanced our awareness that the right to be different cannot be taken for granted. If Tratnik was able to shift from a frontal defence of otherness to describing the inside situation, the conditions and personnel of the reservation, we may well expect, given the unfavourable social conditions – after the emergence of various pro-family and pro-children movements, in which the latter are used as living shields to discipline and to curtail the rights of those who are different, homosexual, with arguments that would have been laughed at in the more liberal 1980s but are nowadays discussed in the Parliament – a new increase in the commitment to, and representation of, all kinds of otherness.

Translated by Nada Grošelj

Mrtve stvari

(odlomek iz kratke zgodbe)

Sama od sebe sem sklenila, da bom svoje malo pokopališče uradno razveljavila, ga prekopala in namesto grobov in križev raje zasadila solato, ki je koristna in še raste sama od sebe. Ko imaš trinajst let in se ti zdi, da drsiš v socialo, opisano v realističnih romanih, da si se nenadoma pogršala, česar ne moreš prikriti z lepimi oblekami, ker seveda ni denarja zanje, med počitnicami pa se vsak dan s kolesom voziš k stari mami, ki po svoji kapi in smrti starega očeta živi sama v hiši z velikim vrtom, ti pa preživljaš poletje pri njej tudi zato, ker ni denarja za morje, s sošolkami pa se zunaj šole ne dobivaš, ker si jim čudna, saj tudi poleti ne maraš nositi kril in oblekic s cvetličnimi vzorci pa še edina v razredu si brez resnega ali vsaj namišljenega fanta, ker so ti pač všeč dekleta ... Ko se ti dogaja vse to, se počutiš dovolj norčasta in bedna že brez tega, da bi skrbela še za zasebno pokopališče. In bila sem že tudi odločno prestara za kaj takega. Bil je čas, da začnem misliti na solato in paradižnik in papriko, na zelenjavo, ki je bo mama vesela, ker ji po službi ne bo treba še vse večere plesti puloverjev za tečne kmečke babe v službi, ki potem njeno filigransko delo poplačajo s kakšno vrečkico krompirja ali korenja za v juho ali s tremi jajčki, nikoli pa ne pomislijo, kako zelo prav pride samohranilki vsak dinar.

»Kdo pa je danes umrl?« sem slišala za hrbtom.

Obrnila sem se, ker nisem nikogar videla priti na dvorišče. Stara mama je še bila pri sosedih, pri studencu pa je zdaj stal moj oče in kadil, kot da bi se vzel od nikoder.

Bila sem malo užaljena, ker je tako hitro pozabil, kako hitro raste tudi brez njega. To poletje sva se sicer večkrat videla, ker se je nenehno kregal s svojo novo ženo in je cele dneve preživljal pri svoji materi in včasih pri njej tudi prespal, čeprav se je tudi z njo prepiral, še bolj pa moja stara mama z njim, in takrat je raje prespal kar zunaj v avtu. Pa saj je bilo poletje, čas dopustov. Mi trije smo sestavljali neko čudno, po nesreči zlepljeno, frankensteinovsko družino: stara mama, ki je po kapi postala še bolj zagrenjena in sitna in ni mogla več kuhati, ker so ji krožniki in lonci in drva padali iz šibkega prijema, oče, ki je bil do mene in do vseh popolnoma nepredvidljiv, saj je prihajal in odhajal, kakor mu je nanese, jaz, ki sem ravnokar odrasla, kar je bilo zelo boleče in kar sem vsem zamerila do obisti.

Včasih sva z očetom skupaj skuhalo kosilo po navodilih stare mame. Njeni napotki so bili pogosto nedosledni, jeza nad najino

nesposobnostjo pa neizmerna. Pri vsakem obroku je bentila, češ da so rezanci v juhi pretrdi, čeprav so že skoraj razpadali, da je solata slabo oprana in polna zemlje, pohan piščanec krvav in sredica kuhane krompirja surova. Ni čudno, da je obupala nad preostankom svojega življenja, tako bednega, saj ji na njene zadnje dni kuhata moški in otrok.

Proti večeru sem pomila posodo, pospravila svoje znamke, značke in razglednice iz vsega sveta v omarico na hodniku (v resnici vsega tega klumpa nisem več zbiral, ampak sem ga samo puščala pri stari mami in se delala, da imam še nekaj svojih hobijev v tej hiši, da me je še vedno nekaj tu ...), se usedla na kolo in se odpeljala v drugo hišo. Tista podnajemniška soba ni bila nikoli moj dom, moja nekdanja hiša z lepim vrtom pa je bila le še napol resnična. Med kolesarjenjem me je neprijetno obšlo, da bom semkaj zahajala samo še toliko časa, dokler bo stara mama živa, in da smo že zdaj vsi trije, stara mama, oče in jaz, v tej zapuščeni hiši z mnogimi praznimi sobami kakor duhovi.

»Nobena stvar ni umrla,« sem nekoliko nejevoljno odgovorila očetu. »Samo svoj vrt bom prekopala.«

Nasmehnil se je in si prižgal novo cigareto. Ni se trudil nadaljevati pogovora, jaz pa še manj.

Ni bilo čisto res, da nobena stvar ne bi umrla. Ko sem se pred tedni vrnila z vedno predolgih počitnic pri maminih starših in najprej prikolesarila k stari mami, sem takoj videla, da je bila pasja ovratnica na verigi prazna. Psice Mace ni bilo več. Stara mama mi je v solzah povedala, da se je zastrupila. Nisem mogla verjeti. Kako se lahko zastrupi pes, ki je na verigi? Okrivila sem staro Agi, ki je rada obiskovala vse, ki se je niso znali znebiti. Čeprav njena penzija ni bila slaba, je imela grdo navado brskanja po smeteh, o čemer je tudi govorila brez zadrege. Večino svojih oblačil je nabrala iz smeti, jih oprala in po potrebi pokrpala ter ponosno navlekla nase čim več kosov, kakor brezdomka, ki se oblači večslojno. Iz smeti je pobirala tudi kruh, zelenjavo, kose surovega ali kuhanega mesa, salame, sir, hrenovke, napolitanke ... Nihče pri zdravi pameti ni jedel tistega, kar je prinesla Agi, stara mama pa je najbrž kak gnil kos piščanca dala moji Maci, čeprav je to tajila. Zato sem poleg Agi okrivila še njo, pa tudi svojo mamo, ki je našla podnajemniško sobo v hiši z dvoriščem, na katerem niso bile dovoljene domače živali, poleg tega pa nihče še pomislil ni, da otrok lahko strašansko pogreša svojega psa. Zato sem nehala biti otrok.

Tako sem za Macino smrt obdolžila mnogo ljudi, tudi svoje starše, in takrat sem se odločila, da svojega otroškega pokopališča nočem več imeti. Prizadevno prekopavanje z lopato in potem rahljanje zemlje z motiko in s krampom ter slednjič grabljanje mi je pomagalo, da sem Macino nesmiselno smrt nekako umestila v ta svet duhov v izginjajoči hiši na mali ulici.

Le moja prijateljica Ida iz sosednje hiše je ostala ista, njo sem imela vedno enako rada. Odkar sem vsak dan redno hodila k stari mami v svojo nekdanjo hišo, sem se spet družila z njo, a na svojem dvorišču, kajti če bi bili na njenem, bi me stara mama obtožila, da nisem pri njej na obisku, ampak me bolj zanimajo tujci. Vedno je zahtevala vso pozornost in vsakega člana ali članico družine, ki se ji je po njenem premalo posvečal, zatožila vsem drugim. Zato sem ji zlagala oprano perilo in drva za pozimi, zračila omare, pospravljala kravate, srajce in suknjiče starega očeta v velike vreče, po katere naj bi prišli vaški sorodniki, in pospravila špecerijo v kuhinjskih omarah, da se vanje ne bi naselili molji.

Tu in tam je hotela, da ji berem, a nisem več marala brati pravljič, ona pa ne poslušati večno istih molitvic iz črnega molitvenika, zato sem ji brala vremenska poročila in črno kroniko iz *Vestnika*. Še posebej je hotela vsak dan sproti vedeti, koliko ljudi je umrlo in katere od njih je poznala in kdo vse se je na osmrtnici vpisal med žalujoče. To je bilo njeno malo pokopališče. Včasih sva na poti iz trgovine zraven trafike našli odvržene stare revije, večinoma take s tragičnimi družinskimi zgodbami. In potem sem ji veliko brala iz hrvaške *Arene*, ker se nama je zdelo, da je to najbolj resnicoljubna revija.

Ampak tistega dne sem prekopala svoj vrt in spraznila pokopališče ter tam posadila mlado solato, ki je po nekaj toplih in deževnih dnevih že toliko zrastle, da se je povsem zlila z odraslo solato na gredi stare mame. Tako se je moj mali vrt spojil z običajno veliko gredo in pravzaprav izginil. A tega sama nisem videla, ker me po tistem dnevu zelo dolgo ni bilo več blizu.

Ko sem prekopala in pograbila vrt ter pospravila vrtno orodje v razpadajočo lopo, ki je po smrti starega očeta ni nihče več vzdrževal, bi lahko Maco peljala na sprehod po poljih vse do proge in vrnili bi se šele po dobri uri, a ni bilo več nobene žive stvari, ki bi jo lahko peljala na sprehod. Tudi kur že dolgo ni bilo več, ker nihče ne bi mogel skrbeti zanje. Žičnata ograja kurnika je bila podrt in zvita v nemaren klobčič, čakajoč, da ga odnesejo vaški sorodniki, ki jih nikakor ni bilo več blizu. Tudi mačk ni bilo več. Tudi nas kmalu ne bo več tam.

Ko sem svoje pokopališče zravнала z zemljo in se spet spomnila, da nimam več Mace, me je prišlo, da bi pobegnila od te hiše v tisti novi, lažni dom, kjer je bilo poleti neznosno, ker si bila priklenjena in zaprta med štiri stene, kot je rekla tudi moja mama, čim se ji je začel dopust.

Usedla sem se na studenec na sredi, na meji med našim in sosedovim dvoriščem, ker je bil skupen, in takrat je iz hiše pritekla Ida z zamisljivo, da bi šli v kino, ker vrtijo dobro kriminalko po romanu Agathe Christie. Ida je vedela veliko o kriminalkah in posodila mi je že skoraj vsa dela najboljše pisateljice Christie, tako da me je njen predlog rešil še enega večera neizbežne turobnosti med izgubljenim in lažnim domom. Zmenili sva se, da se čez pol ure spet dobiva pri studentu in odrineva v mesto.

Šla sem na hodnik in se delala, da pospravljam svojo omarico z značkami, znamkami, razglednicami in s starimi številkami *Arene*, čeprav je tistega dne sploh nisem odprla. Vsi ti zbirateljski hobiji so me vse manj zanimali, a ker svojih zbirk nisem želela prepustiti neumnim daljnim bratrancem iz rojstne vasi stare mame, raje nisem povedala, da v resnici ne zbiram ničesar več.

A čutila sem nezadržno nujno, da pobrkljam po omari, preden bi stari mami priznala, da bom tega dne odšla slabo uro prej, ker greva s sosedovo Ido v kino. Čeprav niti nisem vedela, kaj je bilo tu sploh za priznati. Med počitnicami sem smela vsak dan v kino, ne da bi morala mamu prositi za izhod za vsako predstavo posebej. Moje navidezno pospravljanje po omarici me je spominjalo na očetovo brisanje in glajenje žarometov na avtu, ko ni vedel, kako bi čimbolj neopazno omenil, da gre s kolegi na pijačo, saj je bil takrat še poročen z mojo mamu in ni smel povedati, da gre na zmenek z novo babo, ampak se je moral zlagati.

Ko sem zaprla omarico in obrnila ključek, ki sem ga vedno ponosno nosila s seboj, čeprav v hiši ni bilo nikogar, ki bi si želel ogledati moje zbirke, sem navrgla, da grem z Ido v kino. Stara mama je sedela na divanu v kuhinji pri odprtih vratih, zato sem vedela, da me je slišala. Da bom zaradi tujega človeka odšla prej »od doma«, mi je bilo lažje priznati, če je nisem gledala v obraz, njej pa se je bilo tako lažje sprenevedati, da me ne sliši. Stopila sem do kuhinjskega praga, naprej ni šlo, ker je bil zrak že zgoščen za rezat.

»Čez pol ure,« sem rekla, zavedajoč se, da z vsako izgovorjeno besedo vnašam le še več nemira. »Tam na studentu bom čakala Ido. Če boš prišla še kaj ven na predvečer.«

Stara mama, ki je sedela s sklenjenimi rokami na trebuhu, je glavo obrnila proč. To je bilo vse.

Šla sem sedet na studenec, tako da sem gledala svoj vrt, zravnani z zemljo.

Od nekod se je spet vzeli oči.

»Greš?« me je vprašal.

»Še malo,« sem odvrnila in bingljala z nogami ob kamnitem obodu studenca. Pokimal je in odšel v hišo.

Obsedela sem v predvečerni tišini. Za mojim hrbtom, na nasprotni strani vrta, je zahajalo sonce. Ognjeno rdečo svetlobo sem videla v odsevu na oknu Idine sobe. Izenada se je levo krilo okna odprlo in razpolovilo celovito, umirjeno sliko zahoda. Ida mi je na kratko pomahala, kar sem razumela kot znamenje, da bo takoj.

Nekaj sem začutila v svoji bližini, kot piš Macinega pasjega sopihanja na moji nogi. Obrnila sem se in zagledala očeta, čisto blizu sebe, morda en meter stran. Kadil je. Globoko je potegnili dim, izpihnil in rekel:

»Kam ti zdaj greš?«

»V kino.« Skomignila sem z rameni, kot da to ne bi bilo nič. Saj, kaj pa naj bi to bilo?

»A tako.« V njegovih očeh sem zaznala porog, morda zato, ker so bile obrobline malce krvavo.

»Z Ido,« sem rekla. »Z Ido greva gledati film *In potem ni bilo nikogar več*. To je dobra kriminalka.« Prezirala sem ta svoj slabo zaigran, prijazen ton, ki sem se ga poslužila vsakič, ko sem hotela s kvaliteto upravičiti svoje ravnanje. Saj je samo kino, sem si mislila. A vedela, da ni bil samo kino. A se zato pride k bolni in osamljeni stari mami, da se jo potem ignorira z druženjem s sosedo?

»Z Ido,« je oči z odporom ponovil za mano. Zakašljali je in zavohala sem alkohol. Vedno sem ga, pri vseh ljudeh, že od malega. »Dobro.«

Če je kdo v naši družini rekel *dobro*, to nikoli ni bilo mišljeno dobro, ampak grozljivo.

»Deset malih Indijancev!« je odločno pribil oči in se obrnil. Po kamnitih ploščicah je stopal nazaj na dvorišče in proti hiši. »To je pravi naslov filma.« Prižgal si je cigareto in mi govoril s svojim hrbtom: »Eden za drugim.«

Dead Things

(excerpt from the short story)

I made up my mind to officially abolish my little cemetery, dig it up and, instead of graves and crosses, plant lettuce, which is not only good for you but also grows on its own. When you're thirteen and you feel like you're slipping into the social sphere depicted in realist novels, like you've suddenly grown ugly and you can't hide it with nice clothes because there is no money to buy them and, every day during the holidays, you ride your bike to your grandmother's who, after her stroke and your grandfather's death, has been living alone in that house with the big garden, and you're spending your summer there also because there is no money to go to the seaside and you don't hang out with your classmates outside of school because they think you're weird, refusing to wear skirts and floral dresses even in the summer, as well as being the only one in class who doesn't have a real boyfriend or at least an imaginary one because you happen to like girls... When all of this is happening to you, you feel silly and lame enough as it is without having a private cemetery to take care of. And besides, I was way too old for that. It was time I turned my mind to lettuce and tomatoes and peppers, vegetables that would make my mum happy because she wouldn't have to spend all her evenings after work knitting sweaters for the annoying farm women from work who, in return for her delicate craftsmanship, would give her a small bag of potatoes or carrots to put in a soup or three little eggs, never stopping to think that a single mother could use every penny she gets.

"Who died today?" I heard someone behind me say.

I turned around; I hadn't seen anyone come into the front yard. My grandmother was still at her neighbour's, and standing by the well now was my father, smoking, as if he had come out of nowhere.

I was a little hurt that it took such a short time for him to forget how quickly I was growing, even without him there. We had seen each other several times that summer because he was constantly quarrelling with his new wife and spending all his days at his mother's, sometimes even staying the night, although he argued with her, too, and my grandmother with him even more; at times like that, he would rather sleep outside in his car. And it was summer, after all, holiday time. The three of us made up this weird, randomly put together, Frankenstein-like family: my grandmother, who had grown

even more bitter and fussy after her stroke and could no longer cook because plates and pots and firewood kept slipping from her feeble grip, my dad, whose behaviour towards me and everyone else was completely unpredictable, coming and going as he pleased, and I, who had just grown up, which was very painful and as a result of which I bitterly resented everyone.

Sometimes my dad and I cooked lunch together under the guidance of my grandmother. Her instructions were often inconsistent and her anger over our incompetence terrible. She would fume over every meal, saying that the soup noodles were too hard even though they were practically falling apart, that the lettuce was poorly washed and full of dirt, that the fried chicken was bloody and that the boiled potatoes were raw on the inside. No wonder she gave up over the rest of her life, so pathetic, having a man and a child cook for her in her final days.

Towards the evening, I would wash the dishes, stow my stamps, badges and postcards from around the world into the cabinet in the hallway (I wasn't really collecting any of that junk anymore, I was just leaving it at my grandmother's, pretending I still had a few of my hobbies in that house, that a part of me was still there...), sit on my bike and ride to the other house. That rented room was never my home and my former house with the beautiful garden was only half real. As I was cycling, I suddenly realised with horror that I would only be going there for as long as my grandmother was alive and that the three of us, my grandmother, my dad and I, were already like ghosts in that abandoned house with many empty rooms.

"Nothing died today," I replied to my father somewhat irritably. "I'm just going to do some digging in my garden."

He smiled, lighting himself another cigarette. He didn't try to continue the conversation and neither did I.

That thing about nothing dying wasn't entirely true. When, a few weeks before, I returned from my ever-too-long holidays with my mother's parents and went straight to my grandmother's, I saw right away that the dog collar was missing from the chain. Maca the dog was gone. With tears in her eyes, my grandmother told me she had died from poisoning. I couldn't believe it. How could a chained-up dog poison herself? I blamed old Agi, who liked to pay a visit to anyone who didn't know how to get rid of her. Although her pension wasn't bad, she had a nasty habit of picking through rubbish,

which she wasn't embarrassed to talk about either. She found most of her clothes in the garbage, washed them, patched them up if they needed mending and put on as many items as possible, like a homeless woman dressed in layers. She also plucked out bread, vegetables, pieces of raw or cooked meat, salami, cheese, hotdogs, wafers... No one in their right mind would eat what Agi brought them, but my grandmother probably gave a piece of bad chicken to my Maca, even though she denied it. So in addition to Agi, I blamed her, as well as my mum for renting a room in a house with a backyard where no pets were allowed and it didn't occur to anyone that a child could miss their dog terribly. So I stopped being a child.

I blamed many people for Maca's death – my parents included – and it was then that I decided I no longer wanted my little cemetery. Zealous shovelling, followed by hoeing and mattocking and finally raking helped me to sort of place Maca's senseless death in that ghost world of the vanishing house on the small street.

Only my friend Ida from the house next door had remained unchanged, I always liked her the same. Ever since I had made a habit of coming to see my grandmother at my former house every day, I started hanging out with her again – but on our front yard, not hers, because otherwise my grandmother would have accused me of not coming to visit her but being more interested in strangers. She always wanted all the attention for herself and would tell the entire family on any family member whom she felt wasn't giving her enough of theirs. So I folded her washed laundry and stacked the firewood for the winter, aired the closets, put my grandfather's ties, shirts and jackets into large bags that our relatives from the village were supposed to pick up and put the groceries in the kitchen cupboards so they wouldn't become infested with moths.

Every once in a while she wanted me to read to her, but I no longer liked reading fairy tales and she didn't want to hear the same prayers from the black prayer book over and over again, so I read her the weather forecasts and the crime section from the daily *Vestnik*. She was particularly interested in keeping up to date with how many people had died that day and which of them she knew and who the grievors listed in the obituary were. That was her little cemetery. Sometimes, on our way from the shop, we'd find old, thrown away magazines by the newsstand, mostly those containing tragic family stories. And I would often read to her from the Croatian magazine *Arena* because we thought it to be the most truthful one.

But that day, I dug my garden, emptied the cemetery and planted young lettuce plants that, after a few warm and rainy days, had grown so much as to blend in completely with the fully grown lettuce in my grandmother's garden. And so my little garden merged with the usual large one and essentially disappeared. But I didn't know that because I wouldn't be back there for quite a while after that day.

After hoeing and raking the garden and putting the tools away into the ramshackle shed that had fallen into neglect after my grandfather's death, I could have taken Maca for a walk in the fields all the way to the tracks and we would be gone for a good hour, but there was no longer any living thing I could take for a walk. The chickens were long gone, too, because there was no one to take care of them. The wire fence of the coop was torn down and wound into a messy coil, waiting to be picked up by the relatives from the village who never came around anymore. There were no more cats either. We would soon be gone, too.

When I levelled my cemetery to the ground, remembering again I no longer had Maca, I felt like running away from that house into my new, fake home that was impossible to live in during the summer because you were caged and locked up inside four walls, as my mother herself said as soon as she started her leave.

I was sitting by the well, in the middle between our front yard and the neighbour's because we were sharing it, when Ida came running out of the house suggesting that we go to the cinema; a good crime film based on a novel by Agatha Christie was playing. Ida knew a lot about crime fiction and she had lent me almost all of Christie's works, the best writer of all time, so her suggestion saved me from another evening of inevitable gloomy hovering between my lost home and my fake home. We'd agreed to meet by the well in half an hour and head to town.

I went to the hallway, pretending to tidy up my cabinet with badges, stamps, postcards and old issues of *Arena*, though I hadn't even opened it that day. I was less and less interested in all those hobbies, but because I didn't want to leave my collections to some stupid distant cousins from my grandmother's home village, I didn't tell her I wasn't really collecting anything anymore.

But I felt an overwhelming need to have a rummage through the cabinet before going to my grandmother and confess that I would be leaving about an hour earlier that day because I was going to the cinema with Ida from next door. No matter if I didn't even know

what there was to confess. I could go to the cinema every day during the holidays without having to ask my mother if I could go out before every single show. My pretend cupboard cleaning reminded me of my dad's wiping and polishing of car lights when he didn't know how to slip into the conversation as subtly as possible that he was going for a drink with his mates because, at the time, he was still married to my mum and he couldn't tell her he was taking his new broad on a date, so he had to lie.

When I closed the cupboard and turned the key that I always proudly carried with me, although there was no one in the house who was interested in seeing my collections, I casually mentioned that I was going to the cinema with Ida. My grandmother was sitting on the kitchen divan by the open door, so I knew that she had heard me. It was easier for me to admit that I was leaving "home" earlier because of a stranger if I didn't see her face and it was easier for her to pretend she hadn't heard me. I came to the kitchen doorstep but that was as far as I could go; you could already cut the air with a knife.

"In half an hour," I said, realising that the tension was mounting with every spoken word. "I'll be waiting for Ida out there by the well. If you decide to come out again before nightfall".

My grandmother, sitting with her hands clasped on her stomach, turned her head away. That was it.

I went to the well and sat facing my garden, levelled to the ground.

My dad turned up again.

"Leaving?" he asked.

"In a while," I replied, swinging my legs over the stone rim of the well. He nodded and went inside.

I sat there in the afternoon silence. Behind my back, on the opposite side of the garden, the sun was setting. I saw the fiery red light in the reflection in the window of Ida's room. All of a sudden, the left-hand side of the casement window flew open, splitting the whole, peaceful image of the sunset in two. Ida gave me a quick wave which I understood to mean she won't be a minute.

I felt something near me, like a gust of Maca's doggy panting on my leg. I turned around and saw Dad, really close, maybe three feet away. He was smoking. He took a deep drag, exhaled and said:

"Where are you off to now?"

"The cinema." I shrugged my shoulders as if to say it wasn't a big deal. What was the big deal anyway?

“Oh, right.” I saw a sneer in his eyes, maybe because they were a little bloodshot.

“With Ida,” I said. “Ida and I are going to see *And Then There Were None*. It’s a good crime film.” I despised my poorly executed friendly tone, the one I used every time I wanted to justify my actions by invoking quality. It was just the cinema, I thought. But I knew it wasn’t just the cinema. Is that why you come to see your sick, lonely grandmother, so you can ignore her by hanging out with the neighbour?

“With Ida,” he repeated after me, with disapproval. He coughed and I smelled alcohol. I always could, on everybody, ever since I was little. “Alright.”

If anyone in our family said alright, it was never meant well, but rather as a threat.

“Ten Little Indians!” said Dad firmly, turning around. He was walking on the flagstones back towards the front yard and the house. “That’s the real title of the film.” He lit a cigarette, saying with his back toward me: “One by one”.

Translated by Špela Bibič

**Literarna branja
Vilenice 2016**

*Vilenica Literary
Readings 2016*



Foto © Zoran Lešić

Adisa Bašić

Adisa Bašić se je rodila leta 1979 v Sarajevu v Bosni in Hercegovini. Je magistrica primerjalne književnosti in bibliotekarstva, prav tako je magistrirala s temo o človekovih pravicah in demokraciji. Bašićeva je avtorica štirih pesniških zbirk: *Havine rečenice* (Evini stavki, 1999), *Trauma market* (Trauma market, 2004), *Promotivni spot za mojo domovinu* (Reklamni video za mojo domovino, 2011), za katero je prejela mednarodno nagrado Literaris Bank Austria (2012), in *Motel neznanih junaka* (Motel neznanih junakov, 2014). Njene pesmi so objavljene v vseh novejših antologijah bosanske poezije. Kot asistentka predava poezijo in kreativno pisanje na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in bibliotekarstvo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Sarajevu. Vseskozi dela tudi kot novinarka, med drugim je več let pisala literarne kritike za tedenik *Slobodna Bosna*. Trenutno zaključuje doktorsko disertacijo s temo o erosu in humorju v južnoslovanski poeziji na Univerzi v Gradcu. V zborniku objavljene pesmi so izšle v zbirkah *Promotivni spot za mojo domovinu* in *Motel neznanih junaka*.

Adisa Bašić was born in 1979 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She has a master's degree in Comparative Literature and Librarianship and a master's degree in Human Rights and Democracy. She has published four collections of poetry: *Havine rečenice* (Eve's Sentences, 1999), *Trauma market* (Trauma Market, 2004), *Promotivni spot za mojo domovinu* (A Promo Clip for My Homeland, 2011), for which she received the international Literaris Bank Austria award (2012), and *Motel neznanih junaka* (Motel of Unknown Heroes, 2014). Her poems have been included in all recent anthologies of Bosnian poetry. She is an Assistant Professor of Poetry and Creative Writing at the Department of Comparative Literature and Library Science at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo. She still regularly works as a journalist, having also written literary criticism for the *Slobodna Bosna* weekly for a number of years. She is currently completing PhD studies at the University of Graz and is in the process of writing a doctoral thesis about Eros and humour in South Slavic poetry. This year's *Vilenica Almanac* features poems from her books *Promotivni spot za mojo domovinu* and *Motel neznanih junaka*.

Heroína

Nema ga i nema i nema.
Stvari u ormaru izgubile su njegov miris.
Djeca samo misle da ga pamte.

Davno je legao
i *dugo ti mu je ležati...*

Pod nekom travom nenačedom.
Pod nekim lišćem taloženim.

Nema ga i nema i nema.
A ti bdiješ nad suhom uspomenom.
Njegov lik: presovan cvijet.

Silno hvalimo tvoje dostojanstvo.
Ti si ljubav kakvu sanjamo.
Ti si odanost kakvoj se nadamo.
Ti si slika koja tako dobro ide u naš ram.

A njega nema.
I nema.
I nema.

Niko ne čuje noć.
Do krvi grizeš šake.
U se stavljaš prste.
Glavom o uzglavlje tučeš.

U samotnoj postelji znaš:
ti ga se ne sječaš.

Breaking News

jagorčevina noćas
u iznenadnom napadu
zaposjela park
više detalja u prilogu...

jedan školski autobus
stigao na cilj bez sudara
pun simpatija i
mirišljave uredne djece

radnici ozbiljne male slastičarne
ne štrajkuju –
peku deset rođendanskih torti
i jedanaestu “sretno useljenje”

jedna temperatura uspješno skinuta
oblogama, tušem, mlakom vodom
ogromno olakšanje koje je nastalo
nije izazvalo znatnija pomjeranja na berzi

i za kraj, nešto o vremenu...

dvoje kolega iz meteorološkog zavoda
jutros je nakon višegodišnje službe
ozbiljnim tonom, kraj mjernog instrumenta,
jedno drugom izjavilo ljubav

Komemoracija

tvoje rebro je
oba puta zaraslo
jednom je puklo od
stražareve čelične kugle
drugi put od ljubavnog stiska
mojih nogu

ljubim ti zaraslu sljepočnicu –
živo meso ispod zarasle kože
ližem brazdu kojom je
niz tvoja leđa klizila krv,
ližem tvoju krv

jedna lomljena noga je
ostala kraća
ova noga koju noćas
snažno stišćem svojim
putenim butinama

ova vrela glava
u mojim rukama
obrtala se nekad
u ritmu stražareve
neumorne pesnice

kako je dobro što si živ!
kako je ukusno tvoje živo meso!

na travi ni na betonu noćas nema nikog
ležali ste na betonskom igralištu škole

noćas ovdje nema nikog
samo ti i ja
nema cvijeća
nema sjećanja
u mikrofona
okrugao kao čelična kugla
koja lomi rebra

samo ja koja ljubim
zaraslu kožu
na zaraslom lomu
i ti čije sjeme
ovu pustu zemlju oplođava

Ujedinjenje

historijsko ujedinjenje
odigralo se u miru i diskreciji
male motelske sobe

niko da sazove press konferenciju
izvijesti novinare, CNN live!
niko da proglasi praznik!

na današnji dan treba
raspustiti škole
podijeliti zastave
sazvati spontani skup...

... zaustaviti saobraćaj
glavnom gradskom ulicom
odlikovati zaslužne
pomenuti minutom pale...

... danas treba tući u bubnjeve
čitati proglase
obučiti najsvečanije odijelo...

... treba zadrhtati od težine trenutka
slaveći tvoje i moje ujedinjenje

Junakinja

Ni ga in ni in ni.
Stvari v omari so izgubile njegov vonj.
Otroci samo mislijo, da se ga spominjajo.

Že davno je legel
in dolgo mu je usojeno ležati ...

Pod neko travo nenačeto.
Pod nekim listjem naplastenim.

Ni ga in ni in ni.
Ti pa bediš nad posušenim spominom.
Njegova podoba: sprešan cvet.

Močno hvalimo tvoje dostojanstvo.
Ti si ljubezen, o kakršni sanjamo.
Ti si vdanost, na kakršno upamo.
Ti si slika, ki se tako dobro prilega v naš okvir.

Njega pa ni.
In ni.
In ni.

Nihče ne sliši noči.
Do krvi si grizeš pesti.
Vase daješ prste.
Z glavo v zglavje tolčeš.

V samotni postelji veš:
ti se ga ne spominjaš.

Breaking News

spomladanski jeglič to noč
v nenadnem napadu
zavzel park
več podrobnosti v prispevku ...

šolski avtobus
prispel na cilj brez trčenj
poln simpatij in
dišečih urejenih otrok

delavci resne majhne slaščičarne
ne stavkajo –
pečejo deset tort za rojstni dan
in enajsto za »srečno vselitev«

vročina uspešno zbita
z obkladki, tušem, mlačno vodo
ogromno olajšanje, ki je nastalo
ni povzročilo večjih premikov na borzi

in za konec, nekaj o vremenu ...

kolega iz meteorološkega zavoda
sta danes zjutraj po večletni službi
z resnim tonom, poleg mernega instrumenta,
drug drugemu izpovedala ljubezen

Komemoracija

tvoje rebro se je
obakrat zaraslo
enkrat je počilo zaradi
stražarjeve jeklene krogel,
drugič zaradi ljubezenskega stiska
mojih nog

poljubljam ti zaraslo sence –
divje meso pod zaraslo kožo
ližem brazdo, po kateri je
po tvojem hrbtu polzela kri,
ližem tvojo kri

ena zlomljena noga je
ostala krajša
noga, ki jo nocoj
močno stiskam s svojimi
poltenimi stegni

ta vroča glava
v mojih rokah
se je nekoč obračala
v ritmu stražarjeve
neutrudne pesti

kako dobro je, da si živ!
kako okusno je tvoje divje meso!

na travi ne na betonu nocoj ni nikogar
ležali ste na betonskem šolskem igrišču

nocoj tukaj ni nikogar
samo ti in jaz
ni cvetja
ni spominjanja
v mikrofona
okrogel kakor jeklena krogla,
ki lomi rebra

samo jaz, ki poljubljam
zaraslo kožo
na zaraslem prelomu,
in ti, čigar seme
to pusto zemljo oplaja

Združitev

zgodovinska združitev
se je zgodila v miru in diskretnosti majhne
motelske sobe

nihče ni sklical tiskovke
obvestil novinarjev, CNN live!
nihče ni razglasil praznika!

na današnji dan je treba
imeti v šolah prosto
razdeliti zastave
sklicati spontani zbor ...

... ustaviti promet
na glavni mestni ulici
odlikovati zaslužne
spomniti se padlih z minuto ...

... danes je treba tolči po bobnih
brati razglase
obleči najsvetanejšo obleko ...

... treba je zadrhteti zaradi teže trenutka
in slaviti tvojo in mojo združitev

Prevedla Sonja Dolžan

Heroine

He is gone and gone and gone.
The wardrobe has lost his scent.
The children only think they remember him.

He lay down long ago
And *long has he still to lie...*

Untouched grasses over him.
Leaf mulch layers over him.

He is gone and gone and gone.
You watch over a withered keepsake.
His image: a pressed flower.

Your dignity, our song of praise.
 You, the love of our dreams.
 You, our beacon of loyalty.
 You, all too fit for our picture frame.

And he is gone.
And gone.
And gone.

Nobody hears the night.
Bite your fists until they bleed.
Thrust your fingers inside yourself.
Bash your head into the pillow.

You in your bed alone:
You don't remember him.

Breaking News

tonight, in a sudden attack,
a primrose occupied a park
more in the report that follows...

a school bus
full of wholesome and tidy children
exchanging shy glances
arrived at its destination without a collision

bakers in an upmarket little cake shop
were not on strike –
baking ten birthday cakes
plus one for a 'Happy New Home'

a fever was successfully brought down
using damp towels, cool showers and lukewarm water
the relief this created
did not cause significant shifts on the financial markets

and now, the weather forecast...

this morning, from the weather station
amidst the forecasting instruments
two work colleagues, after many years of service
solemnly declared their love for each other

Commemoration

your rib healed
both times
one time it cracked from
the guard's iron ball
the other time from the loving squeeze
of my legs

I kiss your healed temple –
the living flesh underneath the healed skin
I lick the hollow on your back
down which ran your blood,
I lick your blood

one leg broken
stayed shorter
this leg which I squeeze
so hard tonight with
my lustful thighs

this burning head
in my hands
spun once
in the rhythm of the guard's
tireless fist

how good it is that you are living!
how tasty is your living flesh!

on the grass and on concrete there is no one tonight
all of you lay on concrete in the school playground

there is no one here tonight
only you and me
no flowers
no recollections
for the microphone
round as the iron ball
that breaks the ribs

only me kissing
the healed skin
on the healed bone
and you whose seed
makes this waste land fecund

Unification

historical unification
played out in the peace and discretion
of a small hotel room

nobody to hold a press conference
to inform the media, CNN Live!
nobody to declare it an official holiday!

on this day
schools should be closed
flags should be handed out to all
spontaneous gatherings organized...

... in the main city streets
traffic should be stopped
the deserving should be presented with medals
the fallen remembered with a minute's silence...

... today drums should be beaten
manifestos declaimed
smartest clothing donned...

... all should tremble with the weight of the moment
celebrating the unification of you and me

Translated by Damir Arsenijević



Foto © Braco Zavrnik

Aleš Berger

Aleš Berger se je rodil leta 1946 v Ljubljani. Diplomiral je iz primerjalne književnosti in francoščine na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani. Pri založbi Mladinska knjiga je trideset let skrbel za prevodni program za odrasle in urejal nekaj vrhunskih zbirk slovenskega založništva (Zbirka Lirika). Ob tem je za različne medije pisal gledališke kritike. Veliko je prevajal, predvsem iz francoščine (Apollinaire, Char, Cioran, Beckett, Breton, Césaire, Lautréamont, Prévert, Queneau) in španščine (Borges, García Lorca). Prevedel je okrog petdeset gledaliških iger od Molièra do Koltèsa. Berger je avtor dveh zbirk esejev *Krokiji in beležke* (1998) in *Omara v kleti* (2011), dramskih del *Zmenki* (2006) in *Noji nad Triglavom* (2011), zbirk poezije za otroke *Nono z Bleda* (2010) in *Vnučki ropotuljčki* (2012) ter proznih zbirk *Zagatne zgodbe* (2004) in *Povzetki* (2016). Za prevajalsko, esejistično in založniško delo je bil večkrat nagrajen. V zborniku objavljeni odlomki so iz njegove najnovejše knjige *Povzetki*.

Aleš Berger was born in 1946 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. He obtained a degree in Comparative Literature and French from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana. For thirty years, he was head of the adult translation programme at the Mladinska knjiga publishing house and edited some of the definitive collections of Slovenian publishing (such as the Lirika Series). In addition, he has written theatre criticism for various media. He is a prolific translator from French (Apollinaire, Char, Cioran, Beckett, Breton, Césaire, Lautréamont, Prévert, Queneau) and Spanish (Borges, García Lorca). He has translated over fifty plays, ranging from Molière to Koltès. He is known as the author of the collections of essays *Krokiji in beležke* (Sketches and Notes, 1998) and *Omara v kleti* (Drawer in the Cellar, 2011), the plays *Zmenki* (Dates, 2006) and *Noji nad Triglavom* (Ostriches over Triglav, 2011), the collections of poetry for children *Nono z Bleda* (Grandpa from Bled, 2010) and *Vnučki ropotuljčki* (Grandtoddlers with Rattles, 2012) and the volumes of prose *Zagatne zgodbe* (Embarrassing Tales, 2004) and *Povzetki* (Abstracts, 2016). He has received many awards for translation, essays and publishing. The excerpts featured in this year's *Vilenica Almanac* are from *Povzetki*, his most recent book.

Povzetki

(odlomki)

* * *

SEDIM ZA MIZO in pišem, da sedim za mizo in pišem, da sedim.

Pišem dnevnik o tem, kako je, ko berem svoj dnevnik spred tridesetih let.

Ves lajf spraviti na en fajl ...

Pred praznim ekranom je zaznaval takšno tesnobno svobodo, da bi ji najraje ubežal.

Michel Tournier pravi v *Drobnih prozah*, da je avtoportret klic iz slikarjeve samote. »Tako boren sem tukaj, tako nikomur mar.« Se lahko enako reče o pesmi, eseju, drobni pripombi, kakršna je tale?

»Avtobiografija, polna anahronizmov ...« (R. Qu.?)

»Veliko tremo imam, kadar sedam k pisanju, kajti vem, da utegne nastati kaj antologijskega, in nerodno mi je kar naprej delati zgodovino.«

Dan življenja dam za vsak dobro zašiljen stavek, se je dostikrat pomenljivo pridušal. Učakal je visoko starost.

Kako površni so tisti, ki nas hvalijo: naštejejo komaj polovico naših vrlin!

Če bi vedel, da se bo nekoč skušal čim več spomniti, bi živel bolj pozorno.

Če bi vedel, da se bo moral nekoč marsičesa spomniti, bi živel bolj pazljivo. (Mar res?)

Omnibus

Sedem dni življenja mu je preostalo. Vsak dan sme in mora posvetiti enemu naglavnih grehov. Torej je v sedmih poglavjih zaporedoma:

bahat, pohlepen, pohoten, jezljiv, požrešen, zavisten in len. Zgleden romaneskni junak.

Omnibus II.

Sedem dni življenja mu je podaril dobri Bog, vsak dan bo namenil eni umetnosti. Torej bo v sedmih poglavjih drug za drugim: pisatelj, slikar, plesalec, skladatelj, arhitekt, igralec, virtuoz. Ko se bo osmi dan prebudil, bo spet nepismen, gluhi in barvno slep.

Antidnevnik

Vsak dan zabeležiti, kaj se ti *ni* zgodilo, česa nisi naredil ali povedal, na kaj vse nisi pomislil in kje nisi bil.

* * *

PRIJATELJ, več let si že mrtev, kot si jih živel.

»Z lestenca visita oprani nogavici kot kakšen srednje mlad mrlič.« A je kdo, ki sam zvečer v poceni hotelski sobi v tujem mestu ni kdaj pomislil na to?

Kadar bi se zjutraj rad pokončal, počakaj ob misli na še en neizprosni dan. Kadar bi se na večer, vzdrži ob grožnji še ene noči.

Čisto povprečen Slovenec: dva otroka, par ljubic, ločen, z rakom na pljučih, na meji alkoholizma, z nekaj samomori blizu okrog.

Slišal sem, da je na klin obesil študij, potem še sebe.

Nemalokrat na pokopališču za hip srečam tistega, na čigar grob sem ravno namenjen.

Nagrobniki

Dlje časa
so bile vdove
kot poročene.

(Odkar ga je pokopala, ga ima tisočkrat raje.)

Mirko B.

Rad se je pomenkoval, tudi ko ni mogel več govoriti.

* * *

TISTI NAŠ KOLEGA je imel več žensk kot vsi mi bruci skupaj – v svoji razviharjeni domišljiji, s katero nas je, domišljavo skromen, nesebično obsipaval. Da je bahat devičnik, smo dognali šele takrat, ko nam je bilo vseeno.

Za vruga se ni spomnil, ali je spal s tisto opolnočno znanko. Ali le z njenim možem.

»Zakaj me vsaj enkrat ne prevara?« se je, ženskar, da mu ni bilo para, jezil na svojo stanovitno soprogo, »bi vsaj videla, češplja zagamana, kako trpiš, ko skačeš čez plot!«

Ni zbežal od ženske, ki mu je na drugem zmenku ponudila ključ svoje garsonjere. Zdaj ima obe, žensko in garsonjero.

Zapovedal ji je vse, kar mu je dovolila.

Peljala ga je, po zelo dolgem času, na razstavo v Narodno galerijo in res so ga precej zanimali črvi v gotskih kipih in obrušenost parketa v osrednji dvorani.

Nevesta

Poročni šopek je, kot veli šega, vrgla prek rame in je zletel čez plot. Že čez kak teden je skočila za njim.

S poročne fotografije v izložbi »Foto Minsky« sta se srečno smejala še lep čas po tem, ko sta bila ločena.

Pristrigel je živo mejo, ona je zalila rože. Skupaj sta opleskala ograjo, da bi bilo na zunaj bolj toplo. Zvečer pa po hiši iščeta odeje, ker noter je še zmerom mraz.

Tako ji je pihal na dušo, da jo je prav zazeblo.

O svoji ženski je pripovedoval takšne reči, da smo vsi v mislih norili za njo. In prav odleglo nam je, ko se je izkazalo, da si jo je bil izmisлил.

Kolebal je med Savo in Soro. Končal je v Soči.

Pesmi je pisal mnogim ljubicam in ženam. Bile so različne, ženske, a pesmi tako hudimano enake.

Ljubi druge, sivec, a odloži pero. Porabil si bonus.

* * *

V ZADNJIH LETIH opazuje ženske zadržano informativno.

V koliko naslikanih deklet in žensk si se po muzejih in galerijah mahoma za hip zaljubil?

Neznane mladenke, s katero sem se to noč v sanjah zaklepetal do zarotniških zaupnosti, si buden gotovo ne bi upal ogovoriti.

S kolesom se vozi počasi in zbrano: tiste, ki prehitevajo, imajo kipeče ritke, tiste, ki se peljejo nasproti, se radodarno nagibajo nad krmilom. (Tiste na rolkah prehitro hušnejo mimo.)

Nekdanje skušnjave so stare kot zemlja, nove premlade, da bi to sploh postale.

Ko s kolesa pozvonim peški pred seboj, se koketno namrščeno ozre, misleč, da sem to storil zaradi njene oble zadnjice, a rad bi le, da se mi umakne s poti.

Včasih sem na viharnih nočnih plovbah zgubljal glavo, zdaj le še kape.

Severni kolodvor

Ko sem pospremil ljubico zjutraj na vlak, ki jo bo odpeljal nazaj k zaročencu, sem v kolodvorski restavraciji do večera v pivski vrček točil solze joka, smeha in pozabe.

Odkar sem jo po več kot dvajsetih letih spet videl, nekdanjo viharo ljubezen, se mi ne sanja več kar naprej o njej.

V gledališkem bifeju me pozdravljajo dekleta, ki jim ne poznam imena in komaj zaznam, kako so čedna. Pa saj to zanesljivo opazijo kompetentnejši od mene.

Tista simpatična gospa (mlajših srednjih let) mi po daljšem pomenkovanju izda, kako vseč sem bil njeni mami, ki je hodila v gimnazijsko paralelko. Ona, še pristrčnejša, pa mi nekaj dni zatem razigrano zaupa, da je bila sošolka mojega sinu.

Ko po dolgem času srečaš tisto, s katero sta pred nekaj desetletji zanosno načrtovala kup otrok, se izkaže, da imata devet vnukov, vsak po svoji liniji, seveda.

Včasih bi ob besedah »rdeče progasta podvezničarka« pomislil na slikovite pregrehe v lupanárju, danes vem, da gre za plazilca, ki ga lahko vidim v vivariju ljubljanskega Zoo.

* * *

URA (digitalna) kaže 19:46. Ali tista na kolesarskem kilometrskem števcu. Ali na stolpnici gor. Še dvakrat pogledam, pa bo 20:16. In v pol ure eno življenje (skoraj) okrog.

Kakšen rok trajanja na jogurtu v hladilniku me zanesljivo preživi. Pa zaznamek, kaj storiti v prihodnjem tednu. Datum na neplačani položnici tudi. In mogoče žehta, ki se suši na podstrešju.

Kaj še morda ostane za mano tisti dan? Žoga sosedove hčerke na moji gredici, plošča, ki je nisem vrnil Milanu D., nezalite gorečke (če bo poletje), neodmetan sneg na pločniku (pozimi).

Zmeraj manj ljudi srečam, ki bi jih bilo treba vnaprej pozdraviti, ker so starejši.

Ko med eksponati na razstavi industrijske dediščine zagledaš prav takšen radijski aparat, kot si ga deček poslušal v domači kuhinji ...

Toliko besed sem tolikokrat v življenju uporabil, da lahko zdaj kakšno že pozabim.

Normalno se ti zdi, ko daš posekati drevo, staro natanko, kot si sam.

Ko požgeš dnevniške zapiske zadnjih tridesetih let – se pomladiš ali dokončno postaraš?

Za kocko, da jo vržeš, ubiti slona in mu izpuliti okel?

Iz oporoke

Rad bi šel živ v penzion.

Poscati, po toliko in toliko letih, isti vogal. Oba sva vzdržala ves ta čas.

V starih dnevnikih berem, kako starega sem se počutil tisti čas.

Ni čisto res, ko se reče, da je kdo »premagal zahrbtno bolezen«. Z njo so se bojevali zdravniki in dobrodejni del narave, bolnik je bil le prepaden opazovalec.

Rad bi še dihal, ko se jutri zbudim.

Ne drži najbolj, ko se zapiše, da je nekdo »izgubil življenje«. Če nekaj izgubiš, so možnosti, da se tisto spet prikaže, in včasih so bili uradi za najdene predmete, za izgubljena življenja pa ne. In nesrečniku, o katerem berem v novički, je, kot kaže, zdrsnilo v prepad!

Na eno oko ne vidi, na drugo uho ne sliši, idealen kompanjon!

»Po hudi bolezni je umrl ...« Menda ne po blagi!

Še par ur pred smrtjo je prebrala zanj precej ugoden horoskop za prihodnji teden.

Dosti pokojnikovih vrstnikov nas je šlo v pogrebni vrsti in ne eden je pomislil: kdo bo naslednjič najbolj spredaj? Vsak upa, da ne bo dajal povoda, ampak raje potem za rundo.

Še dolgo po pogrebu tisti dan so mu nazdravljali, rajnemu prijatelju, in se spominjali, da je bil zagrizen abstinent.

»Tale vas bo preživela, garantiram,« mi je pred leti zatrdil vrtnar Tine in ponosno potrepljal enega hrastovih kolov, prekritih z deščico iz česnjevega lesa, kakršni so sestavljali povsem novo ograjo, »tale zaprmej, vam rečem!« Vse odtlej se trudim, da bi (ne da storim ograji kaj žalega) fanta demantiral.

Abstracts

(excerpts)

* * *

I AM SITTING AT THE TABLE and writing that I am sitting at the table and writing that I am sitting.

I am writing in my diary how it feels reading my own diary from thirty years ago.

An entire life in one file...

He felt such anxious freedom in front of the empty screen that he would rather flee from it.

In his *Petites Proses* Michel Tournier claims that the self-portrait is the painter's call from his solitude. "Oh, poor me, nobody cares for me." Could the same be said about a poem, essay, tiny observation such as this one?

"An autobiography full of anachronisms..." (R. Qu.?)

"I am really nervous whenever I sit down to write because I know that I might write something anthological and I feel uneasy about making history all the time."

A day of my life for each well-polished sentence, he would swear to himself meaningfully. He lived to a ripe old age.

How negligent are people who praise us: They enumerate only half of our virtues!

Had he known that one day he would try to remember as much as possible, he would have lived more attentively.

Had he known that one day he would have to remember many a thing, he would have lived more carefully. (Would he have?)

Omnibus

He is left with seven days of his life. He is allowed and obliged to devote each day to another deadly sin. So in the seven chapters he appears as: proud, greedy, lustful, wrathful, gluttonous and slothful. A model hero for a novel.

Omnibus II.

The good God gives him seven days of life, with each one devoted to another art. So in the seven chapters he appears as: a writer, painter, dancer, composer, architect, actor, virtuoso. When he wakes up on the eighth day, he will be illiterate, deaf and colour blind again.

Anti-diary

Daily entries revealing what did *not* happen to you, what you did not do or tell, what did not even cross your mind and where you did not stop by.

* * *

MY FRIEND, you have been dead for more years than you lived to see.

“Hanging from the chandelier are two washed socks as a middle young corpse.” Is there a stranger in town who has not thought of this comparison in a cheap hotel room?

Whenever you would like to kill yourself in the morning, wait for another merciless day. Whenever you would like to do it in the evening, first make it through another dreadful night.

A totally average Slovene guy: two kids, a few lovers, divorced, with lung cancer, on the brink of alcoholism, with a few suicides in his vicinity.

I heard that he first gave up his studies and then he gave up life.

Not so rarely in the cemetery, I have a brief encounter with the person whose grave I am about to visit.

Tombstones

They were longer
widows
than wives.

(Since she buried him, her love for him has grown a thousandfold.)

Mirko B.

He liked to chat, even when he could no longer talk.

* * *

THAT BUDDY OF OURS had more women than all of us freshers together – in his turbulent imagination with which he, conceitedly humble, unselfishly showered us. It was only when we no longer cared that we realized that he was a bragging virgin.

He could not remember – damn it! – whether he slept with that one-night-stand. Or else with her husband.

“If only she cheated on me at least once!” he, a skirt-chaser par excellence, bore a grudge against his loyal wife, “then that silly prune would finally see how it hurts to cheat!”

He did not run away from the woman who offered him the key to her studio flat on their second date. Now they are both his, the woman and the flat.

He ordered her to do anything she allowed.

After a very long time, she took him to an exhibition in the National Gallery, and he was indeed interested to see the worms in the Gothic statuettes and the worn-out parquet in the main hall.

The Bride

As custom has it, she threw the bouquet across her shoulder and it ended up in their neighbour's arms. A week or so later, she ended up there, too.

Their wedding photo on display in the “Foto Minsky” window showed them smiling happily long after they had divorced.

He has trimmed the hedge and she has watered the flowers. Together they have painted the fence to make it look warmer from the outside. In the evening, they look for blankets since it is still cold inside.

He flattered her so warmly that she eventually felt cold.

The things he told us about his woman made us crazy about her. What a relief when it came out that he had made her up!

He wavered between the Sava and Sora rivers. He ended in the Soča.

He dedicated his poems to many lovers and women. They were different, the women; the poems so damn alike.

Love others, you grey-haired man, yet put your pen down. You spent your bonus.

* * *

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, he has been watching women in a reserved and informative manner.

In how many girls and women painted in museums and galleries did you instantly fall in love?

To the unknown young girl whom I chatted with in my dreams, revealing her the most conspirational secrets, I surely would not dare to speak to when awake.

He rides his bike slowly and with focus: those women who overtake him have brimming bums, those who cycle towards him lean themselves lavishly over the handlebar. (Those wearing roller skates just dash by too quickly.)

My old temptations are older than the Earth, the new ones too young to even become tempting.

When I ring my bicycle bell, the woman walking in front of me turns around, her brow furrowed coquettishly, thinking I rang her because of her round butt, while I only wanted her to make way for me.

I used to lose my head on turbulent night voyages, now I only lose my caps.

Northern Train Station

After I walked my lover to the morning train that took her back to her fiancé, I spent the rest of the day in the station bar, drowning my pain, joy and sorrows in beer pints.

Since I saw her again, my past tempestuous love, after more than twenty years, I finally stopped dreaming about her.

In the theatre bar, I am greeted by girls whose names I do not know and whose prettiness I hardly see. Surely there are more competent men for noticing that.

We chat for quite a while when the sweet lady (in early middle age) confides in me how her mother used to like me when we were still in high school. A few days later, she, even more affectionate and playful now, reveals that my son was her school friend.

After a long time you meet the woman with whom you eagerly planned to have a bunch of kids a few decades ago, and it comes out that you have nine grandsons altogether, each through his own line, of course.

In the past, the words “red-sided garter snake” would make me think of appealing sins in the brothel, today I know they denote a reptile I can see in the Ljubljana zoo vivarium.

* * *

THE CLOCK (digital) shows 19:46. Or the one on the handle bar timer. Or on the skyscraper up there. After I have checked it two more times, it will show 20:16. A whole life (almost) completed in half an hour.

Surely, I will be outlived by the expiry date on a yoghurt in the refrigerator. As well as by a note or what I need to do in the next week. By the date on an unpaid bill, too. And perhaps by the clothes drying in the attic.

What else will remain on that day? The neighbour's daughter's ball on my garden bed, the LP I have not returned to Milan D., unwatered pelargoniums (if it is summer), unshovelled snow on the pavement (if it is winter).

I meet fewer and fewer people whom I should greet first as they are older.

When you visit the exhibition of industrial heritage and see the same type of radio you used to listen to as a boy in the kitchen...

There are so many words I used so many times that I can now easily forget some of them.

It seems normal that you have a tree of the same age as yourself cut down.

When you burn your diaries from the last thirty years – do you get younger or irrevocably older?

To kill an elephant and to pull out its tusk in order to throw the dice?

From the Last Will

He would like to make it alive to retirement.

To piss in the same corner after so many years. We have both made it through time.

I read in my old diaries how old I felt in those old days.

It is not strictly true when it is said that someone “has won the fight with a treacherous disease”. The ones fighting with it were the doctors and the wholesome part of one's nature, while the patient was merely an astonished onlooker.

I would like to go on breathing when I wake up tomorrow.

It just does not hold water when we read that someone “lost his life”. If you lose something, there is always the possibility that the missing object will reappear, and there even used to be lost property offices, while there were no lost lives offices. And the poor guy I read about in the newspaper seems to have slipped over a precipice!

He is blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, what a perfect companion!

“He died after a severe illness...” Surely it was not a mild one!

It was only few hours before her death that she read a very favourable forecast in her horoscope for the next week.

There was a long line of peers walking behind the coffin and it was more than one who thought: Who will be at the very front next time? Everybody hoped that they would be the one to give for the round later on rather than the one to give the occasion for the reunion.

After the funeral, they drank to their departed friend's health long into the night, remembering that he was a sworn abstainer.

“This one'll outlive ya, I promise ya!” claimed the gardener Tine a few years ago, proudly caressing an oak pole crossed by a cherry plank that formed the completely new fence, “this one for sure, I tell ya!” Every day since then I have been trying hard to prove the boy was wrong (without damaging the fence).

Translated by Breda Biščak



Foto © Lucia Gardin

Jana Bodnárová

Jana Bodnárová se je rodila leta 1950 v kraju Jakubovany na Slovaškem. Študirala je umetnostno zgodovino. Je ena osrednjih slovaških avtoric z dvajsetimi proznimi in pesniškimi deli za odrasle in otroke, številnimi gledališkimi in radijskimi igrami ter dvema televizijskima scenarijema. Med slovaškimi literati je pionirka performativne video-poezije. Njena dela so prevedena v več svetovnih jezikov. Za zbirko kratkih zgodb *Aféra rozumu* (Škandal razuma, 1990) je prejela nagrado Ivana Kraska za prvenec leta, njena drama *Kurz orientálneho tanca* (Tečaj orientalskega plesa) je bila leta 2004 izbrana za najboljšo dramo leta, s fiktivno avtobiografijo *Takmer neviditeľná* (Skorajda nevidna, 2008) se je uvrstila med finaliste za prestižno nagrado Anasoft litera za najboljše prozno delo leta, s knjigo otroških zgodb *Dita, 30 mušiek svetlušiek a iné príbehy* (Dita, 30 kresničk in druge zgodbe, 2014) pa je leta 2015 osvojila nagrado Biblioteke za najboljšo odraslo ali otroško delo med vsemi izdajami slovaških avtoric preteklega leta. Njen otroški roman *Dievčatko z veže* (*Punčka iz stolpa*) je izšel v prevodu Andreja Pleterskega pri založbi KUD Sodobnost International leta 2013.

Jana Bodnárová was born in 1950 in Jakubovany, Slovakia. She studied Art History. She is one of the main Slovak writers, having published twenty books of prose and poetry for both adults and children, authored many plays, radio plays and scripts for two TV feature films. She is a pioneer of visual poetry performance among Slovak authors. Her work has been translated into several languages. Her works include the short story collection *Aféra rozumu* (A Scandal of the Mind, 1990), for which she received the Ivan Krasko Prize for the best debut book of the year, the play *Kurz orientálneho tanca* (Oriental Dance Class), which was selected as the best Slovak play of the year 2004, the fictional autobiography *Takmer neviditeľná* (Almost Invisible, 2008), which was a finalist for the prestigious Anasoft Litera Award for the best adult fiction book of the year, and the book of children's prose *Dita, 30 mušiek svetlušiek a iné príbehy* (Dita, 30 Fireflies and Other Stories, 2014) for which she won the Biblioteka Prize for the best adult or children's book published by a female Slovak author. Her children's novel *Dievčatko z veže* (Girl from the Tower) was translated into Slovene by Andrej Pleterski and published by the KUD Sodobnost International publishing house in 2013.

Takmer neviditeľná

(úryvok z fiktívnej autobiografie)

Niektorí ľudia nie sú uspôsobení ani pre život, ani pre smrť. Nemajú v sebe sily ani pre jedno, ani pre druhé. Vydávajú priveľkú energiu na prežitie a priveľa síl pri pokusoch nezomrieť naozaj. Nosím v spomienkach aj takýchto ľudí. Najmä R. Tá jeden rok bývala so mnou v internátnej bunke. Pamätám si jej úzku tvár s mačacími očami. Občas pricestoval za R. jej otec, starý lekárnik z mestečka na južnom Slovensku. Raz nás s R. odviezol na saabe k svojej sestre do Budapešti. „Bola z prvých mikrobiologičiek v Maďarsku,“ vravel hrdo. On aj ona mali na predlaktí vytetované číslo. Z ich tiel viala melanchólia, hoci rozprávali rýchlo, ostrými hlasmi a nikdy sa nezmieňovali o minulosti. Vedela som i to, že mama R. zomrela po jej pôrode, že mala nervové problémy, o ktorých si R. myslela, že prešli na ňu ako dedičstvo, ako tieň jej matky. Že z toho pramení i neschopnosť R. milovať sa. To mi povedala po tom, čo priviedla Maxa, študenta ekonómie zo Švajčiarska. Sedeli sme v mojej izbe na váľande, uvarila som čaj s hriankami, srkali sme ten čaj a vášnivo debatovali s Maxom, ktorý, v tom roku 1969, nástojil na potrebe svetovej revolúcie, na nutnosti zmeniť svet obchodníkov, aby sa konečne rozvinul svet nový, spravodlivý pre všetkých. Max študoval Kapitál, obdivoval Maa a Che Guevaru s apoštolskou tvárou. Rozprával nám o vlnách demonštrácií v USA proti vojne vo Vietname, o zmrzačovaní Vietnamcov, o otrávených ryžových poliach, o tragédii amerických vojakov, z ktorých vyprcháva nadšenie a myseľ si otupujú drogami. Mnohých z nich odvezú domov v kovových rakvách. Tvrdil, že Vietkong je nepolapiteľný, že ide o nový druh vojny, v ktorej niet frontovej línie. Nadchýnal sa, ako revolty vysokoškolákov preskočili z New Yorku do Ríma, Madridu, Londýna, Berlína, Tokia, Paríža. V Latinskej štvrti študenti vytrhali dlažobné kocky a stavali barikády. Prevracali buržujské autá a chceli boj. On sám sa trinásteho mája zúčastnil študentskej revolty na námestí Denfert-Rochereau v Paríži. Státisíce študentov, tvrdil, tam vyčkávalo, čo bude ďalej. Ich vodcovia zmätene diskutovali. Maoisti chceli pokračovať s manifestáciami v robotníckych predmestiach, anarchisti a situacionisti vyzývali k napadnutiu štvrtí bohatých, niečo iné žiadali trockisti, začal čo komunisti navrhovali rozísť sa, lebo študenti a robotníci vraj už svoju silu dostatočne ukázali. Maxovi sa na chvíľu vzbúrenci zdali ako dav bláznov. Vysvetľoval nám dvom – ako nejakým cudzinkám

vo vlastnej zemi – aj silu nedávnej Pražskej jari a bol rozhorčený z okupácie Československa. Skončil približne tým, že internacionála mládeže má rovnaké ikony, túžby a ciele: chce rozbiť všetko staré ako Jimi Hendrix gitaru. Pozeral zamilovane na R., ktorá len mlčala, sedela so skríženými nohami a mračila sa. Ráno mi povedala, že šla s Maxom do hotela, v noci to skúšal, ale ju opäť prepadol strach a úzkosť, že sa skrivila ako húsenica a rozplakala. To Maxa zmiatlo a obralo o odvahu milovať sa s ňou. R. bola smutná smútkom svojho židovského kmeňa, mala som s ňou súcit, obdivovala ju, ako všetko, čo súviselo s tým jej kmeňom. Najmä kvôli tomu, že som už v detstve spoznávala, čo bol holokaust. Videla som na fotkách a filmoch vychudnuté, utýrané pololudské bytosti z lágrov. Vyvolávali vo mne, ešte dieťaťi, usedavý plač.

R. navštevovala psychiatra. Povedala mi, že jej kázal zapisovať si všetky sny. V jednom sne umývala vo vani telo svojej matky, ktorá nemala tvár. Robila to pomaly, dôkladne a na konci obradu umývania ovinula mamino telo drôtom. Koniec vsunula do elektrickej zástrčky a vtedy sen skončil.

R. sa vraj viackrát pokúšala o samovraždu. Po jednom pokuse sme ju našli ležať ako dievčatko, ktoré tuho spí na váľande. Bola oblečená v šatách, akoby chcela ísť na prechádzku Ryšavé vlasy rozhodené okolo hlavy, na nohách sandálíky s remencami okolo členkov. Na písacom stole pri váľande boli rozsypané lieky a spadnutý pohár. „Zachránili ste ma,“ povedala mi ľahostajne, keď ju otec odvážal do sanatória v Maďarsku. R. možno navždy zostane zavretá vo svojom svete ako lastúra pred ostrým slnkom. Som vážnom spomienky na ňu. Ale táto spomienka nikdy nebude dosť pravdivá, hlboká, presná a úplná. Lebo také je i písanie.

*

Niekedy prichádza k starej mame jej sesternica z Budapešti. Celý život tam slúžila, podobne ako jej sestra Mária zasa kdesi v Amerike. Práve od svojej sestry Márie nosieva k nám teta Zuzka obnosené americké šatstvo. Rozloží ho v spálni starej mamy a všetky ženy z našej rodiny si chodia vyberať. Ja si beriem šaty z vlneného úpletu so zvonovou sukňou (poľská krajčírka v Bratislave šaty rozpára a ušije mi z ich sukne krásne mini šaty. Keď raz ako vysokoškolačka, vysoká, chudá idem v tých extra fialových šatách popred Carlton, mladý fotograf mi navrhne, že urobí pár fotiek pre Módu. Lenže ja utekám na skúšku z byzantského umenia). Teta Zuzka zakaždým rozpráva

o mŕtvom mužovi, murárovi, ktorý kedysi staval domy v Budapešti, a potom sa oženil s ňou, slúžtičkou zo Slovenska. „Keď budeš väčšia a prídeš za mnou do Pešti, ukážem ti doma knihu. Uvidíš tanky Rusov, tých všivákov! Uvidíš mŕtvych Maďarov vtedy, počas vzbury v päťdesiatom šiestom. Potom sme už boli ako vo väzení. Nikdy som nemohla vycestovať do Ameriky za sestrou Markou. Ani Marienka za mnou. Tieto háby - to je všetko, čo po nej mám. Raz mi poslala žiletku. Nie hocičo! Ale zlatú! Pol roka sme z nej žili i s Ferim, keď som ju predala.“ Feri bol tetin syn a opravoval výťahy.

Mám pätnásť a som prvý raz na návšteve u tety Zuzky v chudobnej peštianskej štvrti, v pavlačovom dome so suchými záchodmi. Ľudia si v kanvách nosia z pivníc uhlie na kúrenie v peciach a z trhu ťad do ťadničiek. Niektorí lákajú na pavlače, z ktorých sa vstupuje rovno do kuchýň, mestské holuby. Jediným pohybom ich zaškrtia a varia z nich polievky. Robí to i teta. Feri má také polievky rád. Ten skoro vždy pripitý Feri láme slovenčinu a vie spievať pár ľudových piesní. Jeho žena Hana robí v konzervárni, kde vyrábajú husacie a kačacie paštéty. Je zamračená a mlčanlivá: „Vidíš, ako Feriho odbíja? Taká je studená ako cencúl“, vraví o Hane teta Zuzka. Ich malý syn Ferko je bledé dieťa, rovnako ako Ilonka, moja kamarátka, ktorá býva o poschodie nižšie ako teta Zuzka. „Je biela. Ako zamúčená“, vraví o nej teta. Ilonka má vážnu chorobu obličiek, o dva roky neskôr zomrie. Ale predtým ešte výskame spolu na húsenkovej dráhe vo Vidám parku, v Korvine si kupujeme navlas rovnaké kockované šaty. Starý fotograf, ktorý si maľuje oči a pudruje líca nás fotí vo svojom ateliéri Mina. Byť i ateliér má v tom istom dome. Je tam veľa zoderatých perzských kobercov, fotiek po stenách, prútených kresiel, na ktorých sedia handrové báby. Sú strašidelné, lebo majú rozmery žien. Fotograf sa celý trasie, keď mi natáča telo k svojmu objektívu. Tiež je už dávno mŕtvý. Aj Feri sa pred rokmi obesil v tureckom záchode za schodiskom na pavlači. Aj teta Zuzka je mŕtva a pochovaná na peštianskom cintoríne pri svojom Rusmi zastrelenom mužovi. Pohreb zaplatila redaktorka z rozhlasu, ktorej teta dlhé roky verne slúžila: „Glancujem tam parkety, varím hovädzinu na višniach, periem pani blúzky i silonky a odpratávam použité vložky, ktoré Katy, jej dcéra, rozhadzuje kade - tade. I na skriňu, ak ju napadne. Lebo bohatí sú neporiadni. A skúpi.“ Hana zmizla z môjho obzoru, aj bledý Ferike. Pavlačový dom je dávno zrúcaný. Po rokoch som zašla do tej štvrte - vlastne celá bola už skoro zbúraná. Vo vysokej starobe teta Zuzka prestala cestovať na Slovensko. Nenosila nám viac ame-

rické „háby“ a zo Slovenska do Budapešti zasa lacnú ryžu i cukor a ešte hrušky zo záhrady mojej starej mamy. Z tých si robievala likér. Jednu jeseň ju pohrýzol pes. Písala, že stále plače, a od toho plaču si hnis z nohy preniesla do oka. Postupne celkom oslepla. Ešte v slepote chodievala predávať starý papier a suchý chlieb pozbieraný po celom baraku, aby mala na cesnakovú polievku a zemiaky uvarené po liptovsky. Aj ona patrí k ženám môjho detstva. Zaryli sa do mojich spomienok, do tichých životov...

*

Pokračuje tranzit mapami spomienok – cez cikcakovitý pohyb mysle. Cez jej obsahy i mechanizmy. Budhisti, nehybne sediaci vo vipasana meditácii, o tom vedia svoje.

Meditovať ma učila budhistická mníška, ale nebrala som ju ako mníšku. Akosi tak nevyzerala. Narodila sa v Prešove, žije v Austrálii, medzitým prešla svet, meditovala v jaskyniach s budhistami, pod olivovníkmi s hinduistami, s dervišmi v Turecku. (Nedávno mi fotograf zo Sýrie, ktorý rád fotí biednych súfirov v sýrskych dedinách, povedal v mikulášskej galérii: „Tureckí súfi sa krútia iba za peniaze a čakanie na turistov si skracujú pitím čaju pickwick. Tí naši sýrski sú biedni. Ale ozajstní derviši). Začiatkom 90. tých rokov v prešovskom Kolégiu Lenka učila pár čudných ľudí, medzi ktorými som sa ocitla kvôli svojej zvedavosti na kultúrne „šperky“ východných učení, akúsi pomotanú (ako mi neskôr tvrdil iný učiteľ) verziu vipasana meditácie.

Občas, keď sme už stuhnuli od dlhého sedenia, Lenka vstane a káže nám všetkým krútiť sa okolo svojej osi. Hlavu nakloniť k ramenu, pravú dlaň otočiť hore, ľavú dole a krútiť sa, krútiť, až príde snový pocit.

*

Podstata mysle! Paul Auster to povedal presne: „Je o neexistujúcich svetoch... Štúdia o vnútornom útočisku, mapa miesta, kam človek chodí, keď jeho život v skutočnom svete už nie je možný.“ A nie je to vlastne podstata spomienok? Kde je stred môjho labyrintu? Čo tvorí jadro efemérnych obsahov minulých udalostí? Je tam pokoj, ticho, možno hudba? Niečo ako chvenie sitár Shankara či prudké Bachove fugy? Alebo tichozvuk celého vesmíru?

Skorajda nevidna

(odlomek iz fiktivne avtobiografije)

Nekateri ljudje niso usposobljeni ne za življenje ne za smrt. V sebi ne premorejo moči ne za eno ne za drugo. Preveč energije porabljajo za preživetje in preveč moči v poskusih, da ne bi zares umrli. V spominu nosim tudi take ljudi. Predvsem R. Eno leto je živela z menoj v istem apartmaju študentskega doma. Spominjam se njenega ozkega obraza z mačjimi očmi, njenih rdečih, krepastih las. Občasno je k R. pripotoval oče, dokaj star lekarnar iz mesteca na južnem Slovaškem. Enkrat naju je z R. v svojem saabu odpeljal k svoji sestri v Budimpešto. »Bila je ena prvih mikrobiologinj na Madžarskem,« je govoril ponosno. Oba sta imela na podlahti vtetovirano blede številko. Iz njunih teles je vela melanholija, čeprav sta se pogovarjala hitro, z rezkima glasovoma, a nikoli nista omenjala preteklosti. Vedela sem tudi to, da je R. mama umrla tik po njenem rojstvu, da je imela težave z živci, za katere je R. menila, da so nanjo prešle kot dediščina, kot materina senca. Da iz tega izvira tudi njena nezmožnost, da bi imela spolne odnose. To mi je povedala po tistem, ko je enkrat pripeljala Maxa, študenta ekonomije iz Švice. Sedeli smo v moji sobi na postelji, skuhala sem čaj s popečenimi kruhki, srebali smo in strastno debatirali; Max je tistega leta 1969 vztrajal pri potrebi po svetovni revoluciji, pri nujnosti spremembe sveta poslovnežev, da bi se končno razvil novi svet, pravičen za vse. Max je študiral *Kapital*, občudoval Maa in Che Guevaro z apostolskim obrazom. Pripovedoval nama je o lanskih valovih demonstracij v ZDA proti vojni v Vietnamu, o pohabljanju Vietnamcev, o zastrupljenih riževih poljih, o tragediji ameriških vojakov, ki jim pojema navdušenje in si pamet otopevajo z drogami, dokler mnogih izmed njih ne odpeljejo domov v kovinski krsti. Trdil je, da so vietkongovci neobvladljivi, da gre za novo vrsto vojne, v kateri ni frontne črte. Bil je navdušen, kako so se študentski upori pred kratkim iz New Yorka razširili na Rim, Madrid, London, Berlin, Tokio, Pariz. V Latinski četrti so študenti trgali granitne kocke in postavljali barikade. Prevrčali buržajske avtomobile in terjali boj. Sam da se je trinajstega maja udeležil študentskega upora na trgu Denfert-Rochereau v Parizu. Na sto tisoče študentov naj bi tam čakalo, kaj bo potem. Njihovi vodje so zmedeno razpravljali. Maoisti so manifestacije želeli nadaljevati v delavskih predmestjih, anarhisti in situacionisti so pozivali k napadu na bogataške četrti, trockisti so imeli drugačne zahteve, medtem ko

so komunisti predlagali, da se razidejo, češ da so študenti in delavci zdaj že pokazali zadostno moč. Maxu so se uporniki za hip zazdeli kot množica norcev. Pojasnjeval nama je – kot kakšnima tujkama v lastni državi – tudi moč nedavne praške pomladi in bil ogorčen nad vojaško okupacijo Čechoslovaške. Končal je v duhu, da ima mladina po vsem svetu enake ikone, želje in cilje: razbiti želi vse staro kot Jimi Hendrix kitaro. Zaljubljeno je gledal R., ki je bila ves ta čas tiho, prekrizanih nog in mrkega obraza. Zjutraj mi je povedala, da je šla z Maxom v hotel, ponoči da je poskušal s tistim, njo pa da je vnovič obšel strah in takšna tesnoba, da se je skrivila kot gosnica in razjokala. Kar je Maxa zbegalo in mu vzelo pogum, da bi z njo imel spolne odnose. R. je dajala žalost njenega judovskega rodu, sočustvovala sem z njo, jo občudovala kot vse, kar je imelo opraviti z njenim rodom. Predvsem zato, ker sem že v otroštvu postopoma spoznavala, kaj je bil holokavst. Na fotografijah in v filmih sem videla shujšana, mučena polčloveška bitja iz taborišč. Že kot otroka so me spravljala v neutolažljiv jok.

R. je obiskovala psihiatra. Povedala mi je, da ji je naročil, naj si redno zapisuje sanje. V enih je v banji umivala telo svoje matere, ki ni imelo obraza, počasi, temeljito, po končanem obredu umivanja pa je materino telo ovila z žico. En konec je nato potisnila v električno vtičnico, nakar so se sanje končale.

R. naj bi večkrat poskušala s samomorom. Po enem od poskusov smo jo našli ležati kot deklico, trdno spečo na postelji. Na sebi je imela obleko, kot bi se odpravljala na sprehod: zeleno z drobnimi rdeče-črnimi cvetovi. Rdeče lase je imela razpuščene okoli glave, na nogah pa je nosila sandale s paščki, ovitimi okrog gležnjev. Na pisalni mizi ob postelji pa razdejanje: razsuta zdravila in prevrnjen kozarec. »Rešili ste me,« mi je rekla skorajda ravnodušno, ko je prišel oče in jo odpeljal v sanatorij nekje na Madžarskem. R. bo morda za vedno ostala zaprta v svojem svetu kot školjka pred žgočim soncem. Morda ne bo nikoli prispela do konca svoje žalosti. Jetnica spomina na R. sem. A ta spomin ne bo nikoli zadosti pristen, globok, zadosti natančen in popoln. Kajti takšno je tudi pisanje.

*

Vsake toliko prihaja k stari mami njena sestrična iz Budimpešte. Vse življenje je služila tam, tako kot njena sestra Mária nekje v Ameriki. In prav od sestre Márie nosi teta Zuzka iz Pešte k nam ponošena ameriška oblačila. Razpostavi jih v spalnici stare mame in vse ženske

iz naše družine si tja hodimo izbirat kaj zase. Tudi jaz pridem na vrsto: izberem si obleko iz volnene pletenine z zvonastim krilom. (Poljska šivilja v Bratislavi obleko razpara in mi iz nje sešije čudovito minikrilo. Ko grem nekoč že kot mlada študentka, visoka, suha, v tisti nenavadno vijolični obleki mimo Carltona, mi mlad fotograf ponudi, da bi naredil nekaj slik za *Módo*. Toda meni se mudi na izpit iz bizantinske umetnosti.) Teta Zuzka ob vsaki priložnosti pripoveduje o svojem mrtvem možu, zidarju, ki je nekdaj gradil hiše v Budimpešti, nato pa se je tam poročil z njo, mlado služkinjo iz Slovaške. »Ko boš večja in boš prišla k meni v Pešto, ti bom doma pokazala eno knjigo. Videla boš tanke Rusov, teh barab! Videla boš mrtve Madžare, takrat, med uporom leta šestinpetdeset. Zatem smo bili kot v zaporu. Nikoli nisem mogla potovati k sestri Marki v Ameriko. Pa tudi Marienka ne k meni. Te cunje, to je vse, kar mi je ostalo po njej. Ampak enkrat mi je poslala britvico. Pa ne navadne! Takšno iz čistega zlata! Pol leta sva od nje živela oba s Ferijem, ko sem jo prodala.« Feri je bil tetin sin, ki je popravljal dvigala.

Stara sem petnajst in sem prvič na obisku pri teti Zuzki v revni budimpeški četrti, v hiši z mostovži in suhimi stranišči. Iz kleti nosijo ljudje v kantah premog za kurjenje v pečeh, s tržnice pa led za zamrzovalne skrinje. Nekateri na mostovže, s katerih se vstopa naravnost v kuhinjo, vabijo mestne golobe. Z eno potezo jih zadavijo in iz njih skuhajo dišečo juho. To počne tudi teta. Feri ima take juhe rad. Ta skoraj vedno pijani Feri govori polomljeno slovaško, zna pa nekaj ljudskih pesmi. Njegova žena Hana dela v tovarni konzerv, kjer izdelujejo gosjo in račjo pašteto. Mrka je in molčeča. »Vidiš, kako odbija Ferija? Mrzla je kot ledena sveča,« pravi o Hani teta Zuzka. Njun sinček Ferko je blede, bolehen otrok, kot Ilonka, moja hitro najdena prijateljica, ki stanuje v nadstropju pod tetinim stanovanjem. »Bela je. Kot pomokana,« pravi o njej teta. Ilonka ima resno obolenje ledvic, čez dve leti umre. A prej še skupaj vreščiva na vlakcu smrti v parku Vidám, v Korvínu si kupujeva do pičice enako kariras-to obleko z ozko pentljo pod brado, stari fotograf, ki si barva oči in pudra lica, pa naju slika v svojem ateljeju Mina. Stanovanje in atelje ima v isti hiši z mostovži. V njem je veliko zguljenih perzijskih preprog, slik po stenah, draperij, pletenih naslonjačev, v katerih sedijo punčke iz cunj. Strašljive so, v velikosti odraslih žensk. Fotograf si slini prste in se ves trese, ko mi telo obrača proti objektivu. Tudi on je že zdavnaj mrtev. Tudi Feri se je pred nekaj leti obesil v stranišču na počep za stopniščem na mostovžu. Tudi teta Zuzka je mrtva, po-

kopana na budimpeškem pokopališču zraven moža, ki so ga ustrelili Rusi. Pogreb je bojda plačala urednica z radia, ki ji je bila teta dolga leta zvesta služkinja: »Biksam parket, kuham govedino na višnjah, gospe perem bluze pa najlonke pa pospravljam odrabljene vložke, ki jih Katy, njihova hči, meče povsod naokoli. Tudi na omaro, če ji tako zapaše. Ker bogataši so nemarni. Pa škrti.« Hana je zginila z mojega obzorja, tudi bledi Ferike. Hišo z mostovži pa so že zdavnaj podrli. Po več letih sem se odpravila v tisto budimpeško četrto – pravzaprav so že skoraj vso podrli. V visoki starosti je teta Zuzka nehala potovati na Slovaško. Ni nam več nosila ameriških cunj, iz Slovaške v Budimpešto pa poceni riža in sladkorja ter hrušk z vrta moje stare mame. Iz njih je delala liker. Neke jeseni jo je ugriznil pes. Pisala je, da kar naprej joče, med jokom pa si je gnoj z noge prenesla v oko. Sčasoma je povsem oslepela. Še slepa je hodila prodajat star papir in suh kruh, ki ga je nabrala po vsej bajti, da bi imela za česnovo juho in krompir po lptovsko. Tudi ona spada med ženske mojega otroštva. Zarile so se mi v spomine, v tiha življenja ...

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Nadaljuje se vožnja po zemljevidih spominov – po cikcakastem poteku uma. Po njegovih vsebinah in ustrojih. Budisti, ki negibno sedijo v meditaciji vipassana, bi o tem znali marsikaj povedati.

Meditacije me je učila budistična nuna, ki je nisem imela za nuno. Ni mi vzbujala takšnega občutka. Rodila se je v našem Prešovu, živi v Avstraliji, vmes pa je prepotovala svet, meditirala v jamah z budisti, pod oljkami s hinduisti, z derviši v Turčiji. (Pred kratkim mi je fotograf, ki rad slika revne sufije v sirskih vasicah, rekel v galeriji v Liptovskem Mikulašu: »Turški sufiji se vrtijo samo za denar, čakanje na turiste pa si krajšalo s pitjem čaja Pickwick. Naši sirski pa so revni. Ampak pravi derviši.«) Na začetku devetdesetih je Lenka v prešovskem kolegiju nekaj čudnih ljudi, med katerimi sem se iz radovednosti, ki jo gojim do kulturnih biserov vzhodnjaških nauk, znašla tudi sama, učila neko pomešano (kot mi je pozneje zatrjeval neki drugi učitelj) različico meditacije vipassana.

Lenka, budistična nuna iz Prešova! Včasih, ko smo bili že otrpli od dolgega sedenja, je ona veselo vstala in nam naročila, naj se vsi vrtimo okrog lastne osi. Glavo k ramenu, desno dlan obrnite navzgor, levo navzdol in se vrtite, vrtite, dokler ne nastopi omotica in sanjski občutek.

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Bistvo uma! Paul Auster se je izrazil natančno: »Svetovi, ki ne obstajajo ... Študija o notranjem pribežališču, zemljevid kraja, kamor človek zahaja, kadar njegovo življenje v resničnem svetu ni več mogoče.« Mar ni to pravzaprav bistvo spominov? Kje je središče mojega blodnjaka? Kaj tvori jedro hipnih vsebin preteklih dogodkov? Sta tam mir, tišina ali mogoče glasba? Kaj podobnega tresljajem sitarja pri Shankarju ali silovitim fugam pri Bachu? Tihozvočje vsega veselja?

Prevedel Andrej Pleterski

Almost Invisible

(excerpt from the fictional autobiography)

Some people are not equipped for life nor for death and somehow lack the strength for either, expending as they do too much energy on survival and too much effort on rather half-hearted attempts at suicide. I carry around with me the memory of such people, of R. especially. We had private rooms in the same student flat. I remember her narrow face with its feline eyes. Occasionally her father came to see her. He was an old pharmacist from a small town in the south of Slovakia. Once he took the two of us in his Saab to visit his sister in Budapest. "She was one of the first female microbiologists in Hungary," he said proudly. Both he and she had numbers tattooed onto their forearms and even though they spoke quickly and stridently and never referred to the past, their bodies exuded a certain melancholy. I knew that R's mother had died soon after her birth and that she'd had nervous problems which R. thought had been passed down to her like a shadow of the woman she never knew. It was that which made her unable to make love. She told me about it after introducing me to Max, an Economics student from Switzerland. We sat on my bed in my room. I made tea and toast and the three of us sat there sipping the tea and passionately discussing the issues of the day. It was 1969 and Max was insisting on the need for world revolution, on the need to change the world of businessmen into a new world where everyone was equal. Max had studied 'Das Kapital' and admired Mao and Che Guevara, with his apostolic face. He told us about the waves of demonstrations in America against the Vietnam war, about the mutilation of Vietnamese, poisoned rice fields and the tragedy of American soldiers losing their illusions and numbing themselves with drugs. Many of them were already coming home in metal coffins. He claimed that the Viet Cong were indestructible; theirs was a new kind of war without a front. He was thrilled about how student revolts were spreading from New York to Rome, Madrid, London, Berlin, Tokyo and Paris. In the Latin Quarter, students were ripping up paving stones, building barricades and turning bourgeois cars over in their desire for a struggle. On May 13th he himself had taken part in a student demonstration in Paris's Denfert-Rochereau square. He claimed there had been hundreds of thousands of students there waiting to see what would happen next. Their leaders argued chaotically, the Maoists wanting to continue with demonstrations in the

working-class districts, the anarchists and situationists calling for attacks in the rich quarters, the Trotskyists recommending something else and the Communists suggesting they all go their separate ways because the students and workers had now demonstrated their strength sufficiently. For a moment Max felt like he was amongst a crowd of lunatics. He explained to us, as if we were foreigners in our own country, all about the wonder of the Prague Spring and was outraged by the occupation of Czechoslovakia. He then finished off by basically saying that international youth had the same icons, desires and goals the world over: they wanted to smash up everything old the same way Jimi Hendrix smashed up his guitar. And he looked ardently at R. But she sat in silence, frowning with legs crossed. In the morning she told me that she had gone to the hotel with Max, he had tried to get close but again she had succumbed to fear and anxiety, curled up like a caterpillar and burst into tears. And that had confused him and robbed him of the courage to make love to her. R. was consumed by the sadness of her Jewish tribe. I felt sorry for her and admired her as I admired everything about her tribe; as a girl I had learnt all about the holocaust, had seen the emaciated, brutalized half-human victims of the death camps in photographs and films. I was still a child and afterwards, I couldn't stop crying.

R. used to visit a psychiatrist who, she told me, had instructed her to write down all her dreams. In one of them she washed the faceless body of her mother in a bathtub. She did it slowly and thoroughly and at the end of it, she wound a long stretch of wire around the body before thrusting one end of it into an electric socket. And then the dream ended.

Apparently R. had tried to commit suicide a few times. After one attempt, we found her lying down like a little girl fast asleep in bed. She was wearing a dress and looked as if she was about to go out for a walk. Her red hair tumbled messily around her head; on her feet were sandals with straps around her ankles. The writing table by her bed was strewn with tablets and there was a glass there lying on its side. "You've saved me," she said indifferently as her father took her off to a sanatorium in Hungary. R. will probably always remain in her own world, closed like a shell hiding from the bright sun. I'm a prisoner of my memory of her. But this memory will never be sufficiently truthful, deep, precise and complete. Writing is the same...

*

Sometimes my grandmother's cousin comes to visit her from Budapest. She worked as a servant there her whole working life, just like her sister Mária in America. And it's from Mária that Auntie Zuzka brings second-hand American clothes to us, putting them out for display in grandma's bedroom so that all the women in our family can come and take what they fancy. I choose a woollen dress with a bell-shaped skirt (a Polish seamstress in Bratislava takes it in and makes me a beautiful minidress from it. Once, as a tall slim university student, I'm walking past the Carlton in my bright purple dress when a young photographer asks if he can take a few pictures of me for *Móda* magazine. But I have to hurry to take an exam in Byzantine art). Auntie Zuzka talks about her dead husband at every opportunity. He was a bricklayer who built houses in Budapest before marrying this servant girl from Slovakia. "When you're bigger, you can come to see me in Pest and I'll show you a book with pictures of Russian tanks – what lice they were! You'll see dead Hungarians from during the uprising in 'fifty-six. We were like prisoners after that. I couldn't go to America to see Marka nor could she come to see me. Those glad rags are all I have from her. She did send me a gold razor though once! After I sold it, Feri and I had enough to live on for six months." Feri was my aunt's son and repaired lifts for a living.

I'm fifteen and visiting Auntie Zuzka in a poor quarter of Pest for the first time, in her tenement block with dry latrines and long common balconies. People carry coal up from the cellar in scuttles to put in their stoves as well as ice from the market for their iceboxes. Some go out onto the balconies straight from their kitchens to catch pigeons, wringing their necks and then making soup from them. Auntie does it – Feri likes such soup. He's almost always tipsy, speaks in broken Slovak and can sing a few folk songs. His wife Hana works in a cannery that makes goose and duck pastes. She is sullen and aloof: "You see how she snubs Feri? Cold as an icicle she is," Auntie Zuzka says about her. Their little son Ferko is a pale child just like my friend Ilonka, who lives on the floor below. "She looks like she's been dipped in flour," my aunt says about her. Ilonka has a serious kidney disease and will die two years later. But first we shriek together on the Big Dipper in Vidám Park, and in *Korvín* we each buy the very same checked dress. An old photographer who lines his eyes and powders his cheeks does portraits of us in a studio called *Mina*.

He has his apartment and studio in the same block. There are lots of worn-out Persian carpets there, photos on the walls and wicker arm-chairs in which ragdolls are sitting, terrifying because they have the proportions of women. The photographer trembles all over when he turns my body to face the camera. He is also long dead. Feri hanged himself years ago in a squat toilet behind the stairs. Auntie Zuzka is also dead and buried in a Pest cemetery next to her husband, who was shot by the Russians, her funeral paid for by the radio editor she had faithfully served for so many years: "I buff up the parquet floors, cook them beef with black cherries, wash the lady's blouses and tights and clear up the used tampons her daughter Katy leaves lying around the place – even on top of the cupboard. Rich people are terribly messy. And mean." Hana disappeared off the map together with her pale son. The tenement block was demolished long ago – years later, I went back to that quarter and it had almost all been demolished. In her advanced old age, Zuzka stopped travelling to Slovakia and brought us no more of her American 'glad rags' nor took back with her cheap rice and sugar together with pears from my grandmother's garden she would make liqueur from. One autumn she was bitten by a dog. She wrote how she couldn't stop crying and so transferred the pus from her leg to her eyes. In time she completely lost her sight. But even when blind, she would go and sell scrap paper and dry bread collected from the whole block so that she could have her garlic soup and potatoes cooked in the Liptov style. She, too, is one of the women of my childhood, engraved in my memory – and in the quietness of their own lives...

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My transit through the maps of memory continues – through the zigzagging of my mind, its contents and mechanisms. Buddhists, sitting motionlessly in *vipassana* meditation, will know all about it.

I was taught to meditate by a Buddhist nun though I never imagined her as one – she didn't look like a nun. She was born in Prešov and now lives in Australia; en route she travelled the world, meditating in caves with Buddhists, under olive trees with Hindus and with dervishes in Turkey. (A Syrian photographer who likes taking photos of poor Sufis in Syrian villages recently told me in Mikuláš gallery: "Turkish Sufis only care about money and quaff Pickwick tea as they wait for tourists. Our Syrian Sufis are poor but are real dervishes"). At the start of the 1990s in the old Prešov college building, Lenka

taught a bunch of odd people, (myself amongst them thanks to my curiosity about the cultural “gems” of Eastern teachings) a rather convoluted (as another teacher later claimed) version of *vipassana* meditation.

Sometimes when we were stiff from all that sitting, Lenka would get up and tell us to spin on our axis. “Tilt your head down to your shoulder, turn your right hand upwards and your left hand downwards and spin round until you have that dreamy feeling.”

*

The essence of the mind! Paul Auster was right when he said: “It’s about non-existent worlds... A study of the inner refuge, a map of the place a man goes to when life in the real world is no longer possible.” But is that not the essence of memories? Where is the centre of my labyrinth? What is at the heart of the ephemerality of past events? Is there peace and quiet there, or perhaps music? Something like Shankar’s quivering sitar or Bach’s energetic fugues? Or the silence of the whole universe?

Translated by Jonathan Gresty



Foto © Algerd Baharević

Julja Cimafejeva

Julja Cimafejeva se je rodila leta 1982 v kraju Spjariža (okrožje Braham) v Belorusiji. Njena rojstna vas ne obstaja več, saj so bili zaradi černobilske nesreče vsi prebivalci tega območja preseljeni. Študirala je angleški jezik in književnost in magistrirala iz literarnih ved na Beloruski državni univerzi. Je pesnica in prevajalka iz angleščine (Bukowski, Lawrence, Rich, Oates) ter soustanoviteljica in sourednica spletne revije za prevodno književnost *PrajdziSvet*. Njen pesniški prvenec *Knjiga памылак* (Knjiga napak, 2014), ki vsebuje tudi nekaj prevodov pesmi, je postal veliko kritičnih pohval in bil nominiran za nagrado za najboljši beloruski literarni prvenec. Pesmi in prevodi Cimafejeve so bili objavljeni v več beloruskih revijah; njene pesmi so prevedene v angleščino, litovščino, ukrajinščino in švedščino. Sodelovala je na različnih mednarodnih festivalih in knjižnih sejmi v Litvi, na Švedskem, v Ukrajini, Franciji in Belorusiji. Živi in ustvarja v Minsku.

Yulya Tsimafejeva was born in 1982 in Belarus. Her birth village of Sparyzza (Braham District) does not exist anymore because its entire population had to be evacuated, and the settlement abandoned, in the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. She studied English Language and Literature and obtained a master's degree in Literature Studies from the Belarusian State University. She is a poet and translator from English (Bukowski, Lawrence, Rich, Oates) and one of the co-founders and editors of the internet magazine of translated literature *PrajdziSvet*. Her debut collection of poems and poetry translations *Knjiga памылак* (The Book of Mistakes, 2014) received critical acclaim and was short-listed for the Best Belarusian Debut literary prize. Tsimafejeva's works and translations have been published in different Belarusian magazines and also translated into English, Lithuanian, Ukrainian and Swedish. She has participated in various international festivals and book fairs in Lithuania, Sweden, Ukraine, France and Belarus. She lives and works in Minsk.

* * *

...Дзяўчынка, стоячы,
гушкалася на арэлях
і прыгаворвала:
“Каця добрая,
Каця кепская...
Каця добрая,
Каця кепская...”

Арэлі – уверх,
ледзь не да аблокаў –
добрая.
Арэлі – уніз,
амаль траву кранаюць –
кепская.

Добрая,
кепская.
Добрая,
кепская.

Надакучыла Каці,
і недзе між верхам і нізам,
між аблокамі і травой,
яна выпусціла жалезныя пруты з рук,
зрабіла з арэляў крок наперад
і пабегла босымі пяткамі
па цёплым летнім паветры...

Не было ні добрай Каці,
ні кепскай,
ні сумнай,
ні вясёлай...
Каця збегла.
Каця змагла.

Новая вопратка караля

Сяджу ў майстэрні фатографа
і слухаю Баха.
На цагляных сценах XIX стагоддзя –
чорна-белыя партрэты
голых мадэляў:
іх вусны, плечы,
грудзі і сцёгны.

А барочная музыка аркестра
ў чорным прайгравальніку
палачкай дырыжора,
быццам іголкай,
праколвае секунду за секундай
і вышывае ў паветры
каляровыя кветкі.
Шыўкі скрыпак, клавіраў і флейтаў
роўна кладуцца
на сцены,
на фота мадэляў,
аздабляючы
матэрыяй часу
пустэчу.

І я думаю,
ці напраўду быў голым кароль,
калі пад літаўры і горны
прыдворнага аркестра
горда ішоў па плошчы,
адчуваючы на сабе
ядваб і аксаміт музыкі,
вытанчанай,
зашпіленай на ўсе гузікі.
А грубы натоўп
яе проста не здолеў
разгледзець.

* * *

Я ліжу твой партрэт.
Фотапапера пахне клейстарам,
Але не мае смаку.
А ты пад ёй пахнеш
Сарваным дзьмухаўцом:
Церпкай сцяблінай
І жоўтым пылком
З тонкіх пялёсткаў.

Я ліжу твой партрэт
І языком спрабую сцерці
След дзьмухаўцовага малачка
Над верхняй губой
І носам, быццам кранаюся
Твайго носа,
Але след пылку на ім
На мне не пакідае следу.

Я ліжу твой партрэт,
Злізваю вусны,
Злізваю нос,
Злізваю шчокі, і вочы,
Ліжу кароткую шчотку тваіх валасоў,
Але яны не колюць язык,
І фотапапера ўсё гэтак жа
Не мае смаку.

...Я злізала цябе
З жоўта-зялёнага поля
Маёй памяці –
Белы пусты абрыс.
І толькі там,
На цёплай зямлі
За межамі фатаграфіі,
Куды языком не дабрацца,
Ляжыць і пахне
Табой сарваны
Дзьмухавец.

Гара

Я стаю ля гары
і прашу забраць мяне назад.

А гара маўчыць,
а яна не прызнаецца,
што мы некалі былі знаёмыя,
і што гэта яна выпусціла
мяне на свет.

Ля гары цёмна, халодна і мокра.
Праз імжу я крычу штомоцы,
але крыкі бумерангам рэха
вяртаюцца назад,
і, перавёўшы дыханне,
я крычу наноў.

А гара глухая,
а гара сляпая,
і нават калі з кулакамі
кідаюся на яе вострыя камяні
і выю ад распачы і болю,
ніводны з яе ўступаў
не скаланецца,
не ўздрыгне,
не памякчэе.
Гара ўсё гэтак жа
для мяне закрытая.

Але мне няма куды ісці,
Больш няма чаго шукаць,
Больш няма да каго прыпасці.
За спінай – чужая чэрань.

І калі знясіленая,
скрываўленая,
у слязах і адчаі,
я падаю, абдымаючы
яе неахопную шыю,
і засынаю,
гара расплюшчвае вочы,
раскрывае ляніва рот
і выконвае маю просьбу.

* * *

... dekllica je stala tam,
se gugala na gugalnici
in ponavljala:
»Katka je dobra,
Katka je slaba,
Katka je dobra,
Katka je slaba ...«

Gugalnica se dvigne,
skoraj do oblakov –
dobra.
Gugalnica se spusti,
toliko da ne oplazi trave –
slaba.

Dobra,
slaba.
Dobra,
slaba.

Katka se je naveličala,
nekje med zgoraj in spodaj,
med oblaki in travo
spustila iz rok železni palici,
stopila pred gugalnico
in bosonoga stekla
skozi topel poletni zrak.

Ni bilo ne dobre
ne slabe Katke,
ne žalostne
ne vesele ...
Katka je stekla stran.
Katka je zmogla.

Cesarjeva nova oblačila

Sedim v fotografskem ateljeju
in poslušam Bacha.
Na opečnatih stenah iz 19. stoletja
so črno-beli portreti
golih aktov:
usta, ramena,
prsi in stegna.

Orkestralna baročna glasba
iz črnega CD-predvajalnika
s taktirko
kakor s šivanko
vbada sekundo za sekundo
in veze po zraku
pisane cvetove.
Vbodljaji violin, klavirjev in flavt
se enakomerno
skladajo v stene,
v fotomodele in
okrašujejo
materijo časa
v puŢinji.

Sprašujem se,
če je bil cesar zares nag
ali pa je v taktu pavk in trobent
kraljevega orkestra
ponosno korakal po trgu,
se dotikal
svile in žameta glasbe,
delikatne,
zapete na vse gumbe.
Razposajena tolpa
pa tega preprosto
ni mogla vedeti.

* * *

Ližem tvojo fotografijo.
Fotografski papir diši po kleju,
Vendar nima okusa.
Ti na njej dišiš
Kot potrzan regrat:
S trpkim stebelcem
In z rumenim prahom
Iz tankih lističev.

Ližem tvojo fotografijo
Z jezikom poskušam zbrisati
Sled regratovega mlečka
Nad zgornjo ustnico
Z nosom se skoraj dotaknem
Tvojega nosu,
Sledovi prahu na njem
Se ne lepijo name.

Ližem tvojo fotografijo,
Oblizujem usta,
Oblizujem nos,
Oblizujem ličnici in oči,
Ližem tvoje kratko ostrižene lase,
Čeprav ne bodejo jezika,
Fotografski papir pa še vedno
Nima okusa.

... Izlizala sem te
Z rumeno-zelenega polja
Svojega spomina –
Bel prazen obris.
In samo tam,
Na topli zemlji
Za fotografijo,
Kamor jezik ne seže,
Diši po tebi
Potrgani regrat.

Gora

Stojim ob gori
in jo prosim, naj me vzame nazaj.

Toda gora molči,
noče slišati,
da sva se nekoč poznali
in da me je prav ona spustila
v svet.

Ob gori je temačno, hladno in mokro.
Skozi droben dež kričim na vso moč,
toda kriki odmevajo in se kot bumerang
odbijajo nazaj,
jaz pa, zadržujoč dih,
znova zakričim.

Toda gora je gluha,
gora je slepa,
tudi ko s pestmi
planem nadnjo z ostrimi kamni
in tulim od obupa in bolečine,
se nobena od skalnih polic
ne zatrese,
ne vzdrgeta,
ne omehča.
Gora je zame
še vedno zaprta.

Jaz pa nimam kam iti,
Nimam več česa iskati,
Nimam se h komu priviti.
Za mojim hrbtom – tuje ivje.

Ko sem že do konca izčrpana,
vsa krvava,
v solzah in obupu,
ko padam in se oklepam
njenega ogromnega vratu,
tonem v sen,
gora razpre oči,
leno odpre usta
in usliši mojo prošnjo.

Prevedla Veronika Sorokin

* * *

A swinging girl
recited:

Katie's good,
Katie's bad,
Katie's good,
Katie's bad.

The swing's up
good.

The swing's down
bad.

Katie's gotten bored
and someplace
between up and down
she let the metal rods go
and stepped forward
across the warm summer air.

There was neither good
nor bad Katie,
neither sad
nor glad Katie.

She ran away.

Translated by Valzhyna Mort

Emperor's New Clothes

In the artist's studio
I listen to Bach.
Black and white shots
of nudes
hang on the XIXth century brick wall.

A baton directing
baroque orchestra music
pins this moment, then next
moment, embroidering
a garden in the air.
Every note a stitch –
a violin stitch, a flute stitch,
clavier stitch – cover the walls,
dressing the nudes
into the fabric of time.

And I wonder,
if the Emperor was really naked.
He marched vainly
to the sound of the royal
orchestra, listening
to the music with his whole
body. A button-all-the-way-up
music. And the horse-laughing
crowd didn't know better.

Translated by Valzhyna Mort

* * *

I lick your picture.
Photo paper smells of wheat glue, but has no taste.
Inside the paper you smell
of a torn lion's tooth:
its tart stem,
its amber pollen,
its fine hair.

I lick your picture
trying to wipe
the milky latex
above your mouth,
with my nose I touch
your nose, but the pollen
doesn't stick to me.

I lick your picture,
tongue away your mouth,
tongue away your nose,
tongue away your cheeks and eyes,
I tongue the short brush of your hair,
yet photo paper still has no taste.

... I've licked you away
from the yellow-green field
of my memory –
a clean white tablecloth.
Yet there,
on the warm earth
beyond the picture where
my tongue cannot reach
is the smell of a plucked
lion's tooth.

Translated by Valzhyna Mort

The Mountain

I stand by the mountain
and ask it to take me back.

But the mountain is dumb,
it doesn't show
we have met before,
it doesn't admit
it set me free once.

It's dark, cold and wet by the mountain.
And through the rain I scream,
but my screams echo and boomerang
to me,
and, taking my breath,
I resume screaming.

But the mountain is numb,
but the mountain is blind,
and even when I attack
its sharp rocks with my fists
and howl in disappointment and pain,
none of its ledges
tilts,
trembles,
or softens.
The mountain is hostile
and closed.

I don't have where to go,
I don't have what to look for,
I don't have what to nestle up to,
alien blackness behind my back.

And when bloody and weary,
in despair and tears,
I fall, embracing its immense neck,
and go to sleep,
the mountain opens its eyes,
lazily opens its mouth,
and complies with my request.

Translated by the author



Foto © Ivan Dobnik

Patricija Dodič

Patricija Dodič se je rodila leta 1969 v Koperu. Diplomirala je iz slovenščine in francoščine na Filozofski fakulteti v Trstu. Po nekaj letih poučevanja italijanščine kot izbirnega predmeta v osnovnih šolah in vodenja tečajev italijanščine je že desetletje zaposlena kot samostojna bibliotekarka v Kosovelovi knjižnici Sežana, kjer je vodja enote Kozina. Je pesnica in urednica več pesniških zbirk in zbornikov, pogosto pa se znajde tudi v vlogi moderatorke literarnih večerov. Doslej je izdala štiri pesniške zbirke: *Pet minut blaznosti* (2008), *Črno obrobljene oči* (2009), *Wada* (2014) in *Ljubimje* (2015). Njene pesmi so prevedene v angleščino, bosanščino, italijanščino in poljščino. Patricija Dodič je tudi ljubiteljska slikarka, likovno je opremila več pesniških zbirk in slikanico *Dež Franja Frančiča*. Kot soadministatorica sodeluje na portalih *Primorci.si* in *Dobreknjige.si*.

Patricija Dodič was born in 1969 in Koper, Slovenia. She obtained a degree in Slovenian and French from the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy in Trieste. After a few years of teaching Italian as an elective subject in lower secondary schools and leading Italian courses, for the past decade she has been working as a library consultant and head of the Knjižnica Kozina Library, a subsidiary of the Sežana-based Kosovel Library. She is a poet and editor of several poetry almanacs and poetry collections and frequently takes on the role of host at literary evenings. She herself has published four collections of poetry: *Pet minut blaznosti* (Five Minutes of Frenzy, 2008), *Črno obrobljene oči* (Black-Edged Eyes 2009), *Wada* (2014) and *Ljubimje* (Loveshire, 2015). Her poems have been translated into English, Bosnian, Italian and Polish. Patricija Dodič is also a prolific painter. She has artistically adorned several collections of poetry as well as Franjo Frančič's picture book *Dež* (Rain). She is also co-administrator of the websites *Primorci.si* and *Dobreknjige.si*.

Svetlo, svetleje, najsvetleje

Čas. Otrok v izvržku veselja in prisoten spomin.

Čista tišina žlobudravosti.

Drhteč od norenja se peni čez lica.

Ko rečeš čas, ga izničiš.

Ko zašepetaš, ga odškrneš.

Ko ga pomisliš, ga že ni.

Adagio in andante med nekoč in nekje.

Nerodno brkljaš med lasmi.

Nobenega izgovora nimaš več.

Nekoč bom zelo stara. Ali pa tudi ne.

V sebi poglobljam suhljato starko.

Ji z mokro cunjo močim presušena usta.

In legam, obrnjena z obrazom v zid.

Ker mi je tu in tam preveč besed.

D kot dih. Ali Darfur.

Džandžavidi. Čiščenje metkov, da se čisteje ubije. Pisarna pod drevesom. Ogledalce, v katero se pogledaš, ko črno postane za odtenek svetleje. Ob muhi na nosu se ti obraz razpotegne v svetel nasmeh. Ko hitiš, se na drugem koncu sveta obrne duša. Ko pobiješ vse, začnejo govoriti ženske. Mama Zakawa skuha čaj.

Wada. Oslepelo srce.

Ko pokoplješ pod goro. Z zeleno ruto čez obrvi. Ko v grobih sledih vetra ostane le še izčrpanost. Ko se črto sredi puščave razmeji z nekaj vedri motne vode. Ko je do najbližjega vodnjaka le šest ur bosohoje. Mahaji. Musbath. Ko je polje prepredeno s temnejšimi sledmi koles. Ko v zraku zadržuješ korak, preden sestopiš v koračnico. Birmaza. In rožnata pregrinjala božajo tistih dosti krvavih ran.

V duši in izven. Halal.

In vendar so gibi v plesu mehki in vodéni. In je trobenta pod glinenim šotorom mehkoglasna. In je vse kot arabski beli konj, ki mu štrlijo iz reber vprašanja. O tem, da te mine. Smrt ima tako veliko zaprtih oči. Ko zogleniš sredi ničesar. Se rokuješ z roko na rani. Niala. Na pot te pospremi tisoč barvnih jezikov. Kjer nihče nikogar ne razume. Kjer vsi razumejo vse. Zato, da pride voda. *Wada* in *uoada*. Zato, da skozi tristo tisoč mrtvih teles v treh letih spoznaš Jebel Marro. In vse, kar ne piše nikjer. Kjer nihče ne pove tistega, kar v resnici je. Najlepši nasmeh je tisti na oslovem hrbtu. Ob vonju jasmína. In pomaranče. Daleč od ljudi. Blizu bogov. Ob gori Kargo. Ob suniju. In tistem potoku vmes. Bog je zares največji med prestreljenimi koleni in pobitimi otroki. Med Nilom in Nigrom. Vsak dan. Včeraj. Še prej. Ko visiš z glavo navzdol. Medtem ko ti v rokah binglja svetleča se brzostrelka. Na zapestju pa ročna ura brez kazalcev. Tisoče kilometrov stran nekdo odkimava in se čudi. Na drugi strani potoka nekdo breztežno prikimava. »Kdo so tisti, ki gredo do kraja?« poje drugi Tomo. Prvi govori. Medtem ko tretji sedi ob meni. In varuje vse kamne in vode mojega sveta.

Rada bi

Rada bi verjela v enega in edinega boga,
ki prozaično (ali poetsko, kdo ve) sedi na nedoločljivem prestolu.
Vanj, ki ne verjame politiki, zemljepisu in kondenziranemu mleku.
Bi ga povabila v nezapomljivi lokal, da kako rečeva o tem in onem.
O ljudeh, čudno zamaknjenih, z izrazom, običajnim za
sodoprste kopitarje.

O njihovi odtujenosti, ki je kot luknja dimljenega sira
v suhoparni močvirski vasici, ali kje že.

Bi ga sunila pod rebra, če bi zenovsko, kot mu menda pritiče,
srepo buljil vame.

Bi mu navrgla o tistih, ki menda sedijo v nebesih, in če jim je dolgčas
in če rabijo priročnik o vzgoji laoških mravelj, ali pač ne.

Rada bi mu rekla, naj iz žepa potegne denar in poravna
tisti dve predolgi kavi, zame pivo, morda dve, on že ve.

Medtem ko z redkokdaj pobrisanih šip na naju zre
nekaj bolje rejenih muh.

Rada bi. (*Più semplice di cosí non si può.*)

Strmeti navzkrižno

Se nasloniti na brezčasna drevesa.
Se obračati v klepsidri zdaj gor zdaj dol.
Se razmazati. Dihati. Živeti.
Si spraskati oko.
Opravičevati zmotnost.
Zaznati besede, ki izjezikajo usta do ušes.
Biti predzadnji.
Ne gobcati.
Iz sebe pobrisati prah.
V primeru približevanja pritisniti gumb.
Se opravičiti ne glede na kondome, kletne prostore, rdeči zahod.
Prenesti količino želja in zapisati zgodbo, ki se začne na Z.
Crkniti od smeha v sobi za dva.
Še enkrat.
Od začetka.
Razdrobiti veselje na krušne hlebce.
Se preseliti v mednožja.
Postati za stoletja mlajši in brsteti iz sebe vase.
Viseti kot Ganeš na tvojem vratu.
Biti brezhibni sanskrt, ki se ujema na mokre dlani.
Raztegniti ročno čas, rečno mrzel, in teči v medžilje.
Pisati.
Na dolgo.
Crkniti od smeha.
V tretje gre rado.

Bright, Brighter, the Brightest

Time. A child in the offal of the universe and a present memory.
Pure silence of gibberish.
Trembling with rave, foaming across the cheeks.
By saying time, you annul it.
By whispering, you nip it off.
When you contemplate it, it's already gone.
Adagio and andante between someday and somewhere.

Awkwardly, you rummage through your hair.
You're out of excuses for good.

Someday, I'll Be Very Old. Or Not.

I'm deepening the sear old lady inside me,
with a wet cloth, I'm moistening her dry mouth.
And I'm lying down, turning my face to the wall.
Because there are too many words for me here and there.

D for Deep Breath. Or Darfur.

The Janjaweed. Cleansing the bullets so the kill is cleaner. An office
 beneath a tree.
 A pocket mirror you check yourself in when the black grows a bit lighter.
 At a fly on your nose, your face broadens with a bright smile.
 When you are in haste, across the world a soul turns over.
 When you kill them all, women start talking. Mother Zakawa
 makes tea. Wada. Blinded heart.
 When you bury at the foot of a mountain. With a green kerchief
 over your eyebrows.
 When there's nothing left in the harsh wind traces but exhaustion.
 When the line in the middle of the desert is drawn up
 by a few buckets of muddy water.
 When the nearest well is just six bare foot hours away. Mahaji. Musbath.
 When the field is cobwebbed with darker wheel traces.
 When your foot lingers in the air before stepping into a march. Birmaza.
 And rosy covers caress those many bloody wounds.
 Inside and out. Halal.
 But still, the dancing moves are soft and watery.
 And the trumpet beneath the clay tent is sweet-voiced.
 And everything is like a white Arab with questions jutting out of
 its ribs. About letting it go. Death has got so many closed eyes.
 When you burn in the middle of nowhere.
 Shake hands with your hand on the wound. Nyala.
 Thousands of colourful tongues escort you on your way.
 Where no one understands no one. Where everyone understands everyone.
 For the water to come. Wada and wohta.
 So that through three hundred thousands dead bodies in three years,
 you learn about Jebel Marra.
 And everything that's not written. Where no one speaks of the things
 there are.
 The loveliest smile is the one on the back of a donkey.
 With the smell of jasmine. And orange. Far away from people.
 Near gods. At Mt Cargo. Near Sunni. And that brook in between.
 God, indeed, is the greatest among shot knees and slaughtered children.
 Between the Nile and the Niger. Every day. Yesterday. And before that.
 When you hang upside down. While your shiny submachine gun is dangling
 in your hands. With a handleless watch around your wrist.

Thousands of miles away someone shakes a head, wonderingly.
Across the brook someone nods, weightlessly.
“Who are those who go all the way?” the second Tom sings. The first one talks.
While the third one is sitting beside me. Sheltering all the stones and waters
of my world.

I'd Like To

I'd like to believe in God, the one and only, that sits
on an indefinable throne prosaically (or poetically, who knows).
In the one that doesn't believe in politics, geography and condensed milk.
I'd invite him to a forgettable pub to have a word or two with him.
About people, strangely raptured, with an expression, typical for
even-toed ungulates.
About their alienation that is just like a hole in the smoked cheese
in a dull marshy village or wherever.
I'd poke him in the ribs, did he, as he is supposed to, stare at me zen-like.
I'd throw in something about the ones that supposedly sit in heaven,
and whether they are bored and need a manual about breeding Laos ants or not.
I'd like to tell him to dig up his pockets and pay for those long blacks
and my beer or two, he'll know.
While a few corpulent flies watch us through the rarely cleaned windowpanes.
I'd like to. (*Più semplice di così non si può.*)

Staring Crosswise

Leaning on timeless trees.
Turning in clepsydra up and down.
Spreading out. Breathing. Living.
Scratching your eye.
Finding excuses for mistakes.
Perceiving words that babble the mouth to the ears.
Being the last but one.
Not shooting your mouth off.
Dusting your inside.
In case of approaching, pushing the button.
Apologizing, regardless of the condoms, cellar rooms, red sunset.
Bearing the quantity of wishes and writing a story that starts with an S.
Dropping dead from laughter in a room for two.
Once again.
From the top.
Splitting the universe into bread loaves.
Moving into the pubic region.
Becoming younger for centuries and sprouting from the inside into yourself.
Hanging like Ganesha on your neck.
Being impeccable Sanskrit, pasting on to the wet palms.
Manually extending time, riverine cold, and running amidst veins.
Writing.
Thoroughly.
Dropping dead from laughter.
The third one's a charm.

Translated by Aleksandra Kocmut



Foto © Ayşe Yavaş

Dana Grigorcea

Dana Grigorcea se je rodila leta 1979 v Bukarešti v Romuniji. Magistrirala je iz nemške in nizozemske filologije na Fakulteti za tuje jezike in književnost Univerze v Bukarešti in en semester absolvirala na Univerzi v Gentu. Pozneje je študirala gledališko in filmsko režijo na Hogeschool-Universiteit v Bruslju ter leta 2004 končala magistrski študijski program novinarstva na Donavski univerzi v Kremsu. Od tedaj sodeluje z avstrijskim časnikom *Kurier*, nemškim radiom Deutsche Welle in televizijsko hišo Arte s sedežem v Strasbourg. Pripravlja televizijske prispevke in radijske oddaje, delala pa je tudi kot nemška dopisnica za romunski radio in televizijo. Grigorcea, ki živi v Zürichu, piše v nemščini, svoj romaneskni prvenec *Baba Rada. Das Leben ist vergänglich wie die Kopfschaare* (Baba Rada. Življenje je minljivo kot lasje) pa je izdala leta 2011. Njen drugi in najnovejši roman *Das primäre Gefühl der Schuldlosigkeit* (Prvinski občutek nedolžnosti) je izšel leta 2015. Z odlomkom iz zadnjega romana je kandidirala na literarnem tekmovanju za nagrado Ingeborg Bachmann in prejela nagrado 3sat-Preis.

Dana Grigorcea was born in 1979 in Bucharest, Romania. She obtained an MA in German and Dutch Philology from the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literature at the University of Bucharest and spent a semester at Ghent University. She later studied theatre and film directing at the Hogeschool-Universiteit of Brussels and completed an MA study programme in Journalism at the Danube University in Krems in 2004. Since then she has worked for the Austrian newspaper *Kurier*, the German Deutsche Welle Radio and the Strasbourg-based TV station Arte. She authors TV segments and radio broadcasts and has also worked as a Romanian correspondent for TV and radio. Grigorcea, who lives in Zürich and writes in German, published her debut novel *Baba Rada. Das Leben ist vergänglich wie die Kopfschaare* (Granny Rada. Life is as Fleeting as Hair) in 2011. Her second and most recent novel *Das primäre Gefühl der Schuldlosigkeit* (The Primary Sense of Innocence) was published in 2015. An excerpt from this novel was entered in the Ingeborg Bachmann Contest and was awarded with the 3sat Prize.

Das primäre Gefühl der Schuldlosigkeit

(Auszug aus dem Roman)

Vom Balkon aus wollte er auf einen Boulevard schauen. Riesig sollte der sein wie in Beijing, noch besser wie in Paris: eine Champs-Élysées anstelle der alten Bojaren Häuser mit den morschen Dächern und den unförmigen Gärten und umhinschlindernden Gassen, in denen jederzeit Epidemien ausbrechen konnten. Und so wurde auf dem Arsenalhügel das ganze Quartier Uranus abgerissen, die achtundzwanzigjährige Chefarchitektin, deren Diplomarbeit der »Urbanisierung von Stadtbrachen« gewidmet war, überbrachte ihren Genossen Kollegen die frohe Kunde, sie hätten nun eine freie Fläche zur Verfügung, »so groß wie Venedig«.

»Wie Venedig!«, muss der eine oder andere Genosse geseufzt haben. »Venedig!«

Die Bukarester Champs-Élysées, bekannt oder auch nicht bekannt geworden als Boulevard des Sozialistischen Sieges, geriet zwar etwas kürzer als die Prachtstraße in Paris, dafür aber ganze acht Meter breiter.

Nicolae Ceausescu war es nicht vergönnt, feierlich vom Balkon herunter zu winken, das tat an seiner Statt Michael Jackson mit dem weißen Glitzerhandschuh. Das war drei Jahre nach Ceausescus Exekution, auf Michaels »Dangerous«-Welttournee.

Damals ging kaum noch einer aus dem Haus ohne die »Dangerous«-Kassette, man trug sie bei sich, und zwar sichtbar, wie einst die Chinesen »Das kleine rote Buch« während Maos Kulturrevolution. Und bei jenen, die einen Kassettenrekorder besaßen, zum Beispiel bei uns, spielte man gern den sogenannten Jackson-Poker: Man spulte mit einem Bleistift oder mit dem Finger das Band in der Kassette vor, und die Mitspieler mussten erraten, was Michael an jener Stelle sang. Nachdem alle ihren Einsatz auf den Tisch gelegt hatten, wurde die Kassette in den Rekorder geschoben, und es gewann, wer am nächsten dran war.

I never knew

But I was living in vain

She called my house

She said you know my name...

Von der »Dangerous«-Kassette besaß ich zwei Stück. Die eine spielte ich ab, die andere hielt ich an einen sicheren Ort bereit für den Fall, dass die erste kaputtging. Und als die CD kam, kaufte mir mein Vater auch die CD, für den Fall, dass wir einmal einen CD-Player kaufen sollten.

Als angekündigt wurde, dass Michael, gleich nach seiner Landung in Bukarest, zum Haus des Volkes gebracht würde, war ich einer von den siebzigtausend Fans, die in der besagten stockfinsternen Nacht hineinging in die Betonschlucht zwischen den Wohnblockzeilen; »Via Mala« nannte man den Ort. Vor uns die steile Felswand des geplanten Monstergebäudes, die auch eine Nacht hätte sein können, eine sternlose, dahinter nur Ödland und Brache. Ich war zum ersten Mal vor dem Bau, den ich sonst nur aus der Ferne, vom Fenster in der Doktor-Lister-Straße, sah. Und ich wäre wahrscheinlich nie hergekommen ohne Michael.

Bis die Hubschrauber kamen mit den Lichtkegeln, erklangen nur vereinzelt Schreie, später aber schwoll das Gekreische an, »Michae-eel, Michae-e-e-eel«, und dann wurden auch Seile heruntergelassen aus den Hubschraubern, und alle schauten hinauf, ob Michael sich zu uns abeilte durch den schräg herabpeitschenden Herbstregen.

»Ist er das?«

»Das muss er sein.«

Doch da war niemand.

Wir sangen ihm seine Lieder, durcheinander, manchmal kam ein Song von den hinteren Regionen der Menschenmenge wie eine Welle über uns und ließ alle anheben:

*And it doesn't seem to matter
And it doesn't seem right
'cause the will has brought
No fortune
Still I cry alone at night
Don't you judge of my composure
'cause I'm lying to myself
And the reason why she left me
Did she find in someone else?*

Und wieder kam ein Lied und spülte das erste hinweg oder brachte es zurück, und es ging um Verrat und Liebe, vor allem aber um den Verrat, und alle sangen:

(Who is it?)

Is it a friend of mine?

(Who is it?)

Is it my brother?

(Who is it?)

Somebody hurt my soul, now

(Who is it?)

I can't take it 'cause I'm lonely.

Und wie aus dem Nichts zersprang die Nacht vor uns mit einem Dröhnen und einer Art endzeitlichem Feuerwerk rund um das Haus des Volkes.

»Es brennt«, rief so mancher fasziniert, »er brennt jetzt alles nieder.«

Und von überall drang Sirenengeheul zu uns her.

Da standen wir am Fuße des Arsenalhügels, dem mythischen Versammlungsort widergöttlicher Mächte, eine dampfende Menschenmasse, klatschnass, aber gestärkt, gesegnet von der Leidenschaft unserer Ahnen, auserwählt, das Ende zu erleben, die letzte Entscheidungsschlacht, wie sie in der Offenbarung des Johannes prophezeit wurde: »Und er versammelte sie zu dem Ort, welcher auf Hebräisch Armageddon genannt wird.«

»Michael, Michael«, riefen wir unseren Erzengel.

Und als das ganze Haus des Volkes hinter Feuer und Rauch verschwand, schrie jemand: »Weg mit der Nomenklatura!« Oder es kam einfach so über uns, und alles begann zu skandieren:

»Weg mit der Nomenklatura!«

»Frei-heit, Frei-heit!«

Und alle streckten die Arme dem Regen entgegen, mit den Fingern das Siegeszeichen formend der ein Jahr zuvor zerschlagenen Demos, nunmehr aber mit Zeigefinger und Daumen, nicht mehr das V-Zeichen aus Zeige- und Mittelfinger wie bei der sogenannten Revolution, als die Nomenklatura uns mit einem riesigen, grausamen Schauspiel gelackmeiert hatte.

Und als sich der Rauch gelegt hatte, weggewaschen vom Regen, hatten wir freie Sicht auf das, was früher einmal das Haus des Volkes war und sich jetzt in blauen Konturen zeigte – das himmlische Haus des Volkes, das Haus des ganzen Volkes Gottes!

Heal the world

Make it a better place

*For you and for me
And the entire human race...*

Lichtstrahlen bündelten sich auf dem Balkon des Volkshauses, wo eine kleine Gestalt stand und winkte.

»Huuuh«, rief Michael in die Mikrophone, »huuh.«

Zwei große Bildschirme flackerten auf in der Nacht und zeigten je einen übergroßen Michael Jackson in rot-blauer Offiziersuniform der königlichen Garde mit goldener Schnur. Aus Geschichtsbüchern kann man erfahren, dass es genau die Gala-Uniform des Königs Karl II. war, allerdings ohne die Tschapka mit dem weißen Haarbusch, statt dessen mit einem schwarzen Hut und der verspiegelten Pilotenbrille, in der das ganze Geschehen auf dem Platz widerschien, bestehend aus unzähligen kleinen Punkten.

»Hello, *Budapest!*«, rief Michael Jackson. »I love you!«

Mir war, als ob es in dem Augenblick, aufgehört hätte zu regnen. Oder die Regentropfen blieben hängen in der Luft, genauso wie der ausgeatmete Dunst. Todesstille. Ende.

Prvinski občutek nedolžnosti

(odlomek iz romana)

Z balkona je hotel imeti razgled na bulvar. Tako velik naj bi bil kot v Pekingu, še bolj imeniten kot v Parizu: Champs-Élysées namesto starih bojarških hiš s trhlimi strehami in brezobličnimi vrtovi ter vijugastih ulic, kjer lahko kadar koli izbruhne epidemija. In tako so na Arzenalskem griču porušili celotno četrt Uranus. Osemindvajsetletna glavna arhitektka, ki se je v diplomski nalogi posvetila urbanizaciji zapuščenih mestnih četrti, je tovarišem kolegom sporočila veselo novico, da imajo zdaj na voljo prosto površino, »tako veliko kot Benetke«.

»Kot Benetke!« je zagotovo zavzdihnil ta ali oni kolega. »Benetke!«

Bukareški Champs-Élysées, ki je zaslovel ali pa tudi ni zaslovel kot Bulvar zmage socializma, je na koncu izpadel sicer nekoliko krajši kot razkošna cesta v Parizu, zato pa je bil za celih osem metrov širši.

Nicolaeju Ceaușescuju ni bilo dano, da bi slovesno pomahal z balkona, to je namesto njega naredil Michael Jackson z belo rokavico z bleščicami. To je bilo tri leta po Ceaușescujevi eksekuciji, na Michaelovi svetovni turneji z albumom *Dangerous*.

Takrat skoraj nihče ni zapustil hiše brez kasete *Dangerous*, nosili smo jo pri sebi, in sicer na vidnem mestu, tako kot nekdanji Kitajci *Rdečo knjižico* med Maovo kulturno revolucijo. In pri tistih, ki smo imeli kasetofon, kot na primer mi, smo se radi igrali tako imenovani Jacksonov poker: s svinčnikom ali prstom si trak v kaseti prevrtil naprej, soigralci pa so morali uganiti, kaj Michael na tem mestu zapoje. Ko so vsi igralci na mizo položili svoj vložek, si dal kaseto v kasetofon, in zmagal je tisti, ki je bil najbližje.

I never knew

But I was living in vain

She called my house

She said you know my name ...

Imela sem dva izvoda kasete *Dangerous*. Eno sem poslušala, drugo pa sem imela spravljeno na varnem mestu, če bi se prva slučajno pokvarila. In ko je izšel CD, mi je oče kupil tudi CD, če bomo kdaj slučajno imeli CD predvajalnik.

Ko so sporočili, da bodo Michaela takoj po pristanku v Bukarešti pripeljali v Ljudsko hišo, sem bila ena od sedemdeset tisočih oboževalcev, ki so se napotili v že omenjeno kot v rogu temno noč, v betonsko sotesko med vrstami blokov; Via Mala se je reklo temu kraju. Pred nami strma skalnata stena načrtovane pošastne stavbe, ki pa bi bila lahko tudi samo noč brez zvezd in za njo sama pušča in ledina. Prvič sem stala pred to zgradbo, ki sem jo sicer videla samo iz daljave, skozi okno na Ulici doktorja Listerja. In če ne bi bilo Michaela, najbrž nikoli ne bi prišla sem.

Dokler niso prišli helikopterji s svetlobnimi snopi, so odzvanjali samo posamezni vzkliki, pozneje pa se je vreščanje stopnjevalo, »Michaeel, Michaeeeeel,« in potem so iz helikopterjev spustili celo vrvi in vsi smo gledali gor, ali se bo Michael po njih spustil k nam skozi poševno bičajoče jesenske dežne kaplje.

»Je to on?«

»To mora biti on.«

Toda tam ni bilo nikogar.

Peli smo mu njegove pesmi, drug čez drugega, včasih nas je kakšen napev iz zadnjih predelov človeške množice preplaval kot val in vsi smo mu pritegnili:

*And it doesn't seem to matter
And it doesn't seem right
'cause the will has brought
No fortune
Still I cry alone at night
Don't you judge of my composure
'cause I'm lying to myself
And the reason why she left me
Did she find in someone else?*

In spet je prišla nova pesem in odplavila prvo ali pa jo naplavila nazaj, in šlo je za prevaro in ljubezen, ampak predvsem za prevaro, in vsi smo peli:

*(Who is it?)
Is it a friend of mine?
(Who is it?)
Is it my brother?
(Who is it?)*

*Somebody hurt my soul, now
(Who is it?)
I can't take it 'cause I'm lonely.*

In kar na lepem se je noč pred nami raztreščila z bobnenjem in nekakšnim apokaliptičnim ognjemetom okoli Ljudske hiše.

»Gori,« je očarano zaklical ta ali oni, »vse bo požgal.«

In od povsod je k nam prodiralo tuljenje siren.

Stali smo ob vznožju Arzenalskega griča, mitološkega zbirališča bogoskrunskih sil, puhteča množica ljudi, premočena do kože, ampak okrepljena, blagoslovljena s trpljenjem svojih prednikov, izbrana, da doživi konec, zadnjo odločilno bitko, kot je bila napovedana v Razodetju po Janezu: »In zbral jih je na kraju, ki se po hebrejsko imenuje Harmagedón.«

»Michael, Michael,« smo klicali svojega nadangela.

In ko je v ognju in dimu izginila cela Ljudska hiša, je nekdo zaklical: »Stran z nomenklaturo!« Ali pa nas je kar tako preplavilo, in vsi smo začeli skandirati:

»Stran z nomenklaturo!«

»Svo-bo-da, svo-bo-da!«

In vsi smo stegovali roke proti dežju, s prsti oblikovali simbol zmage, istega kot pred enim letom na zadušenih demonstracijah, po novem s kazalcem in palcem, nič več znaka V iz kazalca in sredinca kot pri tako imenovani revoluciji, ko nas je nomenklatura ofrناžila z veliko, grozljivo predstavo.

In ko se je dim polegel, spral ga je dež, se nam je odprl pogled na to, kar je bila nekoč prej Ljudska hiša in se je zdaj kazala v modrih obrisih – nebeška Ljudska hiša, hiša vsega božjega ljudstva!

*Heal the world
Make it a better place
For you and for me
And the entire human race ...*

Snopi svetlobe so se usmerili na balkon Ljudske hiše, kjer je stal majhen človeček in mahal.

»Huuuh,« je v mikrofون zaklical Michael, »huuh.«

V noč sta zaplapolala ogromna zaslona in prikazovala nadnaravno velikega Michaela Jacksona v rdeče-modri oficirski uniformi kraljeve garde z zlatimi našitki. Iz zgodovinskih knjig sledi, da je

do potankosti posnemala gala uniformo kralja Karla II., vsekakor brez čapke z belim čopom, zato pa s črnim klobukom in refleksnimi pilotskimi očali, kjer je v nešteti drobni pikah odsevalo celotno dogajanje na trgu.

»Hello, *Budapest!*« je zaklical Michael Jackson. »I love you!«

Bilo mi je, kot bi isti hip prenehalo deževati. Ali pa bi dežne kaplje obvisle v zraku, tako kot izdihana sopara. Smrtna tišina. Konec.

Prevedla Tina Štrancar

The Primary Sense of Innocence

(excerpt from the novel)

He wanted his balcony to overlook a boulevard. It was supposed to be huge, like in Beijing, better than in Paris: a Champs-Élysées instead of the old Boyar houses with the rotten roofs and the shapeless gardens and the meandering alleys in which epidemics could break out at any time. And so on Arsenal Hill the entire Uranus quarter was razed, and the twenty-eight-year-old head architect, who had written her BA thesis on “The Urbanisation of City Wasteland,” brought her comrades the happy news that they had a free area to work with, “the size of Venice.”

“Like Venice!” a comrade or two must have sighed. “Venice!”

Bucharest’s Champs-Élysées, which had become famous, or perhaps not famous, as the Boulevard of the Victory of Socialism, may have been a little shorter than that grand allée in Paris, but it was a good eight metres broader.

It was never Nicolae Ceausescu’s lot to wave solemnly from the balcony. Instead of him, Michael Jackson did the waving, with his glittery white glove. That was three years after Ceausescu’s execution, during Michael’s *Dangerous* World Tour.

Back then nobody left the house without his *Dangerous* cassette; you’d make a show of carrying it around, like the Chinese used to do with *The Little Red Book* during Mao’s Cultural Revolution. And those who had a cassette player, like us for example, would delight in Jackson-poker: you’d fast forward the tape with a finger or a pencil and the other players had to guess what Michael was singing when you stopped winding. After everyone had ponied up, the tape would be placed in the player and whoever came closest won.

I never knew

But I was living in vain

She called my house

She said you know my name...

I had two copies of the *Dangerous* tape. I played one of them and I kept the other in a safe place, just in case the first one got chewed up. And when the CD came out my father bought me the CD too, just in case we ever bought a CD player.

When it was announced that Michael, right after landing in Bucharest, would be brought to the House of the People, I was one of the 70 000 fans that, during the pitch dark night in question, entered the concrete gorge between the rows of apartment buildings; “Via Mala” the place was called. Before us, the cliff-like wall of the planned monster-building, what could also have been a night, a starless one, behind, just badlands and wastelands. It was my first time in front of this structure I only knew from far away, from a window on Doctor Lister Street. And if it weren’t for Michael I probably never would have gone there at all.

Before the helicopters arrived with the light beams, there was only the odd cry, but later the screeching swelled: “Michaeceel, Michaeceel” and then they let down ropes from the helicopters, and everybody looked up to see whether Michael would abseil down to us through the slanting, pounding autumn rain.

“Is that him?”

“It must be him.”

But no one was there.

We sang his songs to him, a medley, now and then from the back region of the crowd a song would sweep over us like a wave, making everyone join in:

*And it doesn't seem to matter
And it doesn't seem right
'cause the will has brought
No fortune
Still I cry alone at night
Don't you judge of my composure
'cause I'm lying to myself
And the reason why she left me
Did she find in someone else?*

And another song would began and wash away the first one or bring it back, and it was a matter of betrayal and love, but mostly betrayal, and everyone sang:

*(Who is it?)
Is it a friend of mine?
(Who is it?)
Is it my brother?*

(Who is it?)

Somebody hurt my soul, now

(Who is it?)

I can't take it 'cause I'm lonely.

And as if from a void the night burst forth before us with a booming and apocalyptic fireworks around the House of the People.

"Fire!" yelled some guy, fascinated. "He's burning everything down."

And howling sirens all around.

We stood there at the foot of Arsenal Hill, that mythical congregation place of ungodly power, a steaming mass of people, soaking wet, but galvanized, blessed by the suffering force of our forefathers, elected to experience the end, the final battle, just as John prophesied in Revelation: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

"Michael, Michael," we called to our archangel.

And as the whole House of the People disappeared behind fire and smoke, someone cried, "Away with the nomenklatura!" Or maybe it just came over us, and everyone began to chant:

"Away with the nomenklatura!"

"Free-dom, Free-dom!"

And everyone stretched their arms up towards the rain, their fingers making the victory sign of the Demos that had been defeated a year earlier, but this time using the thumb and index finger, no longer forming that V-sign by using the index finger and middle finger as they did during the so-called revolution when the nomenklatura had duped us with its huge, horrible theatre.

And once the smoke had abated, washed away by the rain, we had a clear view of what had previously been the House of the People and what now appeared in blue contours – the heavenly House of the People, House of the Entire People of God!

Heal the world

Make it a better place

For you and for me

And the entire human race...

Rays of light converged around the balcony of House of the People, where a small figure stood and waved.

“Hooo!” yelled Michael into the microphone, “Hooo.”

Two giant screens lit up the night, each showing a massive Michael Jackson in a red-and-blue, golden-threaded officer’s uniform of the royal guard. History books will teach you that it was precisely the ceremonial dress of King Charles II, albeit without the Czapka with the white plume, instead with a black hat and mirrored aviator sunglasses in which all the action in the square appeared, consisting of countless little points.

“Hello, *Budapest!*” cried Michael Jackson. “I love you!”

To me it seemed as if in that moment the rain had stopped. Or the rain drops stood suspended in the air, just like the evaporated steam. Deathly silence. End.

Translated by Jason Blake



Foto © Sašo Dimoski

Jovica Ivanovski

Jovica Ivanovski se je rodil leta 1961 v Skopju v Makedoniji. Je avtor pesniških zbirk: *Зошто мене ваков цигер* (Zakaj takšna jetra zame, 1995), *Градот е полн со тебе* (Mesto je polno tebe, 1997), *Чуден некој сончев ден* (Nek čuden sončen dan, 1999), *Три напред три назад* (Tri naprej, tri nazaj, 2004), *Двоен албум* (Dvojni album, 2005) – zbirka je sestavljena iz dveh knjig: *Сладолед во недоглед* (Sladoleđ do neskončnosti) in *Во сенката на билбордот* (V senci billboarda) – *Стремеж за дремеж* (Težnja k dremežu, 2007), *Ветер и магла* (Vetar in megla, 2009), *Со сламка во уста* (S slamčico v ustih, 2011), *Киноутро* (Kinojutro, 2015) in *Морето ми е до колена* (Morje mi sega do kolen, 2016). Njegove pesmi so prevedene v več jezikov, med drugim je v angleščini izšel izbor njegovih pesmi *Open the Window and Let the City Breathe a Little* (Odpri okno in pusti mestu dihati, 2002). Ivanovski je uvrščen v več makedonskih antologij ter redno objavlja v domačih in tujih literarnih revijah. V zborniku objavljena pesem *He mi go najđov grobot* (Tvojega groba nisem našel) je izšla v zbirki *Киноутро* (Kinojutro), ostale pesmi pa v novi zbirki *Морето ми е до колена* (Morje mi sega do kolen).

Jovica Ivanovski was born in 1961 in Skopje, Macedonia. He has published the following books of poetry: *Зошто мене ваков цигер* (Why Such a Liver For Me, 1995), *Градот е полн со тебе* (The City Is Full of You, 1997), *Чуден некој сончев ден* (Some Strange Sunny Day, 1999), *Три напред три назад* (Three Forward, Three Backwards, 2004), *Двоен албум* (Double Album – a collection composed of two books: *Сладолед во недоглед* (Ice Cream for Eternity) and *Во сенката на билбордот* (In The Shadow of the Billboard) (2005) – *Стремеж за дремеж* (Siesta Thirst, 2007), *Ветер и магла* (Wind and Fog, 2009), *Со сламка во уста* (With a Straw in the Mouth, 2011), *Киноутро* (Cinemamorning, 2015) *Морето ми е до колена* (The Sea Reaches to My Knees, 2016). His poems have been translated into several languages. For example, they have been published in the English language collection *Open the Window and Let the City Breathe a Little* (2002) and featured in many anthologies of Macedonian poetry. He regularly publishes his poetry in both domestic and foreign literary magazines. This year's *Vilenica Almanac* features poems from his collection *Морето ми е до колена* (The Sea Reaches to My Knees) and the poem *He mi go najđov grobot* (*I Couldn't Find Your Grave*), which was included in the collection *Киноутро* (Cinemamorning).

Себесоветување

Барај се во другите,

опиши ги местата

на кои не си бил.

Она што не го знаш е она

за што треба да пишуваш.

Оние што не ги познаваш,

ним посвети им книга.

Секојдневието, исмевај го

секој божји ден.

Избегнувај клишеа

зашто ти си клише.

Бегај од нормалното

(иако тоа, овде и сега,

е целосно извртено).

Зацртај си ја иднината

и веднаш пречкртај ја.

Убедувај се дека не си со сите,

додека не те побијат лудите.

Напиши нешто оригинално,

што го напишале други пред векови.

Не откажувај се од потрагата

по она што не постои.

Барај се во другите за да

сфатиш дека не си ист ко нив,

но и дека не си којзнае

колку различен.

Живот во апостолки

Плажата му се плази на морето.

Обврските се одвртани пци.

Песок и жешки стапала.

Книгата се чита сама,

одново и одново.

Чадорот засаден во песокот

гордо му пркоси на ветерот.

Погледот и бескрајот,

перспективата и ти.

Кротка квечерина и

потквасена Месечина.

Газда си на својот мир,

сопственик на сегашноста.

Тивко ветре ти буричка во косата,

како на времето мајка ти

кога проверуваше

да не си фатил вошки.

Па и немаш некој голем избор

Стварноста е кога си тука.

Жив, мрдаш фигури, одиш на пазар,

гледаш вести, пиеш пиво со тие

што не мислат како тебе.

Немаш куче но шеташ приквечер,

семафорите ги знаеш напамет.

Отспротива ти е големата црква

а од сите страни си опкружен со меани.

Треба сериозно да размислиш и да

одлучиш што му е мајката.

Да му се приклониш на ѓаволот

или да испиеш едно пиво,

ево, тука со мене.

Не ти го најдов гробот

Не ти го најдов гробот
 во мермерната шума.
По погребот барав ориентири
за да се снајдам кога ќе ти
 дојдам на муабет,
но ништо не сум запаметил.
Петнаесет минути од гроб на гроб,
 чевлите отежнати од калта,
главата од имиња и ликови,
непознати и кога биле живи.
Заскитав во лавиринтот во кој
еден ден сите ќе се изгубиме
(или ќе си го најдеме местото).
Кога полани за првпат ти дојдов
на гости во новиот стан, ме пречека
на балкон и ми го фрли клучот.
Сега ништо, мртва тишина
 на безживотната улица.
Си заминав со грижа на совест
оставајќи ги свеќите и цвеќето
 на некој незнаен гроб.
Ќе ти дојдам напролет,
во некој убав сончев ден,
со шише цејмисон и две
 кутии цигари,
и ќе седам до фајронт.
Или пак, можеби гробиштата
работат како драгстор,
24 часови на ден?

Мерка да се немало

Нè изеде времето.
Што апетит ќе имаше.
Веројатно има добар метаболизам,
инаку ќе тежеше повеќе од сто кила.
Не престана да цвака и од сè сака да проба –
ме потсетува на еден мој другар.
Непребирливо и алчно,
размачкано – му капе од уста
и се брише со што стигне.
Сите ќе нè изеде,
и после само ќе ждригне
 како Генто после
триесет кебапи.

Svetovanje samemu sebi

Išči se v drugih,
opiši kraje,
 v katerih nisi bil.
Pisati moraš o stvareh,
o katerih nič ne veš.
Tistim, ki jih ne poznaš,
posveti knjigo.
Vsak božji dan
se posmehuj vsakdanjiku.
Izogibaj se klišejem,
ker si sam kliše.
Beži pred normalnim
(tudi če je tu in zdaj
to popolnoma postavljeno na glavo).
Začrtaj si prihodnost
 in jo takoj tudi prečrtaj.
Prepričaj se, da nisi čisto pri pravi,
dokler te norci ne spodbijejo.
Napiši kaj izvirnega,
kar so drugi napisali že stoletja prej.
Ne odpovej se iskanju tistega,
 kar ne obstaja.
Sebe išči v drugih,
da bi spoznal, da nisi kot oni,
kaj dosti drugačen
pa tudi ne.

Življenje v japonkah

Plaža kaže osle morju.
 Obveznosti so odvezani psi.
 Pesek in vroča stopala.
 Knjiga se vedno znova
 sama prebira.
 V pesek zapičen senčnik
 se ponosno zoperstavlja vetru.
 Pogled in neskončnost,
 razgled in ti.
 Krotek mrak in
 vzhajana luna.
 Si gospodar svojega miru,
 lastnik sedanjosti.
 Tih vetrič ti brska po lasih
 kot nekoč tvoja mati,
 ko je preverjala,
 ali si dobil uši.

Kakšne velike izbire pa ni

Resničnost je, ko si tu.
 Živ premikaš figure, hodiš na tržnico,
 gledaš novice, piješ pivo s tistimi,
 ki niso istega mnenja.
 Nimaš psa, a se proti večeru vseeno odpraviš na sprehod,
 semaforje poznaš na pamet.
 Nasproti stoji velika cerkev,
 z vseh strani pa te obkrožajo krčme.
 Resno moraš razmisliti in se
 odločiti, kaj zaboga ti je narediti,
 naj se pokloniš hudiču
 ali pa tukaj z mano
 spiješ pivo.

Tvojega groba nisem našel

V marmornem gozdu
 nisem našel tvojega groba.
Po pogrebu sem iskal orientacijske točke,
da bi se znašel, ko se spet odpravim
 k tebi na klepet,
a si nisem ničesar zapomnil.
V petnajstih minutah hoje od groba do groba
 je moje čevlje obtežilo blato,
mojo glavo pa imena in podobe,
neznane tudi za časa življenja.
Izgubil sem se v labirintu, v katerem
se bomo nekoč izgubili vsi
(ali morda našli svoje mesto).
Ko sem te predlani prvič obiskal
v novem stanovanju, si me pričakal
na balkonu in mi vrgel ključ.
Zdaj ni več ničesar, mrtva tišina na
 ulici brez življenja.
Odšel sem s slabo vestjo,
sveče in rože sem pustil
 na nekem neznanem grobu.
Spomladi se spet oglasim,
kakšnega lepega sončnega dne,
s steklenico jamesona in dvema
 zavojkoma cigaret.
Ostal bom do konca.
So morda tudi pokopališča
kot supermarketi odprta
24 ur na dan?

Če ni mere

Čas nas je požrl.
Kakšen tek je imel.
Verjetno ima dobro presnovo,
drugače bi tehtal več kot sto kilogramov.
Ni nehal žvečiti,
vse je hotel poskusiti –
spominja me na enega izmed mojih prijateljev.
Vse od kraja já, požrešno,
popacan je po obrazu – po bradi se mu cedi,
briše se z vsem, kar mu pride pod roke.
Vse nas bo pogoltnil,
potem bo samo še rignil
kot Gento
po tridesetih čevapčičih.

Prevedel Aleš Mustar

Advice to Yourself

Look for yourself in the others,
describe the places

 you've never been to.

What you don't know is what
you should write about.

To those that you don't know
you should dedicate your book.

The everyday, mock it
 every single day.

Avoid clichés,

'cause you are a cliché.

Escape the normal things

(although here and now,
it's all upside-down).

Draw your future

 and immediately cross it out.

Convince yourself that you're not all there
until the mad ones deny this.

Write something original,
something others wrote centuries ago.

Don't give up the quest
 for things that don't exist.

Look for yourself in the others so
you understand you're not like them,
but also that you're not
that much different.

Life in Flip-flops

The beach shows the sea its tongue.
The obligations are dogs unleashed.
Sand and hot feet.
The book reads itself,
 again and again.
The umbrella planted in the sand
spitefully resists the wind.
The view and the endlessness,
the perspective and you.
A meek sunset and
sourdough Moon.
You are the boss of your peace,
the owner of the present.
A quiet breeze rambles through your hair,
as your mother once did
 when she checked
if you'd got any lice.

Well, There's Not Much of a Choice

The reality is when you're here.
Alive, moving pawns, going to the market,
watching the news, drinking beer with those
 who don't think like you.
You have no dog, but you go for a walk
 in the evenings anyway,
you know the traffic lights by heart.
The big church is across the street
and you're surrounded by inns from all sides.
You need to give it a serious thought and
 decide where the rub is:
To side with the devil
or wash down a beer,
here, together with me.

I Couldn't Find Your Grave

I couldn't find your grave
 in the marble forest.
After the funeral I looked for signs
to get by when I
 come for a chat,
but I remembered nothing.
Fifteen minutes from one grave to another
 my shoes heavy with mud,
my head with names and faces,
unknown even when they were alive.
I was lost in the labyrinth where
we'll all get lost one day
(or maybe find our place there).
When I came to visit you two years ago
in your new flat, you waited
on the balcony and threw me the key.
Now there's nothing, dead silence
 on the lifeless street.
I left feeling guilty
leaving the candles and the flowers
 at an unknown grave.
I'll come in the spring,
on a nice sunny day,
with a bottle of Jamison and two
 packs of cigarettes,
and I'll sit till they close.
Or maybe the graveyards
work around the clock,
24 hours per day?

No Measure at All

Time devoured us completely.
The appetite it has!
Probably a good metabolism,
otherwise it would weigh more than hundred kilos.
It hasn't stopped chewing
 and it wants a taste of everything –
it reminds me of a friend of mine.
Not picky at all, ravenous,
all smeared – its mouth dripping,
 wiping it off with anything.
It will gobble us all,
and then give a big burp
 like Gento after
thirty pieces of little sausage.

Translated by Elizabeta Bakovska



Foto © Anna Vovchenko

Katerina Kalitko

Katerina Kalitko se je rodila leta 1982 v Vinici v Ukrajini. Diplomirala je iz političnih ved in novinarstva. V ukrajinskih literarnih revijah, časnikih in na spletu redno objavlja poezijo, kratke zgodbe, literarne kritike in prevode. Izdala je šest pesniških zbirk: *Посібник зі створення світу* (Priročnik o nastanku sveta, 1999), *Сьогоднішнє завтрашнє* (Današnji jutri, 2002), *Портретування асфальту* (Upodobitev asfalta, 2004), *Діалоги з Одисеем* (Dialogi z Odisejem, 2005), *Сезон штормів* (Sezona viharjev, 2013) in *Катівня. Виноградник. Дім* (Mučilnica. Vinograd. Dom), ki je izšla leta 2014 in bila izbrana za najboljšo ukrajinsko knjigo leta. Poleg poezije je leta 2007 izdala tudi zbirko kratkih zgodb *М.Істерія* (M(h)isterij(a), lani pa je tudi z njeno pobudo v Ukrajini zaživel prvi literarni festival kratke zgodbe Intermezzo. Kalitko je priznana prevajalka iz bosanščine, hrvaščine in srbščine, med drugim je prevedla dela Adise Bašić, Nenada Veličkovića in Miljenka Jergovića. Za prevod slednjega je leta 2014 prejela nagrado METAPHORA. Je tudi prejemnica več pisateljskih štipendij; leta 2015 je prejela pisateljsko štipendijo Srednjeevropske pobude.

Kateryna Kalytko was born in 1982 in Vinnytsia, Ukraine. She graduated in Political Science and Journalism. She regularly publishes poetry, short stories, literary criticism and translations in Ukrainian magazines, newspapers and online. She has published six collections of poetry: *Посібник зі створення світу* (Manual on the Creation of the World, 1999), *Сьогоднішнє завтрашнє* (Today's Tomorrow, 2002), *Портретування асфальту* (Portraying the Asphalt, 2004), *Діалоги з Одисеем* (Dialogues with Odysseus, 2005), *Сезон штормів* (Season of Storms, 2013) and *Катівня. Виноградник. Дім* (Torture Chamber. Vineyard. Home, 2014), which was chosen as the Best Ukrainian Book of the Year in 2014. In addition to poetry, she also published a collection of prose titled *М.Істерія* (M(h)ysteri(a) in 2007. She is known as the initiator of Intermezzo – the first Ukrainian short story festival, which was launched last year. Kalitko is an acclaimed translator from Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian, having translated works by authors such as Adisa Bašić, Nenad Veličković and Miljenko Jergović. She received the METAPHORA award in 2014 for translation of Jergović's works. She has been the recipient of many literary fellowships, among them the Central European Initiative Fellowship for Writers in Residence in 2015.

Звідки прийшов я...

звідки прийшов я з очима іншого кольору
звідки такий що мати в мені не впізнала рідного
звідки ці інші люди в моїй домівці
звідки залізна юшка в моїй тарілці
звідки пам'ять руки що до заліза тягнеться
звідки трави що їхні смаки у роті цвітуть
звідки в мого собаки страх моєї присутності
звідки зіниця розширена в кожній свічці
звідки між зір даремно розсипане борошно
звідки досі плачуть усі невидимі діти
звідки прийшов я відповідаю з дороги
звідки нізвідки пройшов собі межі сльозинами
звідки сльози відповідаю зі спогаду
звідки спогад якщо не згадаю повернення
з поля із лісу із трясовини болотяної
звідки ваш переляк і чому відступаєте
звідки злодій що викрав у мене ім'я моє
і заховав у непророслій зернині
і закопав її у вовчому лузі
звідки у небі дірка розміром з Бога.

* * *

Місто вибруньковується із вокзалу, як бронха.
Ближче до вечора морщаться пучки в теплі.
Тріє царі везуть із собою трохи
злата мовчання, і смирну пахких дієслів,
і трохи ладану спокою.
Ти ще гарна.
Лискучим шаром людей укриває сіль.
Кометячий хвіст нетутешній, як ятаган,
чи підпис іншою мовою, коли перепис осіб,
які прибули перебути. Місяць такий:
накази множаться, як лепротичні рани,
знаходячи виконавців.
Зронивши з руки кульки,
торговка насінням кланяється маленькому каравану,
а той не спиняється.
Біла вечірня нетля
на шибці від жовтня. Тоне кімната в люстрі.
Зі справжнього ці
голодні вітри над планетою.
І кожній втечі хтось виходить назустріч.

Od kod sem ...

od kod sem prišel z očmi druge barve
od kod sem da ni niti mati v meni prepoznala lastnega otroka
od kod so ti tuji ljudje v mojem domu
od kod je železna juha v mojem krožniku
od kod spomin roke ki sega po okovih
od kod so zeli katerih okusi v ustih cvetijo
od kod sem da se moj pes boji moje prisotnosti
od kod zenica ki se razširi ob vsaki sveči
od kod je moka ki je tako potratno razsuta med zvezdami
od kod prihaja jok nevidnih otrok
od kod sem prišel odgovarjam da s poti
od kod od nikoder sem se med solzami vrnil k sebi
od kod solze odgovarjam iz spominov
od kod je spomin če se ne spomnim vračanja
s polja iz gozda s požirajočih močvirij
od kod vaša preplašenost in zakaj se umikate
od kod je zlodej ki mi je ukradel ime
in ga skril v neskajenem zrnu
in ga zakopal v volčjem logu
od kod je na nebu luknja velika kot Bog.

Silhuete v osvetljenih oknih

Službeno stanovanje imata, okna
gledajo na dvorišče zapora,
imata tudi bolnega otroka in vse, kar imajo tudi drugi.
Pozno zvečer, ko deček že spi in je zadnja posoda pomita,
ko mesto zamre v tihi sladkorni lepoti,
ko se v skledi glasno premetavata še živi ribi
in nekje pri vhodu joče neumen slep mačji mladič,
ona sedi in premišljuje: od tod se njen mož
vsako jutro spusti iz nebes v pekel.
Tam so tisti umazani zaporniki, on pa ima sij,
ki je tako velik, da ga je včasih strašljivo božati po glavi,
poleti bo treba na deželo, mali
je letos tako slaboten,
čevlje v popravilo. Skuhati boršč ...
On pa
nekomu izbija zobe, ko ona že skoraj spi,
po koncu izmene s sodelavcem utrujen požira gorilko
in pravi: nočem domov. K tisti neumni babi
in mali je spet bolan. Pekel je, skratka, doma.

* * *

Mesto brsti iz železniške postaje kot bronhij.
Proti večeru pa se krči kot popki na toploti.
Trije cesarji vozijo s seboj malce
zlatega molčanja in po miri dišeče glagole
in nekoliko kadila za mir.
Še vedno si lepa.
S svetlečo skorjo sol prekriva ljudi.
Rep kometa ni iz naših krajev, kot jatagan
ali podpis v tujem jeziku, kot pri popisu oseb,
ki so prispele, da bi ostale.
Tak je ta mesec:
ukazi se množijo kot razjede pri gobavosti
in vedno najdejo izpolnitelje.
Prodajalka sončničnih semen je spustila
iz rok svoje zavitke in se priklanja majhni karavani,
a ta se ne ustavlja.
Bela nočna vešča
na oktobrskem okenskem steklu. Soba tone v lestencu.
Lačni vetrovi nad planetom
so od tu in zdaj.
Vsakomur, kdor zbeži, bo nekdo prišel naproti.

Šesti april

Ne spiš samo s tem moškim,
 ampak z vsem njegovim življenjem.
 Včasih vaju moti med spanjem ali že samo pri objemanju.
 Povejmo, pogosto pride vojna in leže med vaju
 kot otrok,
 ki ga je strah ostati sam v temni sosednji sobi.

Vojna, pravi on, ima v svojem arzenalu veliko števil:
 dva sorodnika – eno vrečo s kostmi,
 tisoč tristo petindevetdeset dni
 obleganja mesta,
 tri pakete s humanitarno pomočjo: olje, konzerve, mleko v prahu,
 tri koščke mila.
 Po tebe pridejo štirje, vsi imajo orožje
 na ramenih.
 Pokažejo ti seznam, skozi nočno mesto
 te vodijo v konvoju. Med hojo dvakrat
 slišiš granate, ki ti letijo visoko nad glavo.
 Petkrat te pripeljejo iz barake pod nočni nalive
 k odprti jami, v kateri jih že gnije triinštirideset,
 in vsakič pomisliš: zdaj bom končno umrl
 in priznal Bogu – to je bila samo slaba šala.
 Oni pa vas vse porinejo v blato z obrazom navzdol
 in vam tiščijo puškino cev v tilnik, tako morate dolgo ležati.
 Od tedaj ne maram več sanjati –
 veš, vsi ti spomini niso najbolj človeški,
 če bežiš skozi gozd in ti streljajo
 v hrbet,
 ali imaš v stegnu kroglo, na obrazu pa še vedno čutiš tisto blato.
 Tedaj ti v prsih z bolečino zraste in utripa veliko drevo brez listov,
 in ti ne odgovarjaš, le kaj bi lahko odgovorila na to.
 In mu brišeš, brišeš, brišeš z obraza vse tisto blato,
 celo v sanjah.
 In celo na daljavo.

Prevedla Andreja Kalc

Where Did I Come From...

Where did I come from that my eyes changed colour
Where did I come from that my mother didn't recognize
me as her own child
Where are these strange people in my house from
Where is this iron stew on my plate from
Where is this memory of my arm searching for iron from
Where is this grass I can taste in my mouth from
Where did I come from that my dog fears me
Where are the dilated pupils of every candle from
Where is the flour from that is scattered among stars – such a waste!
Where are these invisible children from crying somewhere near
Where did I come from – I answer I came from the road
Where from nowhere I just leaked between tears
Where are the tears from I answer from my memory
Where is my memory from if I don't remember coming home
From the field from the forest from the swallowing bog
Where is your fear from and why are you stepping back
Where is this fiend from, he who has stolen my name
And hid it among grain unsprouted
And buried it in the wolves' ravine
Where is this God-sized hole in the sky from.

Silhouettes in the Lit Windows

They have a rented flat looking on to the prison yard
And an ill child and all that other couples have.
Late in the evening when the boy is in his bed
And the last dishes are washed,
And the whole town is dozing in silent sugared beauty,
And two live fish are splashing noisily in the washbasin
And a stupid blind kitten is crying somewhere in the staircase,
She sits down and thinks – here, her husband
Leaves Paradise every morning and descends into Hell.
And there all those dirty jail birds are and he has such a nimbus
Shining that she is sometimes even afraid to pat his hair,
It would be nice to go to the country for summer, the kid
 isn't well this year,
And the shoes need repairing and I have to cook soup...
And he,
While she falls asleep, is breaking somebody's teeth
Later with his companion he drinks vodka wearily
And says – I don't want to go home
There is this stupid woman
And the kid is ill again. In short, there is hell at home.

* * *

The town sprouts from the railway station like bronchial tubes.
Closer to evening, buds shrink in the warmth.
Three kings carry with them
Some gold of silence, and the myrrh of odorous verbs,
And a little incense of rest.
You are still beautiful.
Salt covers people in a glittering coating.
A comet tail is as inconsolable as a yataghan,
Or the signature in a strange language, in the census count,
Of people who came here to stay.
Such a month:
When edicts multiply like leper's ulcers
Finding their executors.
Dropping her little bundles,
A seller of sunflower seeds bows to the little caravan,
Which does not stop.
A white night moth
Has been on the window frame since October.
The room drowns in the mirror.
These hungry winds above the planet
blow from the present.
And every person going out to a meeting will be met by somebody.

Sixth of April

You sleep not only with this man,
But with his whole life,
And sometimes it prevents both of you from sleeping or even hugging.
For example, often the war comes and rests between you
 like a child
Who is afraid to be left alone in the other room.

He says – the war has a lot of numbers in its arsenal:
Two relations – a sack of bones,
One thousand three hundred and ninety-five days of
 siege,
Three packs of humanitarian aid: butter, tins, dried milk,
Three small pieces of soap.
Four men that come for you – and every one has a gun
 on a shoulder belt.
They show you a list and lead you under guard
Across the sleeping town. Twice on the way
You hear artillery shells hissing somewhere high in the night sky.
Five times you are taken out from a barrack in the night storm
To the open pit where already three and forty are rotting,
And every time you think – I will finally die this time
I will see God and tell Him – it was a bad joke.
And they just throw you face down in the mud
And poke a barrel against the back of your head
And you have to lie like this for a long time.
Since that time I don't like to dream, he says –
For all those memories, you know, they are not really for human beings,
When you are running through the forest and they shoot you
 in the back,
Or when you get a bullet in your thigh and you still feel
 this mud on your face.
And the huge leafless tree of pain grows up from your chest,
And you don't know what to say because there is nothing to say to this.
And you sweep away, sweep away this mud from his face,
Even when dozing,
Even when he is somewhere else.

Translated by Maria Galina



Foto © Mare Lipuš

Cvetka Lipuš

Cvetka Lipuš se je rodila leta 1966 v Železni Kapli v Avstriji. Na Univerzi v Celovcu je končala študij primerjalne književnosti in slavistike, na Univerzi v Pittsburghu pa študij bibliotekarstva in informacijskih ved. Slovenska pesnica iz Avstrije je doslej objavila sedem pesniških zbirk, med njimi: *Pragovi dneva* (1989), *Spregeatev milosti* (2003), *Obleganje sreče* (2008), ki je bila nominirana za Veronikino nagrado, *Pojdimo vezat kosti* (2008) in *Kaj smo, ko smo* (2015), ki je bila prav tako nominirana za Veronikino nagrado in za katero je prejela nagrado Prešernovega sklada (2016). V zadnji zbirki so objavljene tudi pesmi, izbrane za letošnji zbornik *Vilenica*. Poezija Cvetke Lipuš je prevedena v mnoge tuje jezike in objavljena v slovenskih, nemških in ameriških revijah ter antologijah. Lipuševa živi in ustvarja v Salzburgu.

Cvetka Lipuš was born in 1966 in Bad Eisenkappel, Austria. She graduated in Comparative Literature and Slavic Studies from the University of Klagenfurt and obtained a degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a Slovenian poet who lives in Austria and writes in Slovene. Lipuš has published seven books of poetry, among them: *Pragovi dneva* (Barriers of Day, 1989), *Spregeatev milosti* (Conjugation of Mercy, 2003), *Obleganje sreče* (The Siege of Happiness, 2008), which was short-listed for the Veronika Prize, *Pojdimo vezat kosti* (Let's Bind Bones, 2008), and *Kaj smo, ko smo* (What Are We, When We Are, 2015), which was also short-listed for the Veronika Prize and for which she received the Prešeren Foundation Award (2016). Her latest collection also features poems selected for this year's *Vilenica Almanac*. The poetry of Cvetka Lipuš has been translated into many languages and has also been featured in various Slovenian, German and American magazines and anthologies. She lives and works in Salzburg.

Gibalo

Babici v onstranstvu,
ena pepelnato mlada,
druga pokrita s starostnimi
pegami in prstjo,
a bosta vedeli za nitke,
ki jih pletejo v novo zgodbo?
Prva, junakinja brez besed,
brez telesa, prgišče prahu
na dnu jezera. Druga,
protagonistka z očmi pelargonije,
s prsti, v katerih domujeta
delo in sad. Skupaj sta poved,
ki jo nadaljujemo v trajnost,
os, okrog katere se vrtimo v število.
Ko bo gravitacija popustila,
ko bomo seštevke podedovanega
in pridobljenega, ko nas bo
odneslo na vse strani,
a bosta kdaj potegnili nit,
sparali svoj delež?

Kaj bi

Moj oče bi bil rad španski kralj,
mama Humphrey Bogart. Stari oče
bi bil chef de cuisine na ruski fronti,
namesto prekuhane žagovine in snežnega kruha
govedino stroganov za vse.
Prababica je trdno držala skupaj vogale hiše,
da je skregana žlahta ne bi spravila na boben.
Ko je v časopisu ugledala podobo zadnje
havajske princeske, je sanjala o čudovitem
klobuku prestolonaslednice, o otokih,
ki bi jih ona znala držati skupaj;
nje Američani ne bi spravili ob prestol.
Stari stric, preden se je armada njegovih
možganov obrnila proti njemu in mu
požgala mesta in vasi, bi bil Gagarin.
Ni ga veselilo v vesolje, a še manj domov.
Babica, ki si je želela biti rojena v znamenju cveta,
po smrti ureja rodbinske grobove na
svojem pokopališču – in kaj boš ti,
ko končaš šolo sanj?

Nespečnost

Samo za hip zaprem oči in
Boston se prevrne v svoj pristan.
Osemdeseta leta me obiščejo v neonskih
barvah, me zvijejo v cigareto.
Portoriko se naveliča Karibov.
Potone kakor podmornica in se
pojavi sredi Mediterana. Presenečene
ladje vabi s temnim rumom v postoj.
Na palubnih ležalnikih me čakajo
moji dragi soproge in soprogi.
Gremo se človek ne jezi se,
poraženec potaplja nože.
Samo za hip zaprem oči in
šumevci se izvijajo iz besed,
najamejo pettisočpeto nadstropje
Babilonskega stolpa in zgubijo sozvočje.
Šesta soproga se preseli v Panteon,
vzame s sabo vso srebrnino, celo poročni
rogaški kristal za božansko služinčad.
Haiti pretrese Guantanamo do kosti.
Tirolska osvoji Italijo, odredi obvezno
opoldansko jodlanje z vsakega kampanila.
Sicilija skoplje tihotapski rov do Soha.
Šesta soproga se vrne praznih rok.
Samo za hip zaprem oči
in povšter se loti lobanje:
a bo že končno mir?
Jupiter povabi izvidniške satelite
na medplanetarno zasedanje.
Za zaprtimi vrati radovednežem grozi
z medgalaktično vojno. Antarktiko
bodo stopili kot sladoled na plaži,
nebotičniki, svetilniki sredi oceana.
Peti soprog odpelje prvo soprogo
v Soho na sicilijanske sladke zvitke.
Sinoda zdravnikov mi meri tlak,
pravi, naj se samo sprostim.
Samo za hip zaprem oči

in delnice padejo na borzah.
Aligator v floridskem močvirju
pohrusta nogo turista, jo izloči
v obliki kavbojskega škornja
številka osemintrideset.
Sosedovo prekrasno mačko na
slemenu strehe ljubkuje mesec, da
vsi moji soprogi kukajo izza zavese
in si razneženo brišejo solze.
Atlantik položi na Adrijino dlan
naftno ploščad in jo prosi za roko.
Odprem oči in naštete ovce se
poženejo čez plot, se napasejo
solate v vrtu najljubše soproge,
ki se jezi, name se ni zanesti,
in se izseli v Babilonski stolp
s pogledom na razjarjene jezike.
Amsterdam zajame potovalna
mrzlica, odpluje na izlet v Rotterdam.
Spotoma si ogleda vrtove Keukenhof.
Ovce se lotijo tulipanov in narcis.
Nizozemska ponudi Brooklynu
zapuščeno zemljišče. Modrooki
soprog, lastnik rumenega taksija,
se razočaran vrne domov.
Urina kazalca obležita v ovinku
pol pete. Ponovno zaprem oči
in levo zrklo vpraša desno:
A končno že spiš?

Poglej nas, kako lebdimo

1

Ko se priselimo, začnemo hoditi na koncerte.
Kot begunci, ki jih je zaneslo v neznani kraj,
sledimo dirigentu skozi metež zvoka,
dokler klavirske tipke ne potrkaajo na razglašena srca.
Sledimo vodiču, lovcu na podgane, ki vleče
za sabo krdelo obiskovalcev skozi cerkve,
palače, mimo kipov generalov, ki jim golobi
urejajo obrvi. Bronaste jezdece zasrbi pod podplati,
ko jih obkrožijo tuji naglasi. Prišleki sledimo
drobtinam dobrodošlic vse do omizja domačinov.
Postrežejo nam z letnicami na hišnih pročeljih,
s šepetom zakristij, z okruški trdnjavskega zidu,
poškropljeni s soljo kakor preste na šanku,
da se pijani od tuje zgodovine vračamo domov.

2

Snubimo pokrajino, ki nam ponudi zeleno roko
v pozdrav, šele kasneje, po rokovanju,
zaslutimo reko, vodne žile. V toplih žepih kostanj
navaja prste na jesen, ki nas bo stisnila v precep,
da bodo obrazi obledeli, da bodo v bunde
zabubljene postave čudežne barvaste pege na sivkasto
rjavem akvarelu. Ko smo na samem, smuknemo
v preteklost kot v domačo haljo. Kako mehko se nam
prižema. V zlatem siju vzide nad nami, ko v jutranji tišini
srebamo kavo in zaspani strmimo v zbegane stole,
ki previdno postavljajo noge na nova tla.

3

Izza zavese škilimo na oder mesta, ki se pripravlja na delovni dan. Širi se šum pločevinaste gosenice, ki iz predmestja leze v blišč sredine, kjer si baročni vrt popravlja pristriženo pričesko v ogledalu tankega ledu, nared za kamere nešteti gostov, ki še dremajo po hotelskih sobah. V tujih jezikih sanjajo o rogljičkih, ki jih vitezi mečejo iz trdnjavskega zida v orkestrsko jamo. Ko vstopimo v ulični prizor, sprejmemo vse, kar nam pade v naročje – zastavice s konic dežnikov azijskih vodičev, slepi pogled putta, hitro hojo podeželske noše –, in nastavimo obraz hladnemu zraku, da se zasolžijo oči in se nad reko prikaže mavrica golobov, not in belih lasulj.

Perpetuum Mobile

Both grandmothers in the beyond,
one ashen young
the other covered with
age spots and earth:
will they know about the threads
that knit them into a new story?
The first, a heroine without words,
without a body, a handful of dust
on the bottom of a lake. The other,
a protagonist with the eyes of a geranium,
with fingers in which reside work and fruit.
Together they are the confession
that we extend into permanence,
the axis around which we spin into a number.
When gravity slackens off,
when we are the sum of what is inherited
and what has been acquired, when we are
carried away in all directions,
will those two ever pull the thread,
unpick what they share?

What If

My father would like to have been the Spanish king,
Mom – Humphrey Bogart. Grandfather would like
to have been the chef de cuisine on the Russian front,
instead of cooked sawdust and snow bread
beef stroganoff for everybody.

Great-granma held the four corners of the house together,
so that her quarrelsome relatives wouldn't do her in.

When she saw a picture of the last Hawaiian princess
in the newspaper, she dreamt about the gorgeous hat
of the heir to the throne, about the islands
which she would know how to hold together;
the Americans would not have dethroned her.

My great uncle, before the army of his brain
turned against him and burned down his
towns and villages, wanted to be Gagarin.

He was not happy going into space, even less going home.

Granma, who wished she had been born
under the sign of the flower,
after her death arranges her family graves in
her cemetery – and what would you like to be
when you graduate from the school of dreams?

Sleeplessness

Just for a moment I shut my eyes and
Boston tumbles into its harbor.
The eighties come to visit me in neon
colors and roll me into a cigarette.
Puerto Rico is tired of the Caribbean.
It sinks like a submarine and surfaces
in the middle of the Mediterranean. With dark rum
it invites the surprised ships to anchor.
Waiting for me on deck chairs are
my dear wives and husbands.
We play the man-don't-get-mad game,
the one who loses sinks his knives.
Just for a moment I shut my eyes and
sibilant consonants unscrew themselves from words,
they rent the five thousand fifth floor of the
Tower of Babel and they lose their harmony.
The sixth wife moves into the Pantheon, taking
with her all the silverware, even the wedding crystal
from Rogaška Slatina for the gods' domestic staff.
Haiti shakes Guantanamo to the bones.
The Tyrol takes possession of Italy, decrees mandatory
noontime yodeling from every campanile.
Sicily digs a smuggling tunnel to Soho.
The sixth wife returns empty-handed.
Just for a moment I shut my eyes and
the pillow gets down to business with my cranium:
will there be peace, finally?
Jupiter invites the reconnaissance satellites
for an interplanetary conference.
Behind closed doors he threatens the snoopers
with an intergalactic war. They will melt the
Antarctic like ice-creams at the beach,
skyscrapers, light-houses in the middle of the ocean.
The fifth husband makes off with the first wife
to Soho for Sicilian sweet rolls.
A synod of doctors measures my blood pressure,
they tell me I should just relax.
Just for a moment I shut my eyes and

shares fall on stock exchanges.

An alligator in the Florida swamps munches
the foot of a tourist and excretes it
in the shape of a cowboy boot,
size thirty-eight.

The neighbors' splendid cat on the
gable of the roof is kissed by the moon, so that
all my spouses peek from behind the curtain
and emotionally wipe away their tears.

The Atlantic places an oil rig on the palm
of the Adriatic and asks for her hand.

I open my eyes and the sheep I have counted
dash away over the fence, graze on
the salad in my favorite wife's garden,
who gets angry, I am not to be trusted,
and moves away to the Tower of Babel
with a view of the wrathful languages.

Amsterdam catches the travel fever,
swims away on an excursion to Rotterdam.

En route it looks round the Keukenhof Gardens.

The sheep start on the tulips and daffodils.

The Netherlands make an offer of their
deserted property to Brooklyn. The blue-eyed
husband who owns a yellow taxi
comes back home disappointed.

The hands on the clock stay down in the corner
of half past five. Once again I shut my eyes
and the left eyeball asks the right:

Are you asleep, finally?

Watch Us Float

1

When we move here we begin going to concerts.
Like refugees who landed up in an unknown place,
we follow the conductor through a blizzard of sound
until the notes on the piano knock on our muted hearts.
We follow the leader, the pied piper, who drags after
him a troop of visitors through churches, palaces, past statues
of generals who are having their eyebrows tidied up
by pigeons. The soles of the feet of bronze horsemen itch
when surrounded by strange accents. We new arrivals follow
the crumbs of welcomes right up to tablefuls of locals.
They serve us with the years marked on housefronts,
with the whisper of vestries, with chips from a castle wall,
sprinkled with salt like pretzels on a bar,
so we return home drunk with alien history.

2

We woo the land which offers us its green hand in greeting,
only later, after we shake hands, are we aware of the river,
the veins of water. In warm pockets a chestnut accustoms
our fingers to the fall which will squeeze us into a corner,
so that faces will fade away, so that shapes that are bundled
in parkas will be fantastic chromatic spots on the grayish
brown watercolor. When we are alone we slip off into the past
as into a bathrobe. How softly it clings to us. In a glitter
of gold it rises above us, as in the morning quiet we sip
our coffee and half asleep stare at the puzzled chairs
which are carefully placing their legs on the new floor.

3

From behind the curtain we peek at the stage of the city preparing for the work day. The noise of a tin caterpillar resounds, creeping from the suburbs into the glare of the center, where a baroque garden fixes its clipped haircut in a mirror of thin ice, ready for the cameras of countless guests who are still dozing in hotel rooms.

In foreign languages they dream about croissants being thrown by knights from the castle wall into the orchestra pit. When we step into the street scene we accept everything that falls into our arms – the flags on the tips of umbrellas from Asian tourist guidebooks, the blind stare of a putto, the fast walk of a rural costume –, and expose our face to the cold air, so our eyes start to weep and above the river appears a rainbow of doves, notes and white periwigs.

Translated by Tom Priestly



Foto © Bruna Ginanni

Valerio Magrelli

Valerio Magrelli se je rodil leta 1957 v Rimu v Italiji. Je pesnik, prozaist, esejist, prevajalec iz francoščine (Mallarmé, Valéry, Verlaine, Jarry) in profesor za francosko književnost na Univerzi v Cassinu. Izdal je šest pesniških zbirk, med njimi *Ora serrata retinae* (1980), *Esercizi di tiptologia* (Vaje iz klicanja duhov, 1992), *Didascalie per la lettura di un giornale* (Navodila za branje časopisa, 1999), *Disturbi del sistema binario* (Motnje v binarnem sistemu, 2006) in *Il sangue amaro* (Grenka kri, 2014), iz katere so pesmi, objavljene v zborniku. Magrelli je tudi avtor štirih proznih zbirk, zadnja z naslovom *Geologia di un padre* (Geologija nekega očeta) je izšla leta 2013, in pisec priročnika za spoznavanje poezije *Che cos'è la poesia?* (Kaj je poezija?, 2005). Prejel je več pesniških nagrad, državno prevajalsko nagrado in bil odlikovan z viteškim naslovom.

Valerio Magrelli was born in 1957 in Rome, Italy. He is a poet, prose writer, essayist, translator from the French (Mallarmé, Valéry, Verlaine, Jarry) and professor of French Literature at the University of Cassino. He has published six poetry collections, among them *Ora serrata retinae* (1980), *Esercizi di tiptologia* (Typology Exercises, 1992), *Didascalie per la lettura di un giornale* (Instructions on How to Read a Newspaper and Other Poems, 1999), *Disturbi del sistema binario* (Disturbance in the Binary System, 2006) and *Il sangue amaro* (Bitter Blood, 2014), which features selected poems included in this year's *Vilenica Almanac*. He has also published four books of prose, the most recent of which, *Geologia di un padre* (Geology of Some Father), was published in 2013, and a manual on poetry titled *Che cos'è la poesia?* (What Is Poetry?, 2005). He is the recipient of many awards for poetry and the national award for translation. He has also been decorated with a knighthood.

Sette poesie

I.

Mimicry

Perché nel pappagallo
voce e colore sono tanto legati?
C'è davvero bisogno di penne
così sgargianti,
per imitare l'uomo?
Forse l'arcobaleno del piumaggio,
Stefano, serve a nascondere
la lama di una lingua prodigiosa,
come un coltello nel bastone animato,
se è vero che il linguaggio
ha innanzitutto lo scopo di nascondere.

II.

Mi lavo i denti in bagno.
Ho un bagno.
Ho i denti.
Ho una figlia che canta
di là dalla parete.
Ho una figlia che ha voglia di cantare
e canta.
Può bastare.

III.***Suites inglesi***

A Roland Barthes, maestro di solfeggio

Ero andato a incontrarlo da studente
per una tesi, e invece chiacchierammo
solo degli spartiti che portavo con me.
Suonava al piano Bach e la corrente
di quel “ruscello” lo sospinse via
fra mulinelli e anse.
A che serve suonare?

Un'obbedienza cieca,
un'arte marziale: l'ascesi,
e in fondo il suono che si leva uguale,
il Sempre-uguale,
nell'ostinata speranza,
se non di un lenimento,
di un mite risarcimento musicale.

IV.***Tombeau de Totò***

Totò diventa cieco, da vecchio.

Tutto quell'agitarsi disossato
per finire nel buio.

Un muoversi a tentoni,
un zigzag nelle tenebre.

Ma è vero anche il contrario:

Totò diventa vecchio, da cieco.

Me lo ricordo ancora, sotto casa,
che traversa la strada a un funerale,
tra due ali di folla impazzita.

E lui stava al gioco, sconnesso, veniva avanti a scatti,
senza vedere nulla – solo ora capisco!

Cieco, vecchio e meccanico,
ma come caricato dalla molla d'acciaio del dialetto.

Finché, perso lo sguardo, non perde anche la lingua.
Nei suoi ultimi film, non potendo seguire le battute,
viene doppiato. Questa la leggenda:
da cieco che era, adesso è diventato muto
nella pellicola, mentre un'altra voce
sostituisce la sua.

Totofonia blasfema, alle soglie dell'ombra.

Deposta la visione, deposta la parola,
il corpo pinzillacchero discende nella Tomba.

V.

Sonata, che vuoi da me?
Bernard de Fontenelle

Musica, musica, che vuoi da me?
Che corpo sta formandosi
lungo la tua catena di molecole?
Che traccia sto seguendo mentre vado
dietro le note come dietro briciole
lasciate da qualcuno per ritornare a casa?
A quale casa mi fai ritornare?

VI.

Invettiva sotto una tomba etrusca

Latino mortale...
Apollinaire

Adesso parleranno tutti uguale,
tutti la stessa lingua che ci ha tolto la nostra.
Hanno cacciato l'alfabeto tra i campi
braccandolo come un fuggiasco, come un ladro,
l'alfabeto dei padri.

Nessuno ci capirà, e nemmeno tra noi
impiegheremo più le vecchie parole,
corrose, diroccate mura delle nostre fortezze.
Ci hanno lasciato soltanto
le tombe, l'estremo ridosso.

Perciò parlo da qui,
voce reclusa nel buio
tra forme colorate, ma immobili per sempre
come l'ultimo alito
della nostra pronuncia.

VII.***Rumore, fa' silenzio!***

C'è gente che trova figure
nascoste nella carta da parati
o nelle nuvole.
A me succede lo stesso coi rumori.

Per essere più esatti, ho un vecchio phon
che appena si accende comincia a vibrare
e man mano
emette un lamento profondo.
E' l'elica difettosa, o i cuscinetti a sfera,
non ne ho idea,
ma so che inizia a intonare una trenodia,
o meglio, a sussurrarla sottovoce.
Prima si avvertono solo suoni indistinti,
una folla che fugge, moto che si avvicinano,
ma facendo attenzione
appaiono via via urla, richiami.

Io mi concentro; una sera, addirittura,
sono arrivato a bruciarmi, tale è lo sforzo
per afferrare il groviglio, il nodo acustico
dell'asciugacapelli.
Perché il suo sferragliare non resta sempre uguale:
più dura, più si sciolgono gli intrecci
del fragore, le voci si distinguono.
Sento dialetti slavi, minacce, spesso spari:
un giorno sono rimasto ad ascoltarlo quasi dieci minuti
per seguire le fasi di un rastrellamento
in un lontano villaggio dei Balcani.

A volte ne esce uno squillo familiare,
credo che sia il telefono, spengo,
vado a rispondere,
ma non c'è mai nessuno: quei segnali,
si vede che provengono da un'altra parte,
sempre.
Se qualcuno ti chiama, non ci credere,
sarà un miraggio uditivo, un'impressione.

La verità è diversa:
mentre mi punto alla tempia quell'attrezzo
che sembra una pistola,
viene fuori il racconto di storie terribili,
fucilazioni, il pianto di bambini.
E' come una confessione non richiesta,
una registrazione spedita per errore.
Che c'entro, io, con tutto questo sangue,
io che mi voglio solo asciugare la testa?
Ormai ci penso due volte, prima di adoperarlo,
prima di sprofondare in quell'orrore
e assistere impotente a certe scene.
Meglio bagnato, allora.
Mi verrà il torcicollo? poco male.

Sedem pesmi

I.

Mimicry

Zakaj sta pri papagaju
glas in barva tako povezana?
Res potrebuje
tako vpadljiva peresa
za posnemanje človeka?
Morda je namen mavričnega perja,
Stefano, da skriva
rezilo čudežne govorice
kakor bodalo v votli palici,
če drži, da je namen jezika
predvsem ta, da prikriva.

II.

Umivam si zobe v kopalnici.
Imam kopalnico.
Imam zobe.
Imam hčerko, ki poje
onstran stene.
Imam hčerko, ki si želi peti
in poje.
To je čisto dovolj.

III.***Angleške suite***

Rolandu Barthesu, mojstru solfeggia

Kot študent sem ga obiskal
zaradi diplomske naloge, pa sva se zaklepetala
samo o partiturah, ki sem jih imel s sabo.
Na klavir je igral Bacha in tok
tega »potoka« ga je odnesel proč
med vrtince in okljuke.
Čemú igrati?

Slepa pokorščina,
bojna veščina: askeza,
na koncu pa zvok, ki se dvigne enako,
Vselej-enakost,
v trdovratnem upanju,
če ne na olajšanje,
pa na blago glasbeno poplačilo.

IV.***Tombeau de Totò***

Na starost je Totò oslepel.
Vsa tista prožna gibčnost,
da je končal v temi.
Tipajoče premikanje,
cikcakanje v mraku.
Res pa je tudi obratno:
Totò kot slepec je ostarel.

Še se ga spominjam, pred svojim domom,
kako gre mimo pogreba,
med kriloma ponorele množice.
In on je sprejel igro, razrahljan, bližal se je v trzljajih,
ne da bi sploh kaj videl – šele zdaj razumem!
Slep, star in mehaničen,
vendar kot napet na jekleni vzmeti dialekta.

Dokler ni poleg pogleda izgubil še jezika.
Ko v svojih poslednjih filmih ni mogel več slediti dialogom,
so ga sinhronizirali. Legenda pravi:
kot slepec je zdaj postal še nem
na filmu in drug glas
je nadomestil njegovega.
Blasfemična totofonija na pragu senc.

Ko je odpovedal vid, odpovedala beseda,
se je škartno telo spustilo v Grob.

V.

Sonata, kaj hočeš od mene?

Bernard de Fontenelle

Glasba, glasba, kaj hočeš od mene?

Kakšno telo se oblikuje

ob tvoji verigi molekul?

Po kateri sledi hodim, ko grem za

notami kakor za drobtinami,

ki jih je nekdo pustil, da se bo laže vrnil domov?

V kateri dom me vračaš?

VI.

Invektiva pod etruščansko grobnico

Smrtonosna latinščina ...

Apollinaire

Zdaj bojo vsi govorili enako,

vsi isti jezik, ki nam je odvzel našega.

Po poljih so lovili abecedo

in jo zasledovali kakor ubežnika, kakor tatu,

abecedo očetov.

Nihče nas ne bo razumel in tudi med sabo

ne bomo več uporabljali starih besed,

razjedenih, porušenih zidov naših trdnjav.

Pustili so nam samo

grobove, poslednje zavetje.

Zato govorim od tod,

glas, zaprt v temo

med obarvane, a za vedno negibne oblike,

kakor zadnji dih

naše izreke.

VII.***Hrup, utihni!***

So ljudje, ki odkrivajo figure,
skrite na tapetah
ali v oblakih.
Meni se enako dogaja s šumi.

Naj pojasnim: imam star fen,
ki se začne tresti, ko ga prižgem,
in polagoma
oddaja globoko stokanje.
Zaradi pokvarjenega ventilatorja ali krogličnih ležajev,
ne predstavljam si,
vem pa, da ubere žalostinko,
začne jo pritajeno šepetati.
Najprej je slišati samo nerazločne zvoke,
množico, ki beži, motorna kolesa, ki se bližajo,
če pa si pozoren,
se postopno pojavi vpitje, klicanje.

Zberem se. Nekega večera sem se celo
opekel, tako sem se trudil
okleniti štrene, akustičnega vozla
iz sušilnika za lase.
Kajti njegovo rožljanje ni zmeraj enako:
dalj ko traja, bolj se rahlja preplet
trušča in glasovi postajajo razločni.
Slišim slovanska narečja, grožnje, pogosto strele:
nekega dne sem ga poslušal skoraj deset minut
in spremljal faze vojaškega prečesavanja
daljne vasi na Balkanu.

Včasih pride iz njega domače zvonjenje,
mislim, da je telefon, ugasnem,
grem odgovoriti,
pa nikoli ni nikogar: očitno ta znamenja
pridejo od drugod,
vselej.
Če te kdo pokliče, ne verjemi,
verjetno je prisluh, vtis.

Resnica je drugačna.
Ko si v sence uperim aparat,
ki je videti kot pištola,
pride iz njega pripoved strašnih zgodb,
streljanje, otroški jok.
Kakor nepotrebna izpoved,
posnetek, poslan po pomoti.
Kaj imam jaz s tem, z vso to krvjo,
jaz, ki bi si samo rad posušil glavo?
Zdaj dvakrat premislim, preden ga uporabim,
preden se pogreznem v to grozo
in sem nemočna priča takim prizorom.
Potem sem pa že rajši moker.
Me bo zgrabil krč v vratu? Nič hudega.

Prevedla Veronika Simoniti

Seven Poems

I.

Mimicry

Why is it that in the parrot
voice and colour are so tightly bound up?
Do they really need such
extravagant plumes
to mimic man?
Perhaps the rainbow of plumage,
Stefano, serves to hide
the blade of a miraculous tongue
that's like the point of a swordstick,
if it's true that the chief use
of language is to conceal.

II.

I brush my teeth in the bathroom.
I have a bathroom.
I have teeth.
I have a daughter who sings
the other side of the wall.
I have a daughter who wants to sing
and sings.
That might just be enough.

III.***Suites inglesi***

A Roland Barthes, maestro of scales

As a student I'd gone to meet him
for my thesis, but instead we chatted
only about the musical scores I had with me.
He was playing Bach on the piano
and the current of that 'stream' carried
him away among whirlpools and eddies.
What use is playing?

A blind obedience,
a martial art: ascesis,
and in the end a sound which is made the same,
always-the-same,
in the stubborn hope,
if not of alleviation
at least of some mild, musical compensation.

IV.***At Totò's Tomb***

As an old man, Totò became blind.
All that rubber-limbed gallavanti
just to end up in the dark.
A tentative groping,
a zigzag through darkness.
But the opposite is also true.
As a blind man, he became old.

I still remember him, nearby my house,
crossing the street for a funeral,
between two wings of a madding crowd.
And he was playing along, aloof, moving jerkily,
without seeing anything – only now do I understand!
Blind, old and mechanical,
but wound up by the steel spring of his Neapolitan dialect.

At least until, having lost his sight, he could still speak.
In his last films, unable to follow the jokes,
he had to be dubbed. This is the story:
that from being blind he then went dumb
in the film, while another voice had to stand in
for his own.
Blasphemous Totò-fakery, in the shadow of the tomb.

His vision extinguished, his speech annulled,
the ragtag body's laid to rest.

V.

Sonata, what do you want from me?

Bernard de Fontenelle

Music, music, what do you want from me?
 What body is shaping itself out of
 your long chain of molecules?
 What track am I following as I
 proceed picking up those notes left like crumbs
 to guide someone home?
 What home would you have me return to?

VI.

Invective Beneath an Etruscan Tomb

Fatal Latin...

Apollinaire

Now we shall all speak the same,
 the same language, our own having been stolen.
 They've hunted down our alphabet among the fields
 cornering it like a fugitive, a thief,
 our father's alphabet.

No-one will understand us, and no-one not even
 amongst us will any longer use the old words,
 crumbling, gap-toothed wall of our fortress.
 They've only left us
 the tombs, the last stronghold.

And so I speak from here,
 a voice taking refuge in the dark
 among painted shapes, though motionless
 like the final breath
 that freights our utterance.

VII.***Noise, Be Silent!***

There are those who find
figures hidden in the wallpaper
or in clouds.
This happens to me with noises.

To be more precise, I have an old hairdryer
which, soon as it's switched on, starts to vibrate
and gradually
emits a deep keening.
Due to a defective screw, or dented ballbearings –
I couldn't say.
What I know is that it begins to chant a threnody
or, better, to whisper it in a low hum.
At first all that's heard are indistinct noises,
a fleeing crowd, an approaching commotion,
but pay attention and it gradually
turns into hollering, into howls.

I concentrate. One evening I even
burnt myself, such was the effort
to grasp the snarl-up, the acoustic knot
of the hairdryer.
Its clatter's never quite the same:
the longer it goes on, the more dense the weave
of the noise, and the voices become distinct.
I discern Slavic dialects, threats, often shots:
one day I listened for almost ten minutes
to the strafing, through its various stages,
of a distant Balkan village.

Sometimes I hear a familiar ring.
I think it's the telephone and turn the thing off,
go to answer,
but no-one's ever there – those signals,
it's clear, always come
from somewhere else.
If someone calls you, never believe it,
it's just an auditory mirage.

The truth is something else.
When I point that gadget that seems
a pistol at my temples,
what comes out is the telling of a ghastly tale,
shooting, the cries of babies.
It's like an unsolicited confession,
a recording sent by error.
What has all that blood to do with me,
me who only wants to dry my hair?
Now I think twice before using it,
before sinking into that horror,
and being present at such scenes.
Better stay soaking wet, then.
I'll suffer neck pain. Tough.

Translated by Jamie McKendrick



Foto © Vladislav Hristov

Aksinija Mihajlova

Aksinija Mihajlova se je rodila leta 1963 v Rakevu v Bolgariji. Ena osrednjih bolgarskih pesnic je tudi prevajalka, urednica in soustanoviteljica prve zasebne bolgarske literarne revije *Ах, Мария* (Oh, Marija). Izdala je šest pesniških zbirk v bolgarščini: *Тревите на съня* (Bilke sna, 1994), *Луна в празен вагон* (Luna v praznem avtomobilu, 2004), *Три сезона* (Trije letni časi, 2005), *Най-ниската част на небето* (Spodnja plast neba, 2008), *Разкопчаване на тялото* (Odpenjanje telesa, 2011), za katero je prejela nagrado za poezijo Hrista Foteva in nagrado za književnost Miloša Ziapkova, ter *Смяна на огледалата* (Zamenjava ogledal, 2015), ki je bila odlikovana z nagrado Ivana Nikolova za najboljšo bolgarsko pesniško zbirko. V francoščini pa je izšla njena pesniška zbirka *Ciel à perdre* (Nebo za izgubo, 2014), za katero je prejela pomembno francosko pesniško nagrado Prix Guillaume Apollinaire, ki je le redko podeljena tujim avtorjem. Njene pesmi so bile prevedene v več jezikov, sama pa je prevedla več kot trideset literarnih del. V zborniku objavljene pesmi so iz zbirk *Най-ниската част на небето* (Spodnja plast neba), *Разкопчаване на тялото* (Odpenjanje telesa) in *Смяна на огледалата* (Zamenjava ogledal).

Aksinia Mihaylova was born in 1963 in Rakevo, Bulgaria. She is a poet, translator, editor and one of the co-founders of *Ах, Мария* (Oh, Maria), the first private literary magazine in Bulgaria. She has published six collections of poetry in Bulgarian: *Тревите на съня* (The Grasses of a Dream, 1994), *Луна в празен вагон* (A Moon in an Empty Car, 2004), *Три сезона* (Three Seasons, 2005), *Най-ниската част на небето* (The Lowest Layer of the Sky, 2008), *Разкопчаване на тялото* (Unbuttoning the Body, 2011), for which she received the Hristo Fotev Award for Poetry and the Milosh Ziapkov Award for Literature, and *Смяна на огледалата* (Changing Mirrors, 2015), for which she received the Ivan Nikolov Prize for the Best Bulgarian Poetry Collection. She also published a collection of poetry in French titled *Ciel à perdre* (A Sky to Lose, 2014), for which she received the prestigious French poetry prize Prix Guillaume Apollinaire, an award rarely bestowed on foreign poets. Her poems have been translated into several languages, while she herself has translated over thirty literary works. This year's *Vilenica Almanac* features poems from the collections *Най-ниската част на небето* (The Lowest Layer of the Sky), *Разкопчаване на тялото* (Unbuttoning the Body) and *Смяна на огледалата* (Changing Mirrors).

Пътят на света

Откъде се взе този сняг в Сараево в средата на май?
 Изглежда времето придобива лошите навици на хората.
 Нещата се повтарят, говорят мъжете в кръчмата.
 Балканите са набъбнала вена,
 която Европа разрязва през няколко десетилетия,
 за да пречисти застаряващата си кръв.
 Най-важните неща започват от пазара,
 в началото и края на века все на един разбунен пазар.
 Също като пролетта, която винаги идва в петък
 и избира кръчмата с кръгли маси,
 където смисълът на всяка премълчана дума
 е видим отвсякъде,
 също като невинните ни ръце
 в средата на масата,
 закрилящи пъпа на света.

Джаз

Също като споделените градове,
 недостижими вече,
 които зазиждаме
 един по един в стиховете си,
 черквата влиза на части
 през квадратните прозорци на кафенето:
 първо помътнелите витражи и звънът на камбаните,
 после просякът,
 наметнал анемичното декемврийско слънце,
 което опровергава
 разливащия се върху тезгяха глас,
 че е *summertime and the living's easy*.

Само куполът, натежал
 от полепналата по него божия милост,
 не се побира на масата,
 където седим неподвижно
 с очи на ангели,
 затворени в приют.

Частни уроци през май

Опитвам се да те науча на кирилицата на миризмите:
 че мушкатото на отсрещния балкон
 е повече от цвете,
 че липата през юни
 е повече от дърво,
 но не напредваме достатъчно бързо.
 Палецът ти следва сянката на свещта,
 която ветрецът полюшва върху отворената страница,
 очертавайки подвижни граници
 между теб и мен,
 сякаш да те защити,
 сякаш ти си онова момченце,
 загубило някога акварелните си бои
 на връщане от училище,
 което продължава да рисува
 изгубеното небе на детството си и хълмовете
 с един и същи цвят.

Първи сняг

Родено с майските дъждове, сега гледа изумено
 това преливащо от брашно сито – градината,
 протяга боязливо лапа в бялото,
 после я дръпва като опарено
 и мяучи жално на кухненския праг

като човек, събудил се в неподходящ сезон
 с лозарска ножица в ръка,
 който гледа вторачено живия плет,
 ограждащ искрящата градина
 на първата любов,
 на първата смърт,
 очаквайки някой да го вземе на ръце
 и да го отнесе на завет в сайванта.

* * *

В най-свободната зона на плажа
между редици от камъшитени чадъри
и любопитни погледи
очите ми пробягват
по отворената страница

*мамо, в твоята утроба
ти подготви смъртната ми маска**

Опитвам се да приема
несъвършенството
на човешкия род
и мисълта
че съм носила под сърцето си
смъртта
цели девет месеца
и докато дъщеря ми строи
замъци на брега
упорствайки срещу морето
се чувствам някак си примирена

наблюдавайки
колко съвършена е
в детството си смъртта
колко свободна

*цитат от Лилиан Вутерс

Popek sveta

Od kod ta sneg v Sarajevu sredi maja?
 Kaže, da vreme prevzema slabe navade ljudi.
 Stvari se ponavljajo, pravijo moške v gostilni.
 Balkan je nabrekla žila,
 ki jo Evropa prereže vsakih nekaj desetletij,
 da si prečisti zastarelo kri.
 Najpomembnejše stvari se začnejo na tržnici,
 na začetku in koncu stoletja, vselej na nemirni tržnici.
 Tako kot pomlad, ki pride vedno v petek
 in si izbere gostilno z okroglimi mizami,
 kjer je smisel vsake zamolčane besede
 viden od vsepovsod,
 tako kot naše nedolžne roke
 sredi mize,
 ki ščitijo popek sveta.

Jazz

Kot zdaj že oddaljena mesta,
 ki si jih delimo
 in jih zazidavamo
 drugo za drugim v svoje verze,
 vstopa cerkev po koščkih
 skozi kvadratna okna kavarne:
 najprej motni vitraži in donenje zvonov,
 nato berač,
 ogrnjen v anemično decembrsko sonce,
 ki izpodbija
 čez pult razlivajoči se glas,
 da je *summertime and the living's easy*.

Le kupola, obtežena
 z božjo milostjo,
 je prevelika za mizo,
 ob kateri sedimo nepremično,
 z očmi angelov,
 zaprti v zavetišče.

Privatne lekcije v maju

Skušam te naučiti cirilico vonjav:
da pelargonija na nasprotnem balkonu
ni le roža,
da lipa junija
ni le drevo,
a ne napredujeva dovolj hitro.
Tvoj palec sledi senci sveče,
ki od vetrca podrhteva nad odprto knjigo
in skicira gibljive meje
med tabo in mano,
kot bi te hotela zaščititi,
kot da si tisti deček,
ki je izgubil vodene barvice
na poti iz šole
in ki še vedno riše
izgubljeno nebo svojega otroštva in hribe
z eno in isto barvo.

Prvi sneg

Rojen v majskem deževju začudeno gleda
to sito, polno moke – vrt,
s šapo boječe podreza v belino,
nato jo umakne, kot bi se opeknel,
in otožno zamijavka na kuhinjskem pragu

kot človek, ki se je zbudil v napačnem letnem času,
in s škarjami za trto v roki
osuplo zre v živo mejo,
ki obdaja iskreči se vrt
prve ljubezni,
prve smrti,
in čaka, da ga nekdo dvigne v naročje
in odnese na varno.

* * *

Na najbolj neobljudenem delu plaže
med vrstami slamnatih senčnikov
in radovednimi pogledi
moje oči begajo
po odprti knjigi

*mama, v svoji maternici
si pripravila mi smrtno masko**

Poskušam sprejeti
nepopolnost
človeškega rodu
in misel
da sem pod srcem nosila
smrt
celih devet mesecev
in medtem ko moja hči vztrajno zida
peščene gradove na bregu
in kljubuje morju
se čutim nekako pomirjena

opazujem
kako popolna je
v svojem otroštvu smrt
kako svobodna

* citat Liliane Wouters

Prevedla Namita Subiotto

The Bellybutton of the World

Where did this mid-May snow in Sarajevo come from?
It looks as though the weather is acquiring people's bad habits.
History repeats, say the men at the pub.
The Balkans are a swollen vein
which Europe slices open every few decades
to purify its aging blood.
The most important things start with the market,
at the beginning and the end of the century, always at this restless market.
Just like spring, which always comes on a Friday
and chooses a pub with round tables
where the meaning of each unsaid word
is visible from all sides,
just like our innocent hands
in the middle of the table,
shielding the bellybutton of the world.

Jazz

Just as the shared,
now unreachable cities, which we wall
one by one in our poems,
the church enters piece by piece
through the square windows of the café:
first the dimmed stained glass and the tolling bells
then the beggar's back wearing the anemic
December sun, which refutes
the voice spilling over the counter
that sings *summer time and the living's easy*.

Only the dome, heavy
with god's mercy stuck to it,
is too big for this table,
where we sit still,
with the eyes of angels
locked up in an asylum.

Translated by Katerina Stoykova-Klemer

Private Lessons in May

I'm trying to teach you the Cyrillic alphabet of scents:
 that the geranium on the balcony across the street
 is more than a mere geranium,
 that the linden tree in June
 is more than a mere tree,
 but we aren't making progress fast enough.
 Your thumb is following the candle shadow
 that the wind is making tremble on the open page,
 as if drafting mobile borders
 between you and me,
 as if to protect you,
 as if you were that boy,
 who a long time ago had lost his watercolors
 on his way home from school,
 and who's still painting
 the lost sky of his childhood and the hills
 in the same color.

Translated by Roumiana Tiholova

First Snow

Born out of May's rain, amazed, it now observes
 the garden – this sieve, heaping with flour;
 it stretches a timid paw into the white,
 then pulls it back as if singed
 and mews pitifully on the kitchen threshold

like a person who awoke in the wrong season
 with a pair of pruning shears in hand,
 who stares at the hedge fence
 enclosing the sparkling garden
 of the first love,
 the first death,
 expecting someone to lift him in their arms
 and carry him into the shelter of the shed.

Translated by Katerina Stoykova-Klemer

* * *

In the most deserted area of the beach
among the rows of thatched umbrellas
and curious looks
with an open book in my lap
I run my eyes over the pages:

*Mother, in your womb
you had prepared my dead mask**

I am trying to accept
mankind's imperfection
and the thought
that I had carried
the death beneath my heart
for the whole nine months
and while my daughter
is building sand castles
never giving in to the sea
I feel somehow resigned

contemplating
how perfect
the death in its youth could be,
how unbound

* quotation by Liliane Wouters

Translated by Roumiana Tiholova

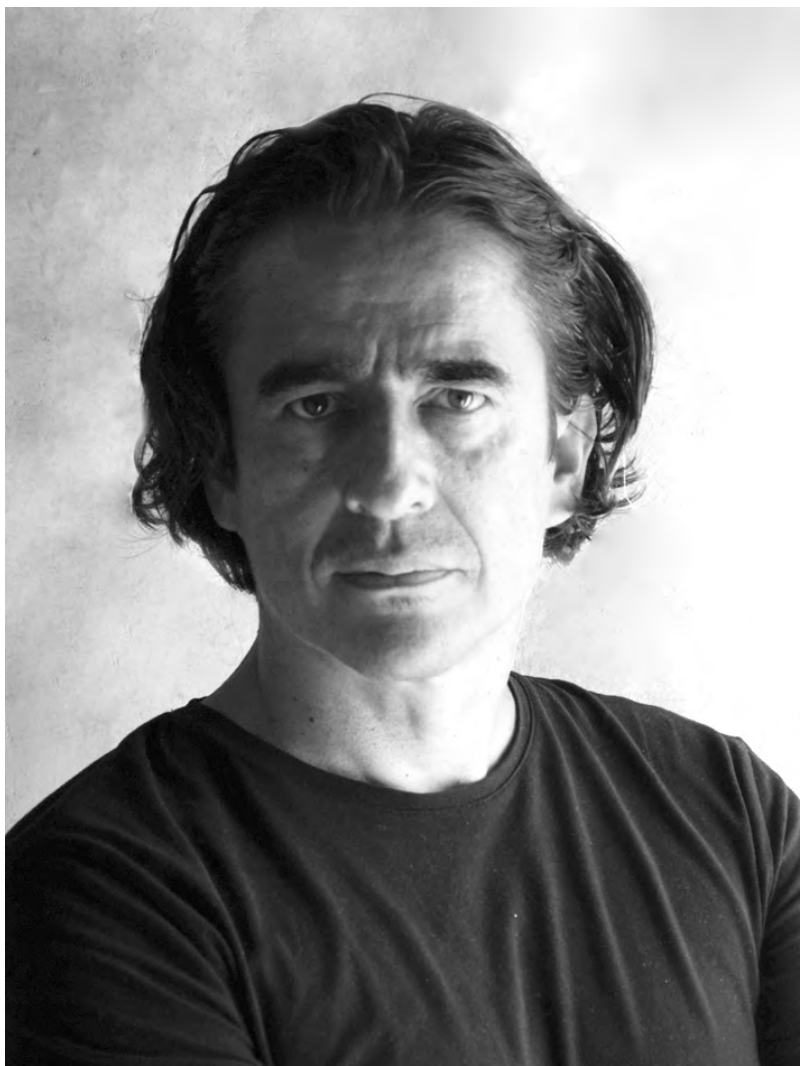


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Carlos Pascual

Carlos Pascual se je rodil leta 1964 v Mexico Cityju v Mehiki. Študiral je književnost ter filmsko in gledališko umetnost. Da se je lahko posvetil umetniškemu ustvarjanju, je opravljal različna dela: bil je gradbinec v Bostonu, varnostnik v Los Angelesu, predstavnik za stike z javnostjo kazina v Las Vegasu in podpredsednik kitajskega podjetja za trgovanje na deviznih trgih s sedežem v Hong Kongu. Pascual je avtor pesniške zbirke *Caída Libre* (Prosti pad, 1999), gledaliških iger *There Are No Poets in Phoenix* (V Phoenixu ni pesnikov, 1989) in *Allison in the City of the Sleeping Sharks* (Allison in mesto spečih morskih psov, 2010) ter avtor in producent več filmov, med drugim dokumentarnega filma *El Fénix y Quetzalcóatl* (Feniks in Quetzalcóatl, 1998) o življenju D. H. Lawrencea. Ker ni pristaš državnega subvencioniranja kulture, je vse svoje projekte izpeljal sam. Od leta 2008 živi v Sloveniji in redno piše za različne revije (*Ekran, Literatura, Ciciban, Objektiv*). Leta 2014 je ustanovil Pocket Teater Studio, namenjen neodvisnemu gledališkemu ustvarjanju, leta 2015 pa je pri založbi LUD Šerpa objavil esejistično zbirko *De sirvientas, tacones altos y oportunidades perdidas* (*O služkinjah, visokih petah in izgubljenih priložnostih*), ki jo je v slovenščino prevedla Mojca Medvedšek.

Carlos Pascual was born in 1964 in Mexico City, Mexico. He studied film, literature and theatre. He took on different jobs in order to support his art. He worked as a construction worker in Boston, as a security guard in Los Angeles, as a casino PR in Las Vegas and as vice-president of a Chinese foreign exchange company based in Hong Kong. Pascual's literary works include the collection of poetry *Caída Libre* (Free Fall, 1999) and the plays *There Are No Poets in Phoenix* (1989) and *Allison in the City of the Sleeping Sharks* (2010). He has also conceived and produced several films, among them, *El Fénix y Quetzalcóatl* (The Phoenix and Quetzalcóatl, 1998), a documentary about the life and times of D. H. Lawrence. As he is not a proponent of state subsidies for culture, he completed all of his projects on his own. He has lived in Slovenia since 2008 and regularly writes for various magazines (*Ekran, Literatura, Ciciban, Objektiv*). In 2014, he founded the Pocket Teater Studio, devoted to independent theatre productions. His collection of essays *De sirvientas, tacones altos y oportunidades perdidas* (Of Maids, High Heels and Lost Opportunities) was translated into Slovene by Mojca Medvedšek and published by the LUD Šerpa publishing house in 2015.

Jana y la Serpiente

(fragmento de novela)

*“A los muertos se los encuentra;
son los vivos los que desaparecen”*

Arturo Bocchini,
jefe fascista de la Polizia di Stato
de Benito Mussolini

1

En la madrugada del 11 de enero de 1974, el cuerpo sin vida de Sinclair Robertson apareció desnudo sobre una banca helada del parque Juárez. El hombre que lo encontró – un inconstante deportista del que se ha perdido el nombre y las señas – declaró más tarde frente a tres oficiales de la policía, que no notó nada extraño en el parque esa mañana, a excepción del cuerpo demasiado blanco y velludo de Sinclair.

Los empleados municipales que recibieron la orden de llevar el cuerpo a la policía, tardaron más de dos horas en lograrlo; la piel del extranjero se encontraba adherida al crudo metal de la banca. La temperatura aquella noche había rondado los menos dos grados centígrados –una noche demasiado fría hasta para un muerto–.

Después de algunos interrogatorios y conversaciones, la policía municipal inició una nada ortodoxa búsqueda de Jana Mitič, una al parecer oscura y hermosa yugoeslava que había arrastrado (esa fue la palabra que usó uno de los interrogados) al joven Sinclair a San Miguel, entre noviembre y diciembre de 1973.

Nadie pudo fijar la fecha exacta de la llegada de Jana Mitič y Sinclair Robertson al pueblo. Todos coincidieron, eso sí, en que sus caras y cuerpos comenzaron a ser comunes durante las noches del diciembre anterior a la tragedia. Él, al decir de los interrogados, era un tipo afable de rasgos finos, barba azafranada y al descuido y ojos aceitunados y cálidos; de uno ochenta de estatura y de una constitución física delgada, pero saludable. De ella en cambio, fue imposible establecer más que datos muy generales y confusos; mientras unos la recordaban agresivamente hermosa, otros la describían como excesivamente corriente y chata. Hubo quien la describió como monumental, mientras otro la calificó de menuda e insignificante.

No se encontró una sola fotografía de la pareja, ni un documento, ni una credencial, nada. El cuerpo de Sinclair Robertson fue

enterrado en el panteón municipal cuatro días después de haber sido encontrado en el parque y dos días después de haber sido abierto en canal por un médico forense de Celaya. De Jana Mitič no se supo más y su búsqueda se fue enfriando hasta que terminó tan helada como la banca del Parque Juárez a la que estaba adherida la espalda de Sinclair, aquella madrugada del 11 de enero de 1974.

La historia se publicó días después de la aparición del cuerpo en un folletín escandaloso que ahora no se encuentra por ningún sitio. Después, los nombres de Jana y Sinclair se fueron deslavando hasta formar parte de un archivo colectivo de leyendas no contadas que en este pueblo forman columnas arrumbadas de diarios amarillentos. La historia se olvidó por casi treinta años. Hasta ahora.

Pude haber dejado pasar de largo el fortuito encuentro de la libreta azul, pero el nada insignificante hecho de que me llegara precisamente a mí, de la mano de quien la encontró bajo la duela del boliche de la calle de Hidalgo, hizo que la comezón del deber y la esperanza de la expiación encontraran un espacio entre el cabal cinismo y el absoluto desencanto.

Pude haber también hecho llegar la libreta a la policía, pero, ¿de qué podía servir? Nadie persigue en este país un crimen que ya se olvidó; ¿quién perseguiría ahora, en su sano juicio, a una tal Jana Mitič, original de Ormož? Por eso mejor he decidido ir recuperando los rastros y hacerlos públicos; para que la reconstrucción de los hechos no sea un desangelado trámite burocrático o judicial, sino un proceso colectivo de asombro y hasta de nostalgia.

2

Ahora convengamos que es 1949 y que un vaso de tequila tiembla sutilmente a cada golpe de riel. Convengamos que un hombre mira el vaso de tequila sentado en el coche-bar de un tren que avanza hacia el norte por el corazón de México. Desde hace unos minutos, unas líneas del viejo poeta y rey Netzahualcōyotl resuenan en su cabeza:

*Príncipes, pensadlo,
oh águilas y tigres:
pudiera ser jade,
pudiera ser oro
también allá irán*

*donde están los descarnados.
Iremos desapareciendo:
nadie ha de quedar...*

Joaquín mira un expediente que reposa junto al tequila. El águila que devora a la serpiente en la cubierta del documento le recuerda su compromiso. Le es tan difícil ver ese icono como una simple representación de un ave que devora a un reptil, sin que todo el entramado de frases preconcebidas, leyendas históricas y deudas de sangre se instalen en alguna parte de su espíritu —aunque él rechazaría la palabra espíritu—. Mira a través de la ventana. Sabe que ha dejado las inmediaciones del valle central y en su espina siente una incertidumbre como una serpiente helada.

Aún sin cumplir los treinta años su piel tiene algo de cuero trabajado en talabartería. Sus cejas se juntan en el inicio de una nariz grande y afilada. Tenues rasgos indígenas se adivinan entre trazos levantinos. Una barba cerrada de día y medio atestigua su condición de mestizo. Sus ojos vuelven a mirar al águila y la serpiente. Toma su bebida y la vacía de un golpe. El expediente describe la raíz de la preocupación de su padrino, don Gervasio González y la incomodidad del presidente de la República. Una sola palabra sintetiza el tuétano del asunto: antropofagia.

3

Una leyenda local hace responsable de la fachada gótica-pop de la parroquia de San Miguel de Allende a la rudimentaria comunicación entre un melancólico y un avisgado. El nostálgico era un hombre que para curarse una herida de amor y aprovechando la ansiedad de grandeza y el pánico a la insignificancia de una pequeña aristocracia criolla, encendió una iniciativa para enaltecer el templo colonial estilo neoclásico de fines del siglo XVII, que presidía la plaza central de la ciudad.

El avisgado era el maestro albañil Zeferino Gutiérrez, quien recibió el encargo oficial de la obra a través de un documento firmado por un comité ciudadano establecido con ese fin y una serie de ilustraciones y postales de las catedrales góticas europeas de manos del melancólico. Ayudado por aquellas imágenes, como lo tiene la leyenda, Zeferino dibujaba y desdibujaba el proyecto a sus subalternos sobre la tierra seca del atrio.

El resultado final de este peculiar proceso es un pastiche de dimensiones catedralicias menores. Es un tótem de las aspiraciones fallidas y apresuradas de un pueblo que sólo la práctica de la costumbre hace tolerable y el ejercicio de la estupidez, orgullo.

4

La noche anterior de aquél día de 1949, Joaquín leía el expediente a la luz de una veladora. Una tormenta de verano azotaba cantera, asfalto, cemento, asbesto, lámina y tezontle en el centro de la ciudad de México. El ruido del agua había apagado el escándalo de la calle y le ofrecía un remanso apenas suspendido sobre el ineludible temor a otra inundación que volviera a la incipiente urbe a su naturaleza de pantano. Repasaba un fragmento del texto articulando las palabras con sus labios: “un oscuro caso criminal que no sólo nos puede causar graves conflictos diplomáticos con nuestro vecino del norte, sino que puede reencender un poderoso vínculo con nuestro más oscuro pasado, amenazando los beneficios civilizatorios de la Revolución Mexicana en estos territorios hostiles.”

El documento, preparado a petición del partido por un abogado que de llamaba a si mismo el cronista de San Miguel, continuaba con una semblanza histórica: “Desde su fundación, San Miguel fue un puesto de conflicto. Invadido primero por indios de la etnia Otomí que huían de la presencia española en el valle de México, fue colonizado más tarde y de forma paralela por franciscanos y encomenderos. Las fricciones con pueblos vecinos desataron pronto cuatro decenios de hostilidades sangrientas. Muchos de los descendientes de los más salvajes guamares, guachichiles y otomíes que tuvieron participación en el conflicto, se encuentran aún entre nosotros, escondidos bajo una delgada pátina cristiana.”

Luego del repaso histórico, el abogado aventuraba una queja: “Los párrocos en San Miguel, envalentonados por una casta criolla y altanera, alientan una gran cantidad de manifestaciones populares que sólo perpetúan el atraso y la ignorancia entre las clases más desfavorecidas. Ingentes cantidades de dinero se destinan a fiestas religiosas que más simpatizan con inclinaciones paganas que católicas. Este dinero, que podría ser utilizado para útiles escolares, buena alimentación e higiénicas instalaciones sanitarias, es destinado, con la aprobación de la curia reaccionaria, a la compra de cohetones, in-

dumentaria romana y bebidas embriagantes. Los niños asisten a las escuelas públicas con ropa deshilachada, mientras el viernes de La Dolorosa, decenas de altares a la Virgen se arropan de telas púrpuras y brillantes. Es esta fiesta – que señala el inicio de las celebraciones de Semana Santa, el viernes anterior al viernes santo – una celebración de cierto interés, ya que en señal de dolor, los sanmiguelenses se ofrecen unos a otros helados de sabor, para poder embeberse con las lágrimas de la virgen. Si en el medio oriente transmutaron la sangre del supuesto hijo de Dios en vino, aquí, en esta tierra de bárbaros, la gente ha transmutado las lágrimas de su madre en nieve de limón.”

Jana in kača

(odlomek iz romana)

*»Mrtvi so slej ko prej najdeni;
tisti, ki izginejo, so živi.«*

Arturo Bocchini,
fašistični načelnik
Mussolinijeve policije

1

Ob zori enajstega januarja leta 1974 se je golo in mrtvo telo Sinclaira Robertsona pojavilo na zaledeneli klopi parka Juárez v mehiškem mestu San Miguel de Allende. Moški, ki ga je našel – priložnostni tekač, čigar ime in okoliščine so sedaj izgubljene – je ob prisotnosti treh policistov kasneje izjavil, da tistega jutra v parku ni videl ničesar neobičajnega. Razen Sinclairovega golega, kosmatega in presenetljivo belega telesa.

Občinski delavci, ki jim je bilo zaukazano, da truplo prinesejo na policijsko upravo, so svojo nalogo opravljali več kot dve uri. Tujčeva koža je bila prilepljena na surovo železo klopi. Tisto noč se je temperatura spustila na minus 2 stopinji Celzija; prenizko celo za mrtveca.

Po nekaj pogovorih in zasliševanjih je policija začela z vse prej kot načrtnim iskanjem Jane Mitič, neznane lepe Jugoslovanke, ki je mladega Sinclaira odvelkla (besedo je uporabila ena izmed prič) v San Miguel de Allende v času med novembrom in decembrom leta 1973.

Nihče ni mogel natančno določiti datuma njunega prihoda v mesto, vsi pa so se strinjali, da sta obraza in postavi Jane Mitič in Sinclaira Robertsona v decembrskih nočeh pred tragedijo pričela postajati prepoznavna. On naj bi bil prijazen mladenič čistih potez, z razmršeno rdečkasto brado in toplimi, iskrenimi očmi; visok približno 180 centimetrov in sloke, čvrste postave. V nasprotju z njim je bilo o njej mogoče zbrati le bežne, nerazumljive in paradoksalne podatke; nekateri so se je spominjali kot agresivno lepe, drugi so jo opisovali kot skrajno prostaško in dolgočasno. Nekaj prič ji je pripisovalo mogočnost, eden izmed njih pa jo je označil za slabotno in neznatno.

Našla se ni niti ena fotografija para; niti en dokument, niti ena izkaznica; nič. Štiri dni po odkritju trupla in dva dni po tem, ko ga je mrliški oglednik s Celaye s skalpelom odprl, kot bi razparal tru-

plo prašiča, je bilo telo Sinclaira Robertsona pokopano na urejenem delu mestnega pokopališča, rezerviranem za tujce. O Jani Mitič se ni izvedelo nič več. Preiskava se je ohladila in postala tako hladna kot tista ledena klop v parku Juárez, ki je bila v jutru enajstega januarja 1974 prilepljena na Sinclairov hrbet.

Dneve pozneje se je povzetek te zgodbe pojavil v zdaj izgubljenem regionalnem tabloidu. Posledično sta v skupnem arhivu neizrečenih legend, ki v tem mestu tvorijo pozabljene kolumne porumenelih tednikov, zbledeli tudi imeni Jane in Sinclaira. Zgodba je speča mirovala skoraj trideset let. Do zdaj.

Lahko bi spregledal naključno najdbo modre knjižice tri mesece pred svojim prihodom v mesto, a vse prej kot zanemarljivo dejstvo, da je bila iz rok tistega, ki jo je našel pod lesenim podom kegljišča na ulici Hidalgo, kasneje predana prav meni, je v meni vzbudilo ščemenje dolžnosti; upanje na zadoščenje si je izborilo prostor med vsesplošnim cinizmom in popolnim razočaranjem.

Najbrž bi se lahko odpravil na policijo, a čemu bi služilo tovrstno dejanje? Na tej zemljepisni širini pozabljen zločin ne kliče po razrešitvi. Kdo pri zdravi pameti bi poskušal izslediti Jano Mitič iz nekega kraja, imenovanega Ormož? Tako sem se odločil zbrati vse sledi in javno razkriti svoja dognanja; da se rekonstrukcija dejstev ne bi sprevrgla v sodni in birokratski postopek, temveč v zmes osuplosti in nostalgije.

2

Strinjamo se, da je leto 1949 in kozarec tekile rožlja v ritmu vlaka, ki skozi srce Mehike potuje proti severu. V kozarec strmi moški, ki sedi ob baru v kupeju. Čez nekaj minut mu bo v glavi zadonelo nekaj stihov starega kralja in pesnika Netzahualcoyotla:

*Princesa, pomisli.
Oh, orli in tigri:
lahko je žad,
lahko je zlato.
Tudi oni bodo šli,
kjer so brezmesni.
Izginili bomo:
nihče ne bo ostal ...*

Joaquín pogleduje proti dokumentu, ki leži ob majhnem kozarcu tekile. Orel, ki na naslovnici golta kačo, ga spominja na njegovo dolžnost. To ikono je od nekdaj težko videl le kot enostavno upodobitev ptiča, ki se hrani s plazilcem; v nekem kotu njegovega duha so se naselile prazne fraze, zgodovinske zameglitve in dolгови krvi (čeprav bi omembo duha gotovo zavrnil). Nagne se nazaj in skozi okno ugleda pokrajino. Zaveda se, da je za seboj pustil domačo grudo, in čuti, kako njegovo hrbtenico ovija mrzla in sluzasta kača negotovosti.

Četudi še ni dopolnil trideset let, je hrapavost njegove kože podobna usnju, uporabljanem v sedlarstvu. Njegove obrvi se stikajo ob korenu velikega in koničastega nosu. Med levantinskimi potezami se rišejo komaj zaznavni namigi o staroselskih koreninah. Brada, stara dan in pol, potrjuje njegovo mešano kri. Njegove oči se vrnejo k orlu in kači. Nato seže po pijači in z enim požirkom izprazni kozarec. Dokument opisuje izvor skrbi njegovega botra don Gervasia Gonzaleza in nelagodje predsednika Republike. Jedro problema razkriva že ena sama beseda: ljudožerstvo.

3

Lokalna legenda pravi, da naj bi bila nenavadna komunikacija med melanholičnim pustolovcem in bistrournim zidarjem zaslužna za zasnovo in izgradnjo gotske-pop fasade osrednje župnije v San Miguelu de Allende. Melanholični pustolovec je bil možki, ki je v želji, da bi si pozdravil ljubezenske rane, obenem pa zadostil svojemu hlepenju po prepoznavnosti in utišal svoj strah pred nepomembnostjo majhne kreolske aristokracije, vzpodbudil povečanje neoklasicističnega kolonialnega templja s konca 17. stoletja, ki je dominiral na glavnem mestnem trgu.

Bistrourni zidar po imenu Zeferino Gutiérrez je naročilo prejel od pravkar ustanovljenega komiteja meščanov, od pustolovca pa je prejel zbirko razglednic z motivi evropskih gotskih katedral. Z njihovo pomočjo – kot predpostavlja legenda – naj bi Zeferino svojim podrejenim načrt projekta zarisoval v suhi zemlji pred stavbo.

Končni rezultat tega čudnega procesa je pastiš z dimenzijami manjše katedrale; totem neuspeh in prenatrpanost prizadevanj ljudstva, ki je znosen le zavoljo običaja in zavoljo človeške neumnosti, ki si ga je izdelala kot znamenje ponosa.

V noči pred tistim dnevom leta 1949 je Joaquín dokument prebiral ob soju pogrebne sveče. Nevihta je zunaj, v središču Mexico Cityja, udarjala ob kamen, asfalt, cement, azbest, steklo, kositer in vulkansko kamenje. Šum vode je pridušil ulične zvoke in mestu nudil zavetje, ki je nežno lebdelo nad vseprisotnim strahom pred še eno smrdečo poplavo, ki bi mu povrnila njegovo močvirsko naravo. Z ustnicami je v enem izmed odlomkov sledil zapisanim besedam: »nejasen kriminalni primer, ki bi lahko ne le povzročil diplomatske spore z našim severnim sosedom, temveč ponovno obudil močno povezavo z našo najtemnejšo preteklostjo in tako v teh sovražnih deželah ogrozil civilizacijske prednosti mehiške revolucije.«

Dokument, ki ga je naročila Stranka in pripravil odvetnik, ki si je neuradno nadel naziv kronista San Miguela, se je nadaljeval z zgodovinskim povzetkom: »San Miguel je vse od svoje ustanovitve predstavljal križišče sporov. Sprva so ga napadli otomijski Indijanci, ki so bežali pred špansko prisotnostjo na mehiški planoti, kasneje pa so ga kolonizirali frančiškani in *encomenderi*. Trenja s sosednjimi mesti so zanetila štiri desetletja trajajoče krvave sovražnosti. Mnogi izmed potomcev najokrutnejših Guamarov, Guachichilov in Otomijev, ki so sodelovali v konfliktih, živijo med nami, prežeči za tanko krinko krščanstva.«

Po zgodovinskem pregledu odvetnik tvega pritožbo: »Duhovniki v San Miguelu s spodbudami arogantne kreolske skupnosti podpihujejo ljudska razkazovanja, ki krepijo zaostalost in nevednost najmanj privilegiranega ljudstva. Ogromne količine denarja se zlivajo v verske fieste, ki bolj kot s katoliškimi običaji simpatizirajo s poganskimi navadami. Denar, ki bi ga lahko uporabili za učbenike, zdravo prehrano in sanitarije, se zdaj z dovoljenjem nazadnjaške katoliške elite uporablja za nakup petard, rimskih kostumov in alkoholnih pijač. Medtem ko otroci obiskujejo šolo v raztrganih oblačilih, je na praznik Žalostne matere božje na ducate Marijinih oltarjev okrašenih s škrlatom in svilo. To praznovanje, ki naznanja začetek velike noči, je nekakšna nenavadna redkost; v znak trpljenja ljudje iz San Miguela drug drugemu podarjajo sladoled in ližejo solze Device. Če so na Bližnjem vzhodu kri božjega sina pretvorili v vino, so ljudje tu, v tej barbarski regiji, solze njegove matere spremenili v limonin šerbet.«

Iz angleščine prevedla Pia Prezelj

Jana and the Serpent

(excerpt from the novel)

*"The dead are bound to be found,
the living are the ones that disappear."*

Arturo Bocchini.

Fascist chief of police
under Benito Mussolini.

1

At dawn on January 11th, 1974, Sinclair Robertson's dead and naked body appeared lying on a frozen bench at the Juárez Park in the city of San Miguel de Allende. The man who found him – an irregular jogger whose name and circumstances are now lost – later declared, in the presence of three police officers, that he saw nothing unusual in the park that morning. That is, apart from Sinclair's naked, hairy and startlingly white body.

The municipal workers, who were given the order to bring the body to police headquarters, took over two hours to complete their task. The foreigner's skin was stuck to the raw metal of the bench. That night the temperature dropped to minus two degrees centigrade; too cold even for a dead man.

Following a few conversations and inquiries, the local police started a far from methodical search for Jana Mitič, an obscure and beautiful Yugoslav woman who had dragged (that exact word being used by one of the witnesses) the young Sinclair to San Miguel de Allende, between November and December 1973.

No one could exactly pinpoint the date of Jana and Sinclair's arrival into town, though everyone agreed that their faces and frames were becoming rather familiar during the December nights previous to the tragedy. Apparently, he was an amicable fellow with fine features, an unkempt reddish beard and warm, candid eyes; approximately six feet tall, of a healthy, lean built. About her, on the other hand, only very vague, confusing information could be gleaned; some remembered her as aggressively beautiful, others described her as exceptionally vulgar and plain. Others still recalled her as monumental, while one witness characterized her as frail and insignificant.

Not even a single photograph of the couple was to be found; not a document, not an ID; nothing whatsoever. Four days after the

body was discovered in the park and two days after a coroner from Celaya split it open like a pig's carcass, Sinclair Robertson's body was buried in the orderly foreigner's section of San Miguel's municipal cemetery. There was no more forthcoming information on Jana Mitič. The search for her cooled off, until it got as cold as that icy bench in Juárez Park which clung to Sinclair's back that morning of January 11th, 1974.

Days later, an account of this story appeared in a regional tabloid, now nowhere to be found. Subsequently, the names of Jana and Sinclair faded away into the collective archive of untold legends that in this town form forgotten columns of yellowed dailies. The story has lain dormant for almost thirty years. Until now.

I could have ignored the fortuitous finding of the blue notebook, but the far from insignificant fact that it was handed precisely to me by the person who found it under a wooden plank at the bowling alley in Hidalgo Street, made the itch of duty and the hope for atonement find a sleeve of a place between overall cynicism and utter disenchantment.

I suppose I could have gone to the police. But what good would that have done? A forgotten crime does not solicit pursuit at these latitudes. Who in his right mind would hunt for a Jana Mitič from a town called Ormož? This is why I have decided to collect all traces and then publicly disclose my findings, since I do not wish for the reconstruction of the facts to be a judicial and bureaucratic maneuver, but rather a collective process of awe and, I dare say, nostalgia.

2

Let us now agree that it is 1949, and a glass of tequila rattles to every beat of a train heading north through the heart of Mexico. A man is staring at the glass, seated in a coach bar. For a few minutes now some lines of the old king and poet Netzahualcoyotl have been resounding in his head:

*Princes, think
Oh eagles and tigers:
It could be jade.
It could be gold.
Also they will go*

*Where the fleshless are.
We will disappear:
No one will stay..*

Joaquin is looking at a document lying by the side of the small glass of tequila. The eagle devouring the serpent on the cover reminds him of his duty. He could never see the icon as a simple representation of a bird eating a reptile, without having all the scaffolding of preconceived phrases, historical mystifications and debts of blood settle in some corner of his spirit – though the word spirit he would adamantly reject. He leans back and looks at the landscape through the window. He knows he has left home turf behind now and can feel a cold and slimy snake of uncertainty coiling down his backbone.

His skin, not yet 30, has something of the texture of rough leather worked in a saddlery about it. His eyebrows meet at the root of a large and sharp nose. Subtle native features can be discerned between the fine Levantine strokes. A day-and-a-half old beard confirms his mixed blood condition. His eyes revert to the eagle and the serpent. He takes his drink and empties the glass in one full swing. The file describes the origin of the worries of his godfather, don Gerónimo González and the uneasiness of the president of the Republic. A single word could define the marrow of the issue: anthropophagy.

3

The unlikely communication between a melancholic adventurer and a sagacious mason, says a local legend, was responsible for the inception and construction of the gothic-pop façade of San Miguel de Allende central parish. The melancholic adventurer was a man who in order to heal himself of a love wound, and proceeding from the clamoring for recognition and the fear of insignificance of a small Creole aristocracy, sparked an initiative to enhance the 17th century neo-classical colonial temple presiding over the main city square.

The sagacious mason was a master builder named Zeferino Gutiérrez, who received the commission from a newly-formed citizen's committee alongside a series of postcards of European gothic cathedrals from the adventurer. With the help of these images, as the legend establishes, Zeferino would draw and un-draw the project for his gang in the dry dirt in front of the building.

The final result of this peculiar process is a pastiche of minor cathedral dimensions, a totem of failed and rushed aspirations of a people; it is only its everyday presence that makes it tolerable, and makes it a proud badge of middling human stupidity.

4

The night before that day in 1949, Joaquín was reading the case file by the light of a religious candle. A storm outside was lashing against the stone, asphalt, cement, asbestos, glass, tin and tezontle in the center of Mexico City. The water's noise had subdued the sounds from the street, offering him a haven slightly suspended over the ever-present fear of another stinky flood that would return the city to its essence of a swamp. He was going over a fragment mouthing the words with his lips: "a dark criminal case that could not only create diplomatic conflicts with our northern neighbor, but could also reignite a powerful link with our darkest past, jeopardizing the civilizational benefits of the Mexican Revolution in this hostile land."

The document, ordered by the Party and prepared by a lawyer who has unofficially claimed for himself the title of the chronicler of San Miguel, continued with a historical brief: "Since its inception, San Miguel was a conflicted crossroad. Invaded first by the Otomi Indians escaping the Spanish presence in the Mexican central valley, it was colonized later by the Franciscans and *encomenderos*. Frictions with neighboring towns ignited 4 decades of bloody hostilities. Many of the descendants of the most savage Guamares, Guachichiles and Otomis who played a part in the conflict live between us, lurking out from behind a thin Christian veneer."

After the historical review, the mayor risks a complaint: "The priests in San Miguel, encouraged by an arrogant Creole class, promote a prodigious amount of popular displays that only perpetuate the backwardness and ignorance amongst the least favored citizens. Huge quantities of money are poured into religious fiestas that sympathize more with the pagan uses than with the Catholic ways. This money that could be used for school textbooks, healthy diet and sanitary installations is used instead, with the approval of the reactionary Catholic elite, to buy firecrackers, Roman costumes and alcoholic beverages. The kids attend school with holes in their clothes, while on the "Friday of the Painful" dozens of Virgin shrines are decked in

purples and silks. This specific celebration, which signals the beginning of Easter, is something of a curiosity; to symbolize suffering the people of San Miguel offer each other ice cream and imbibe the tears of the Virgin. If in the Middle East they have transmuted the blood of the son of God into wine, here, in this barbaric land, the people have transmuted the tears of his mother into lemon sherbet.”

Translated by Carlos Pascual and Ana Jelnikar



Foto © Mare Ploom

Ülar Ploom

Ülar Ploom se je rodil leta 1955 v Tartuju v Estoniji. Je pesnik, pisec kratke proze, prevajalec iz italijanščine (Dante, Petrarca, Calvino) in strokovnjak za italijansko literaturo. Njegovo osrednje znanstvenoraziskovalno področje so dela Danteja Alighierija. Ploomova prva pesniška zbirka *Üks ja kogu* (Eden in vse), iz katere so tudi pesmi, objavljene v zborniku, je izšla leta 2002. Za omenjeno zbirko je prejel nagrado Betti Alver za najboljši prvenec in nagrado Juhana Liiva za najboljšo pesem v estonskem jeziku (2005). Sledili sta še dve pesniški zbirki: *Porr ja Sorry* (Plezalček in Sorry, 2006) ter *Juunist juunini* (Od junija do junija, 2011). Ploomove pesmi so bile objavljene v antologijah v angleškem in italijanskem jeziku. Gostoval je na pesniških festivalih v Talinu, Salernu, Cartageni de Indias in Devinu.

Ülar Ploom was born in 1955 in Tartu, Estonia. He is a poet, writer of short prose, translator from the Italian and literary scholar focusing on Italian literature (Dante, Petrarch, Calvino). His main field of research covers the works of Dante Alighieri. Ploom's first collection of poetry *Üks ja kogu* (One and All), which includes poems featured in this year's *Vilenica Almanac*, was published in 2002. For this book, he received the Betti Alver Prize for best debut work of the year and the Juhan Liiv Poetry Award for an outstanding poem in the Estonian language (2005). The noted collection was followed by two others: *Porr ja Sorry* (Treecreeper and Sorry, 2006) and *Juunist juunini* (From June to June, 2011). Ploom's poems have been featured in various English and Italian language anthologies. He was a featured guest at poetry festivals in Tallinn, Salerno, Cartagena de Indias and Duino.

Luuletusi minu Cityst

City Ball (I)

Minu Cityl on täna ball
ja City istubki, must pluus seljas,
blond king jalas,
timukapunasesse vaagnasse,
ning lendab kõrgesse torni,
kus me tantsime,
minu City ja mina,
habemenugadel,
kuni kireb kukk
ja välk lööb torni
valgeks tuhaks,
millest fööniksina
tõuseb City taas:
City, viirastuste kuninganna,
City, varjude vardja,
City, my pity and my love.

City vihmad (III)

Sügisese vihma vihinad Citys on
kui vettinud suuskurid tundra ligastes kihtides:
tihked on tilgad asfaldil, aukudes, loikudes.

Kevadisel vihmäl on
siidine vidin City umbunud uulitsail:
sulgjad on piisad asfaldil, aukudes, loikudes.

Varasuvine vihm toterdab
väriseva voonana City vooredele,
paks suvine vihm prantsatab näljase hoorana City hoonetele.

City on talvise vihma all
kui valendav aiatükk musta kuu paistel:
sajab tuld ja tõrva, jäätuvad ripsmed.

City teeb tualetti (IX)

City silmad on peaaegu nagu muinasjutus:
 üks naerab, aga teine on tühi,
 sest pisarad on pärlitena
 mööda põrandat laiali veerenud
 ja City ei viitsi neid praegu kokku korjata.
 City lihvib naeratust
 ja proovib ette erinevaid hambaid:
 valged on liiga vagurad,
 mustad liiga tagurlikud,
 sinepikollane ei sobi kokku City silmadega.
 Ehk teate teie Cityle midagi soovitada?

Citizeni spleen (XI-XIII)

City zen

Minu City on nagu vana ja vigane vares,
 nagu vindunud ja visisev tukk,
 nagu pimedaks nälginud rasvahani;
 minu City on nagu Tallinna kilu omas mahlas:
 minu City on nii minu enda nägu.

City Ball II (XXIX)

Minu Cityl on jälle ball,
kuhu ta ilmub kutsumata.
Oo, veetlev on City frakis ja räbaldunud kasukas,
ühes jalas lõhnav lakk-king, teisel varbad väljas.
City on eriti valiv limusiini valikul – mõnikord jääbki valimata—,
aga sellest pole lugu,
sest siis tuleb Ball ise
ja kahmab City kaenlasse.

Värahtavad mäed ja ohkavad orud,
nautlevad nõmmed ja kükivad külad,
suuri hüppeid sooritavad hiiud,
ei istu paigal birgitad ega roccodki,
ning meri on tantsijaile põlvini.

Ballatuur on boheemlikust banaanseni
ning stataalsest fataalseni:
mainitagu eelkõige töötangot ja ööbreaki
ning börsiballetti Dionysose ditürambidele;
mõistatuslikumad paarid sooritavad
surmavalsi pikki poognaid.

Nii saab otsa öö ja oodatakse hommikutundi.
City valeval otsmikul pärlendavad higipisarad,
suust ripneb suuri naerukeesid.
City silmad põlevad kui neonküünlad,
tema pulsid on tuikvel ja
varbad verised,
ainult soeng seisab imeväärselt koos.
Viimaks ometi kireb kukk
ja City vajub sinnasamma,
unelokid laubal,
hingamine süütult lapselik,
käed kallima kaela ümber.
Head und!

City unetus (XXXII)

Täna ei tule Cityl und.
 Kõik magab: taevas ja maa,
 meri ja rannakivid.
 Aga City pöörab oma väsinud silmad
 vilkuvate tähtede poole
 ja tunnistab tõtt
 kuu ümarates põskedes.
 Üksik auto pageb uulitsal;
 joodik tuigerdab üle tänava,
 vajub kõnniteele kokku;
 keegi kass järab prügikastil kalapead.
 Kurb on minu City,
 sest tal ei tule und,
 nii nagu – muide – vist igal õhtul.

City hommik (XXXIII)

Mõnel hommikul on Citys nagu siis,
 kui koidujärgsel tunnil udu varjust
 ilmub tänavanurk, pagaripoe trepp,
 noore naise kübarapael Vanaturu kaelas,
 ja keegi, kes heidab aimamisi pilgu
 läbi hallikasvalge loori sinnapoole,
 kus teispool väravat on Linn.

Kolm graatsiat, suitsud suul

Kolm graatsiat, suitsud suul, hõljusid üle me majaesise muruplatsi: üks verevas hiuksevalamus, üks valgeis retuuses, üks sukis mustis, suures varbas suur auk.

Pika hambaga vaatasin neid heki varjust:
mis nad tulevad ja saastavad nagu soojuselektrijaama korstnad
värsket õhku teiste majaesisel?!

Torkasin pea heki tagant välja ja hüüdsin (eneselegi ootamatult):
“Neiud, kas teil suitsu on?” –
ent nemad, naerusuised, eemaldusid kiirel astel.

Nõrk mõrkjasimal hõng sõõrmeis,
hele mürgiastel juba toimimas,
tundsin - oh mind paadunud mittesuitsetajat! –
hirmsat suitsuhimu.

Kus Lend viib üle punetava taeva

nad tantsivad, nad vaatajaid ei vaata,
neil silmad teineteise jaoks on loodud,
ja kehad, mille keeled kõnelevad
üks teise ümber põimituna ruumis

ja ajas, kuigi igavikku näevad
neil südamed, ja veelgi kaugemale,
küll sala teades, et ei kesta kauem
tants ajast, mis on tantsimiseks antud

*

nad tantsivad, nad kedagi ei vaata,
vaid teise silmadele jätkub silmi,
ja hinge helinaid ja keha keeli,
mis lubab teise enda ümber keerdu,

et kõneleda, kaua kõneleda,
nii kaua, kuni sees kord vaibub helin
ja vaikus tardub liikumatus kehis,
mis näivad tantsivat ka sellisena

*

nad tantsivad ja teise sisse näevad,
on kehal piir, end sellest kutsub läbi
see iseenda teine olemine:
see endaks saab, kui voolab endast välja

veel on nad eraldi, küll juba paljad,
ning rauast puuridki ei jaksaks hoida
kaht teine teise sisse ehmunud hinge,
mis hämmastuvad teisesuse lummast

*

nad tantsivad, nad kedagi ei vaata,
nad vaikivad: kõik voogab nagu tuli,
kui leegid teineteise ümber keerdus
üht tuhka põletavad põlemises

nad vaikivad, kuid süda laulab laulu

nad nagu sügiseseid linnud paaris
veel tiirutavad ümber tardund pesa,
siis ühinevad sinna suurde parve,
kus lend viib üle punetava taeva

Pesmi o moji City

City Ples (I)

Moja City gre danes na ples,
oblečena v črno bluzo
in v blond čevljih se usede
na rabeljsko rdeč pladenj,
potem zleti na visok stolp,
kjer pleševa,
moja City in jaz,
po brivskih nožih,
dokler ne zapoje petelin
in ne udari strela, ki stolp
spremeni v bel pepel,
iz katerega se City
spet dvigne kot feniks:
City, kraljica prividov,
City, paznica senc,
City, my pity and my love.

City deževja (III)

Jesenski dež v Cityju škreblija podobno kot
premočeni smučarji na blatnih slojih tundre:
goste so kaplje na asfaltu, v luknjah in lužah.

Pomladni dež se
svileno oglašja na njegovih prepolnih ulicah:
peresne so kapljice na asfaltu, v luknjah in lužah.

Zgodnjepoletni dež se kot tresoč
jagnje opoteka k Cityjevim hribom,
obilan poletni dež vdira v njegove hiše kot lačna kurba.

Pod zimskim dežjem je
City videti kot svetla greda v črni mesečini:
padata ogenj in žveplo, trepalnice zmrzujejo.

City se ureja (IX)

Cityjine oči so skoraj kot iz pravljice:
eno se smeji, drugo pa je prazno,
ker so se solze kot biseri
raztresle po tleh
in se jih City zdaj ne ljubi pobirati.
City pili svoj nasmeh
in preizkuša različne vrste zob:
beli so preveč zadržani,
črni preveč staromodni,
gorčično rumeni se ne skladajo z očmi.
Bi ji morda lahko vi kaj priporočili?

Citizen spleen (XI–XIII)

City zen

Moja City je kot stara, polomljena vrana,
kot tleče, prasketajoče poleno,
kot pitana gos, ki je od lakote oslepela,
moja City je kot sardelica iz Talina v lastnem soku:
moja City je narejena čisto po moji podobi.

City Ples II (XXIX)

Moja City gre spet na ples,
 kjer se prikaže brez vabila.
 Oh, kako očarljiva je v fraku in ponošenem plašču,
 na eni nogi dišeč lakast čevlji, na drugi ji iz čevlja molijo prsti.
 Še posebej izbirčna je pri limuzini – včasih si je sploh ne izbere –,
 a to ne predstavlja težave,
 saj takrat pride sam Ples
 in jo vzame v naročje.

Hribi se tresejo in doline vzdihujejo,
 pustinja se veselijo in vasi počepnejo,
 velikani delajo velike skoke,
 birgite in roccoji ne morejo biti pri miru,
 plesalcem sega morje do kolen.

Ballatura se iz boemske spremeni v banansko
 in iz statalne v fatalno:
 omenimo zlasti delovni tango in nočne izhode,
 pa borzni balet na Dionizove ditirambe,
 ko skrivnostnejši pari izvajajo
 dolge figure valčka smrti.

Noči je konec, čakamo jutro.
 Na Cityjinih svetlih obrveh se svetlikajo kapljice znoja,
 iz ust ji visijo dolge verižice smeha.
 Oči ji gorijo kot neonske sveče,
 pulzne točke ji utripajo in
 prsti na nogi krvavijo,
 le frizura je čudežno nedotaknjena.
 Nazadnje zapoje petelin
 in City se na mestu sesede,
 s prameni sanj na čelu
 diha nedolžno, kot otrok,
 z rokami okoli vratu najdražjega.
 Sladke sanje!

City nespečnost (XXXII)

Nocoj City ne more zaspati.
Vsi spijo: nebo in zemlja,
morje in kamenčki na obali.
City pa obrne utrujene oči
k svetlikajočim se zvezdam
in v okroglih luninih licih
spozna resnico.
Po ulici pospešuje osamljen avto,
pijanec se opoteka po njej
in se zgrudi na pločnik,
mačka žveči ribje glave na zabojniku za smeti.
Moja City je žalostna,
ker ne more zaspati,
tako kot vsak večer.

City jutro (XXXIII)

Nekatera jutra v Cityju so takšna,
kot bi se v urah po zori iz senčnih meglic
prikazali ulični vogal, stopnice pekarnice,
trak na klobuku mladenke na ulici Starega trga
in nekdo, ki skozi sivkasto belo tančico
vprašujoče pogleduje tja,
kjer se na drugi strani vrat začne Mesto.

Tri gracije s cigaretami v ustih

Tri gracije s cigaretami v ustih so prilebdele na zelenico pred našo hišo: prva je imela bujne rdeče kodre, druga je bila v belih pajkicah, tretja pa v črnih žabah z veliko luknjo na palcu.

Z odporom sem jih opazoval izza žive meje: kako lahko pridejo onesnaževat svež zrak pred hiše neznancev, kot dimniki termoelektrarne?!

Glavo sem pomolil iz žive meje in zavpil (ter presenetil še sebe): »Punce, a imate kakšen čik?«
Nasmejale so se in jo hitro popihale.

Z blagim sladkastim vonjem v nosnicah je že začel delovati prijazni pik strupenega žela in začutil sem – oh, zagrizeni nekadilci! –, nezadržno željo po cigareti.

Let vodi čez rdečkasto nebo

plešeta, ne gledata opazovalcev,
oči imata le drug za drugega,
telesi govorita s svojim jezikom
in se prepletata v prostoru

in času, čeprav njuni srci
zreta v neskončnost in še dlje,
se skrivoma zavedata, da ples ne bo
trajal dlje od odmerjenega časa

*

plešeta in nikogar ne gledata,
oči ne moreta odvrniti drug od drugega,
zvončkljanje duš in strune teles,
dovolita, da se soplesalec ovije okoli telesa

in govori, tako dolgo govori,
dokler notranje zvončkljanje ne zamre
in se v negibnih telesih ne strdi tišina,
čeprav se zdi, da tudi takrat še plešeta

*

plešeta in vidita drug v drugega,
telo ima sicer meje, a čeznje kliče
tisto drugo bitje v tebi:
postal boš ti, če se boš razlil čez sebe,

še vedno sta narazen, a že gola,
celo železne kletke ne bi mogle
zadržati dveh duš, da ne bi planili
druga v drugo, prestrašeni od uroka drugosti

*

plešeta in nikogar ne gledata,
molčita: vse valovi kot ogenj,
kot ovijajoči se plameni
ju ogenj spreminja v pepel

molčita, a njuni srci pojeta

kot par jesenskih ptic se še sukata
okoli okamnelega gnezda,
potem se pridružita veliki jati,
ki jo let vodi čez rdečkasto nebo

Prevedla Julija Potrč

Poems About My City

City Ball (I)

My City has a ball today
she sits herself down, in black blouse,
and blond shoe,
in a killer-red basin,
then flies up to a tower
where we dance,
my City and I,
on razor blades,
till the cock crows
and lightning strikes
the tower to white ashes,
then as a phoenix
City rises again:
City, queen of phantoms
City, guardian of shadows
Ciudad, mi piedad y mi amor.

City Rains (III)

The autumn rain hisses in City
like sodden skiers in the slime-layered tundra:
dense drops descend on asphalt, holes, puddles.

The spring rain makes
a silky swish on City's stuffy streets:
feathery drops fall on asphalt, holes, puddles.

The early summer rain totters
like a trembling lamb on City's hills,
plump summer rain flops like a hungry whore onto City's houses.

City stands in the winter rain
like a garden plot luminous under the black moon:
it rains fire and brimstone, eyelashes ice over.

City Gets Dressed Up (IX)

City's eyes are straight out of a fairy-tale:
 one laughs, the other is blank,
 for tears, like pearls,
 have scattered all over the floor
 and City's in no mood to pick them up.
 City perfects her smile
 trying out different teeth:
 white are too meek,
 black too backward
 mustard doesn't match City's eyes.
 Perhaps you could give City a tip?

Citizen Spleen (XI-XIII)

City Zen

My City is like a lame old crow,
 like a flickering, fizzling firebrand,
 like a fatted goose starved blind;
 my City is like Tallinn sprat in its own juice:
 my City is so much in my image.

City Ball II (XXIX)

My City is off to a ball again,
this time uninvited.

Oh so charming City is in tails and tattered coat,
one perfumed patent shoe, toe out of the other.

City is pretty picky in her choice of limos – sometimes opting for none –,
but that's no problem,
for then Ball appears in person
and sweeps City off her feet.

Hills shudder and valleys sigh,
moors make merry, and hamlets hunch down,
giants perform huge leaps,
birgits and roccos can't sit still,
and dancers are knee-deep in the sea.

Ballatuur goes from bohemian to bananic
and from statal to fatal:
first and foremost are the office-foxtrot and the shift-break
and the business ballet to Dionysian dithyrambs:
more enigmatic pairs perform
a hyperbolic death waltz.

Night ends and morning hours approach.
Beads of sweat shine on City's white brow,
chunky chains of mirth hang from her lips
City's eyes burn like neon candles,
her pulse points throb
her toes are bloodied,
only her hairdo is miraculously intact.
At last the cock crows
and City drops on the spot,
dreamcurls on her brow,
breathing guilelessly childlike,
arms around her darling's neck.
Sweet dreams!

City Insomnia (XXXII)

Tonight City can't get to sleep.
 All is at rest: heaven and earth,
 sea and beachstones.
 But City turns tired eyes
 towards the twinkling stars
 and sees the truth
 in the round-cheeked moon.
 A single car speeds down the street,
 a drunk lurches over the road,
 and crumples onto the pavement;
 a cat gnaws at fishheads on top of a bin.
 My City is upset,
 for sleep will not come,
 just like every evening – actually.

City Morning (XXXIII)

Some City mornings are like this:
 from under the post-dawn shawl of mist
 appears a street corner, the bakery steps,
 a young woman's hatband in Old Market street,
 and some one who casts a guessing glance
 through the greyish-white veil to where
 beyond the gates Townhaven waits.

The Three Graces, Smoking Away

The three Graces, smoking away, hovered over the front lawn:
one with flowing red tresses, one in white leggings, one in black stockings,
a big hole in the big toe.

With a grin I watched from behind the hedge:
what are they doing polluting other people's fresh air
like power station chimneys?

I poked my head round the hedge and shouted (even surprising myself):
“Girls, have you got a cigarette?” –
but, with smiles on their faces, they hotfooted it.

A slight sickly-sweet smell in my nostrils,
a light poison sting had struck,
I felt – oh hardened non-smokers! –
an awful craving for a smoke.

Where Flight Leads Over the Red Horizon

they simply dance, never watching the watchers,
they have eyes for none except one another
and bodies that entwine their talking tongues
one round the other within this space

and time, though gazing towards eternity
and farther still, their longing hearts
secretly know that the dance cannot last
longer than the allotted dancing time

*

they simply dance, unaware of watchers,
two pairs of eyes locked onto each other,
and the chime of souls and chords of bodies
which allow the other to coil round the self

to talk, and talk on and on forever,
until the chime within at last subsides
and silence seals their bodies into stillness
though they seem to dance even there

*

they simply dance and see into each other,
the body has borders, but across them the call
of the self's other being still persists,
coming into its own as it overflows

they are apart as yet, already naked,
and even cages of iron won't hinder
two souls from fleeing one into the other,
bewildered by the spell of being other

*

they simply dance, unaware of watchers,
they fall silent, all floats like fire,
as flames entwining together in spirals
burn to cinders in a single blaze

they fall silent though their hearts are singing

and just like coupled autumn birds
they continue to circle the frozen nest,
at last they fall in with the massive flock,
where flight leads over the red horizon

Translated by Miriam McIlfatrick



Foto © Studio Bakos

Gábor Schein

Gábor Schein se je rodil leta 1969 v Budimpešti na Madžarskem. Diplomiral je iz madžarske in nemške literature in je zaposlen kot docent za madžarsko literaturo na Univerzi Eötvösa Lóránda v Budimpešti. Piše poezijo, prozo in kritike ter prevaja. Schein je avtor devetih pesniških zbirk, med njimi *Szavak emlékezete* (Spomin besede, 1991), *Üveghal* (Steklena riba, 2001), *(retus)* ((retuša), 2003), *Éjszaka, utazás* (Noč, potovanje, 2013), epske pesnitve *Bolondok tornya* (Stolp norcev, 2008), štirih romanov *Mordecháj könyve* (Mordohajeva knjiga, 2002), *Lázár!* (Lazar!, 2004), *Egy angyal önéletrajzai* (Avtobiografije angela, 2009) in *Svéd* (Šved, 2015) ter zbirke kratkih zgodb *Megölni, akit szeretünk* (Ubiti ljubljene, 2011). Njegova dela so prevedena v angleščino, nemščino, francoščino in bolgarščino; zanje je prejel več nagrad, med drugim nagradi Józsefa Attila in Milana Füst.

Gábor Schein was born in 1969 in Budapest, Hungary. He graduated in Hungarian and German Literature and works as an associate professor for Hungarian literature at the Eötvös Lóránd University in Budapest. He is a poet, writer, critic and translator. Schein has published nine collections of poetry, among them *Szavak emlékezete* (Words' Memory, 1991), *Üveghal* (Glass Fish, 2001) and *Éjszaka, utazás* (Night, Journey, 2013), the epic poem *Bolondok tornya* (Tower of Lunatics, 2008), four novels – namely, *Mordecháj könyve* (Book of Mordecai, 2002), *Lázár!* (Lazarus!, 2004), *Egy angyal önéletrajzai* (Autobiographies of an Angel, 2009) and *Svéd* (Swede, 2015) – and the short story collection *Megölni, akit szeretünk* (To Kill the One We Love, 2011). His work has been translated into English, German, French and Bulgarian and honoured with many awards, among them the Attila József Prize and the Milan Füst Literary prize.

Készülődés a varjak ünnepére

Meghalunk itt sorban, mint a kis bakák.
Ki karmot dicsér, ki robotot, ki hazug szót,
és boldog mind, ha pókhálóvá nyútt takaró alatt
rózsaszín húst ölel. Amiről hallgatunk,

nem a nagy titok. Nem siklunk soká az idő taraján.
Negyven fölött az ember már kész temető.
Sűrű esőbe néz, az arcokat ernyők fedik,
de képzeletben még itt is hús után kap.

Így készülünk, ostobán, a varjak ünnepére.
Lesz nagy sírás, káromlás. Pedig ha bevonul a győztes,
szekerén a megkötözött testtel, nevetnénk is akár.
Sikerült a nagy átverés. Csak azt nem tudjuk, kinek.

Kifordított szemmel

A bigott bosszú megint összetákolta cézárját. Valóban nincs új a nap alatt. A néma tüntetők a hét főbűn helyett a búskomorságot tartották meg maguknak, és letéve tábláikat, melyek jogállamot követeltek, megverten oldalogtak el, pisszenni se mertek az ellenséges közegben. A jó társat, a haragot, sosem szerzik vissza. De röhögni régi szokásuk szerint még tudnak magukon, amikor egymás között vannak. A legjobban egy színész nyerít. Nemrég tüdőrákot diagnosztizáltak nála.

*

Nyiss ki egy könyvet, és bökj rá egy szóra! Próbálj kirakni a betűiből értelmes szavakat. Hogy mi értelmes, az megegyezés kérdése. Egyezz meg magaddal! Egyezkedj! Vagy nézegesd a villamosokat a szeptemberi napsütésben. Mozgó tükröket vitet körül a város, a szoborszemek kétszáz év óta ugyanúgy néznek, és nem öregsenek: a tükörben az élet az ifjúság betegsége. De te gyógyulni akarsz. Kigyógyulni a korból, mely nem akarja látni, miként fedi egymást a személyes és a politikai patológia.

*

Két világot viselsz magadban. Hosszú sétákat teszel éjszaka. Olyan vagy, mint egy kísértethajó, mely kerül minden kikötőt, pedig vágyik oda, míg horgonyt vetni csak egymás gyengeségeiben lehet. Belül sötét vizeken hajózol, sötét ég alatt. De az indítékaid kívül annál fényesebbek. Harcba vonulnál ott, ahol a háborúk csak szünetelnek, és a szimbólumok, az őrző metaforák szünet nélkül ölnek. Tedd ezt! Légy legalább kívül becsületes! De ne hidd, hogy onnan eljuthatsz magadhoz.

*

A személy akkor fordul maga ellen, és érez szégyent, heves önutálatot, ha sokáig nem tudja teljesíteni belső elvárásait, és így nem tudja tisztelni magát. Ezt a villamosmegállóban egy húsz éve elnémult költő mondja, és a válasz egy sorstársi bólintás. De lássuk, mi az, amink mégiscsak megmaradt. Most esik az eső, jön az ősz. Jelszavunk lehet-e: thümósz? Hogy levette minden nedveset, félúton a harag és a nyugalom között, a magunk urai legyünk végre, és ne kolduljuk a bátorságot.

*

Hangulataid a Holddal változók. Tapasztalod magadat, de nem érted meg. Vagy egyszerre túl sokfélét értesz, túl sok szemmel nézed magadat, pedig vakon kellene, ahogy Buddha néz, a csordultig telt ürességre szögezve. És mégis indulsz? Nem tudod, hova. Hogy bízhatna meg benned akárki? Hogy bízhatnál te magadban? Az első lépésed elárul. Olyan vagy, mint a nappali Hold. Ismeretlen utakon jársz önmagad túloldalán, ahová nem követhet senki. Készülj az éjszakára! Nézz át a Földön kifordított szemmel!

*

Nincs számítás, amely beválhat. Nincs út, mely célhoz vezet. Ahol kétségbeesés, harag és büszkeség amalgámja mérgez, győzhet, aki mindent egy lapra tesz föl. Győzelme új szabályokat ad. És jönnek, akik úgy beszélnek az ő nyelvét, mintha velük született volna. Te ne tarts velük! Úgy járkálj alvó városodban, mintha temetőben, hogy barátja lehess az időnek. Bátorságot ebből meríts! Mert nem felejt és nem emlékszik a város, de házai formát adnak az időnek, és minden lakóját fölfalja.

*

Mint mikor a Duna kinyújtózik. Derékig vízben állnak a táblák, eltűnnek a lépcsők, nem látszanak a padok, ahol öregek és szerelmesek szoktak ülni, adódnak most is ilyen pillanatok. Ezeket számláld! Tépd le fejedről az ólomsisakot, mely az évek alatt ránőtt, dobd el messzire! Készülj! Törd fel a napokat egyenként, mint egy mandulát, edd ki belőlük, ami keserű volt, ami keserű lesz, és minden éjjel úgy fekszel le, mintha reggel benézhetne ablakodon hatalmas fejével egy rénszarvas.

Zuhanás

Láng csap ki egy zuhanó vadászgépből. Koromszínű füst száll, süketítő sivítás. Katapultálni! Ez most a parancs annak, akinek még van hova. Család? Európa? Átvált a pánikkapcsoló, az agy alkotóelemeire bontja a képeket. Mit látsz? El tudod mondani? Erre most nincs idő. Speciális neuronok elemzik a színt, a formát, a kontrasztokat. Fél másodperc múlva mozdulni fogsz, mintha

rakétával lőnének ki. Eldől, hogy a baleset kimenetele halálos lesz-e, vagy marad még esély. A tudat végre tökéletesen éber. Az automata pilótához pillanatonként tízmillió információ jut el, és ebből most negyvenet közül is veled. Persze így is a múltban élsz. Nem a szemeddel, hanem az emlékeiddel látod a pusztuló arcokat, amelyek körülvesznek, és mint egy sebész, lemetszed magadról

a feléd induló kezet, minden mosolyt, kimondatlan kérést. A pusztítás az egyetlen dolog, amihez valóban értesz, és fájdalom nélkül tagadod le magad előtt: a kannibalizmus nem csak Pápua féltett öröksége. Mióta élsz, egy gyűlölködő koldusország szennyt nyeled. Nincs rá mentség. De akármi történik, mindig zajlik valami más is, az illúziók egyáltalán nem kivételek.

Ha az utcára csak szökőnapokon dugod ki az orrod, csetelsz, levelezel inkább, és ritka fűszerekkel rafinált vacsorát főzöl gyerekek, feleségnek, barátnak talán, mindez egy időre feledhető. Elvégre az agy tudja, mi a fontos, mi nem az, amit pedig már ismer, megtartja magának. Hüti, csillapítja magát. Számára még mindig eldönthetetlen, hogy az utcán öldöklés folyik-e, vagy barbár

szerelmi tánc. Miközben híre jön, hogy egy tanár a bizonytalan határszélen részeg huligánokat vezet egykori iskolájához, hogy hatéves cigánygyerekekre támadjanak, itt egy nyakigláb kamaszfiú a villamosból üzen telefonon a barátjának: „siess, leszarom a lábad”. Az agyban minden tapasztalat nyomot hagy, és az archívumból bármikor előhívható, ha érzésekkel párosul. Ilyenkor persze örülnél,

ha nem ismernéd ezt a nyelvet. De a következő pillanatban ebből is muníció lesz, érv az ország és magad ellen, mert aki elmúlt negyven, az már perfekt alvajáró, szétbogozhatatlan benne a személyes és a kollektív képzelet. Ezért az automata pilóta mindig túl későn jelez. A zuhanás feltartóztathatatlan. Miféle reményt akarsz? Még szerencse, hogy az agy született ateista, mert elutazni csak az agyban lehet.

Búcsúzni orosz módra

Utazni visszafelé, nem hagyva ki egyetlen állomást sem. Összegyűjteni minden kis részletet, és egyenként letörölni őket a vonat ablakáról, mint megannyi párás, üres képet. Leoldani a borítékokról a címzést, kiüríteni a levélfiókokat, megsemmisíteni a számítógép memóriáját,

összetörni a telefont. Elégetni minden följegyzést, vázlatot, cédulát, kéziratot. Ha mindez kész van, leülni egy kicsit, orosz módra, indulás előtt. Odakint lekötve vár a kosár, a cséza, rajta pokróc, befogva az öreg ló. Alázkodj meg, büszke ember! Aztán kinézni még egyszer a szemközti háztetőkre.

Ebben a látványban lakott a nyugalom. Búcsúzni tőlük, felállni a székről, bő vízzel lemosni az asztalt, a polcokat. Úgy menni el innen, hogy ne maradjanak olvasható nyomok. A megtett út igaz története így talán megőrizhető. Mert a halál nem veszi vissza semmit, csak megváltoztat. Ezt a mondatot

egyszer aláhúztam egy könyvben. Ma már tudom, hogy ez is másképpen van. A halál azt veszi vissza, aminek nincs élete, és nem változtatja meg, ami él: arcokat írt belém a létemnél erősebb szeretet. Köszönöm, hogy velük élhettem, megőszülve a halálra. Mint füst, mint nyári felhő, hogy szertefoszoljak.

Priprave na vranjo gostijo

Tukaj bomo po vrsti pomrli kot mali pešaki.
Eden slavi kremplje, drugi tlako, tretji laži,
vsi pa so srečni, kadar pod pajčevinasto tkano odejo
objemajo rožnato meso. To, o čemer molčimo,

ni velika skrivnost. Ne drsimo dolgo po slemenu časa.
Človek po štiridesetem ima le še korak do pokopališča.
Tudi ko gleda v gost dež in obraze zakrivajo dežniki,
še vedno hlasta za mesom v svoji domišljiji.

Tako se pripravljamo, bedasto, na vranjo gostijo.
Takrat bo jok in stok in veliko krakanja. Ob prihodu
zmagovalca bi se privezani na voz morda lahko celo smejali.
Uspela je velika ukana. Samo tega ne vemo, komu.

Z obrnjenimi očmi

Slepo maščevanje je spet napletlo cesarja. Res nič novega pod soncem. Nemi demonstranti so namesto sedmim naglavnim grehom, potem ko so odložili transparente z zahtevami po pravni državi, raje zapadli v potrto, se pobito pobrali stran in si v sovražni sredini niso upali niti pisniti. Pravega tovarštva in jeze si ne bodo povrnili nikoli več. Krohotati samemu sebi se kot po navadi med prijatelji še znajo. Najbolj rezgeta neki igralec. Nedavno so mu diagnosticirali pljučnega raka.

*

Odpri knjigo in se zapiči v neko besedo! Iz njenih črk poskusi sestaviti smiselne besede. Kaj je smiselno, je stvar dogovora. Dogovori se s seboj! Pogajaj se! Ali pa glej tramvaje v septembrskem siju sonca. Mesto prevaža okoli premična zrcala, oči kipov gledajo enako tudi po dvesto letih in se ne starajo: v zrcalu je življenje bolezen mladine. Toda ti hočeš ozdraveti. Okrevati po bolezni dobe, ki noče prepoznati sovpadanja osebne in politične patologije.

*

V sebi nosiš dva svetova. Ponoči hodiš na dolge sprehode. Si kot ladja strahov, ki se izogne vsem pristaniščem, čeprav si želi tja, a kaj ko je mogoče vreči sidro samo v šibkosti drugega. Znotraj sebe pluješ po temnih vodah, pod temnim nebom, medtem ko so tvoji razlogi zunaj bolj sijoči. V boj bi šel, kjer so vojne obstale, simboli in pobesnele metafore pa brez prestanka pobijajo dalje. Kar! Bodi pošten vsaj od zunaj. A ne misli, da boš tako našel pot do svoje sredice.

*

Človek se obrne proti sebi, čuti hud gnus in sram, če dolgo ne more izpolniti svojih pričakovanj in se zato spoštovati. O tem pripoveduje na tramvajski postaji pesnik, ki je utihnil pred dvajsetimi leti, tovariš z enako usodo pa mu kima v odgovor. A pogledjmo, kaj nam je ostalo. Dežuje, prihaja jesen. Ali je naše geslo lahko: thymos? In bomo potem, ko bomo slekli vse mokro, na pol poti med jezo in mirom, končno gospodarji samega sebe, ne pa prosili vbogajme za pogum.

*

Tvoje razpoloženje se spreminja z luno. Preizkušaš se, a ne razumeš. Ali razumeš naenkrat preveč različnega, se gledaš s preveč očmi, čeprav bi se moral gledati kot slepec, kot Buda, s pogledom, pripetim na polno praznino. Vendarle kreneš. Čeprav ne veš, kam. Kako bi ti lahko kdo zaupal? Kako bi si lahko zaupal? Izda te že prvi korak. Si kot luna podnevi. Na svoji drugi strani hodiš po neznanih poteh, kamor ti ne more slediti nihče. Pripravi se na noč! Poglej na zemljo z obrnjenimi očmi.

*

Ni računice, ki bi se obnesla. Ni poti, ki bi vodila k cilju. Tam, kjer zastruplja ljudi amalgam obupa, jeze in ponosa, lahko zmaga tisti, ki stavi vse na eno karto. Njegova zmaga postavi nova pravila. In prihajajo, ki govorijo njegov jezik tako, kot bi se rodili v njem. Ti ne pojdi z njimi! Po svojem spečem mestu pohajaj kot po pokopališču in postani prijatelj časa. Iz tega črpaj pogum. Ker mesto ne pozablja in se ne spominja, vendar daje s hišami obliko času, na koncu pa požre še vse stanovalce.

*

Kot kadar se steguje Donava. Polja so do pasu v vodi, stopnice izginajo, ne vidijo se klopce, kjer po navadi posedajo starci in zaljubljeni, tudi zdaj se dogajajo takšni trenutki. Te preštevaj! Sklati z glave svinčeno čelado, ki je z leti prirasla nanjo, daleč jo odvrzi! Pripravljaj se! Dneve zdrobi kot mandlje, vsakega posebej, odgrizni proč, kar je bilo in kar bo grenko, ter vsako noč leži v posteljo, kot da bi jutraj lahko pogledal skozi okno severni jelen s svojo velikansko glavo.

Padec

Iz padajočega lovskega letala bruhne ogenj. Vali se sajast dim, sliši oglušujoče tuljenje. Katapultirati se! To je zdaj ukaz za vse, ki se še lahko kam. Družina? Evropa? Vključi se prestava za paniko, možgani razstavljajo slike na sestavne dele. Kaj vidiš? Znaš povedati? Zdaj ni časa za to. Posebni nevroni razčlenjujejo barvo, obliko, kontraste. Čez minuto in pol se boš premikal, kot bi te

izstrelili z raketo. Odločilo se bo, ali bo izid nesreče smrten ali boš še imel možnost preživetja. Končno je zavest popolnoma budna. Do avtomatskega pilota pride vsak trenutek deset milijonov informacij, od tega jih zdaj štirideset sporoča tudi tebi. Tudi na ta način seveda živiš v preteklosti. Umirajočih obrazov okoli sebe ne vidiš z očmi, temveč s spomini, in kot kirurg režeš od sebe

roke, ki se stegujejo proti tebi, vse nasmehe, neizrekljivo prošnjo. Uničevanje je edina stvar, na katero se zares spoznaš, in brez bolečine ne priznaš samemu sebi: kanibalizem ni samo skrbno varovana dediščina Papue. Odkar živiš, požiraš umazanijo sovražne beraške države. Opravičila za to ni. Toda kar koli se dogaja, vedno poteka tudi kaj drugega, iluzije niso nobena izjema.

Na ulico pomoliš svoj nos samo ob prestopnih dnevih, raje četaš, si dopisuješ in skuhaš otroku, ženi, morda prijatelju večerjo, oplemeniteno z redkimi začimbami, na vse drugo lahko za nekaj časa pozabiš. Navsezadnje možgani vedo, kaj je pomembno, kaj ni, kaj že poznajo, zadržijo zase. Ohlajajo se in pomirjajo. Še vedno pa ne doženejo, ali se na ulici pobijajo ali pa plešejo barbari

Ljubezenski ples. Medtem pride vest, da neki učitelj na negotovem robu meje pelje k svoji nekdanji šoli pijane huligane, da bi napadli šestletne ciganske otroke, na tramvaju kot prekla dolg najstnik sporoča prijatelju po telefonu: »Šibaj, jebem ti noge.« V možganih vsaka izkušnja pusti sled in jo lahko kadar koli, če je združena z občutki, prikličem iz arhiva. V takšnih trenutkih bi bil seveda vesel,

če ne bi znal tega jezika. Toda v naslednjem hipu bo tudi to municija, dokaz proti državi in tebi, ker kdor jih ima čez štirideset, je mesečnik par excellence, saj sta osebna in kolektivna domišljija v njem že nerazvozljivi. Zato avtomatski pilot vedno javlja prepozno. Padec je neizbežen. Kakšno upanje si želiš? Še sreča, da so možgani rojen ateist, ker je zares odpotovati mogoče samo v njih.

Slovo na ruski način

Potovati nazaj, ne da bi izpustil
eno samo postajo. Zbrati vse podrobnosti
in jih vsako posebej zbrisati z okna vlaka
kot toliko drugih meglenih in praznih slik. Odstraniti
naslov z ovojnice, izprazniti pisemske nabiralnike,
uničiti spomin računalnika,

zdrobiti telefon. Zažgati vse zapiske,
osnutke, listke, rokopise. Ko je vse nared,
pred odhodom, po rusko, še malo posedeti.
Zunaj čakajo privezana košara, koleselj, na njem odeja,
star konj v vpregi. Ponižaj se, ponosni človek!
Potem se še enkrat ozri ven na strehe hiš nasproti.

V tem prizoru je domoval mir. Poslovi se od njih,
vstani s stola, z veliko vode pomij mizo,
police. Odidi tako, da ne bodo ostali za tabo
prepoznavni sledovi. Resnična zgodovina opravljene poti
se morda lahko ohrani na tak način. Ker smrt ne jemlje
ničesar nazaj, samo spremeni lahko. Ta stavek

sem nekoč podčrtal v neki knjigi. Danes vem,
da je tudi to drugače. Smrt vzame nazaj,
kar nima življenja, in ne spreminja, kar živi:
ljubezen, močnejša kot lastno življenje, je pisala vame obraze.
Hvala, da sem lahko živel z njimi, osivel čakal smrt.
In se razblinil kot poletni oblak in lahen dim.

Prevedla Marjanca Mihelič

Preparation for the Crows' Feast

We die here in a row, like little billy-goats.
Who praise the claw, the hard labour, the lying word,
and all are happy, if they can embrace the rosy flesh
beneath the spider-woven blanket. It is not the great secrets

that we are silent about. We do not glide for long on the crest of time.
After forty, a person is already a graveyard.
Looking into the heavy rain, faces covered by umbrellas,
but thinking even here you can get a little meat.

So we prepare, like idiots, for the crows' feast.
Much weeping and cawing. If the victor marches by,
body bound to the cart, we could possibly even laugh.
The great scam has been successful. We just don't know for whom.

Translated by Otilie Mulzet

With Eyes Turned Inside Out

Bigoted revenge knocked together its Caesar yet again. Nothing new under the sun indeed. Instead of the seven deadly sins, the silent demonstrators held on to depression the longest, their only property and, laying down their banners demanding a state of rights, turned tail in the surrounding hostility, their boon companion, anger, lost along the way. Still, as of old, they keep laughing at themselves when among friends.

The one
with the loudest laughter is an actor, recently diagnosed with lung cancer.

*

Open a book and point at a word! Try to combine its letters into meaningful words. What meaningful means, consensus will tell you. Come to terms with yourself! Talk terms! Or gaze at the trams in the September sun. The city has its moving mirrors carried around, statues of the same unaging eyes for two hundred years: life in the mirror is youth's disease. But you want to get cured. Cured of the age that will not admit how private and political pathology overlap.

*

You carry two worlds within. Take long walks at night. You are like a ghost ship that keeps out of ports, though longing to berth, for one can only drop anchor in each other's failings. Inside, you sail on dark waters beneath dark skies. But your outward motivations are all the more shining. You'd gladly go to war where wars are merely suspended and where symbols, raving metaphors are on an incessant killing spree. Do so! Be upright on the outside at least! But don't think this will lead to your inner self.

*

A person turns against himself in shame and violent self-hatred if he can't fulfill his own expectations for so long he becomes unable of self-respect. These words are spoken in a tram station by a poet gone silent for the last twenty years, the answer a comradely nod. Still, let's see the remainders. It's raining now, soon autumn will be here. Could our
password
be thymos? So that, taking off all wet things, midway between anger
and calm, we
could at last become masters of ourselves, not begging for the alms of
bravery?

*

Your moods change with the moon. You experience but don't
comprehend yourself.
Or comprehend too many things at once, watch yourself with too
many eyes while you
should look like the Buddha: blindly, fixed on the void filled to the brim.
You set out all the same, not knowing where? How could anyone trust
you? How could you trust yourself? Your very first step betrays you.
You're like
the midday moon. You walk virgin paths on the far side of yourself
where no-one
can follow. Get ready for the night! Look across the Earth with eyes
turned inside out!

*

There are no safe estimates. No path to lead to the goal. Where the mix
of despair, wrath and conceit poisons, the one who puts all his eggs in
the one
basket is likely to win. His victory brings a brand-new set of rules. There
will come those who speak his lingo like a native tongue. Keep clear
of them! Walk your sleeping city like a graveyard, so that time can
befriend you. Draw courage from this: the city neither remembers nor
forgets but its houses mould time, and it devours all its inhabitants in
the end.

*

Like the Danube stretching out. Sign-posts half submerged in the
water, stairs drowned, the benches where lovers and old folks used to sit
vanished from sight: such moments still exist. You shall count these
only! Tear
off the leaden helmet that grew into your head! Get ready! Crack open
the days like almonds, eat what was and will be the bitterest part only
and go to sleep each night as if you could find in the morning
a giant reindeer's head staring in your window.

Translated by Erika Mihálycsa

Crash

Flames leap from a crashing fighter. Pitch-black smoke, a deafening screech. Eject! The command now to those who still have a place to. Family? Europe? The panic button hit, automation kicks in, images are decomposed by the brain. Can you tell what you see? No time for that. Special neurons analyze colours, shapes, contrasts. In half a second you're to be parachuted

at rocket speed. It will turn out if the crash is fatal or some chance remains. Consciousness perfectly sharp at last. The autopilot receives 10,000 data per second, out of which it now transmits 40 to you. Even so, you live in the past. You see the ruined faces around not with your eyes but with your memories and like a surgeon you sever

the hand that reaches out to you, the smiles, unvoiced requests. Destruction is all you're qualified for. You cod yourself painlessly: cannibalism is not the fenced-in heritage of the Papua only. Since birth you've been swallowing the faeces of a hate-ridden beggar nation. All your fault. But whatever occurs, there will always be something else: illusions are not rare.

If you go down the street on leap days only, chat and mail and cook exquisite dinners with outlandish spices for children and wife and friends maybe, all this can be forgotten for a while, since the brain knows what is important and keeps the familiar to itself. It can cool and ventilate itself. Even now it cannot decide if what goes on in the street is killing or a savage

mating ritual. In between, the news of a teacher leading drunken yobs to his ex-school close to the blurry border to attack Gypsy six-year-olds, and a lean teen texting a friend from the tram: Screw your feet, speed up! Every experience leaves its trace in the brain and can be looked up in the archive anytime if linked to some emotion. You would

of course gladly unknow the language in such moments. But this, too, turns into ammunition, an argument against yourself and the country, for everyone past forty is a perfect somnambulist with private and collective imaginary hopelessly entangled. No wonder the autopilot's signals

come always

too late. Crash is unavoidable. What hope do you hope for? How lucky the brain is a born atheist, for one can only go away in the brain.

Translated by Erika Mihájcsa

Farewell, Russian Style

To travel backward, not leaving out even a
single station. To gather up all the small details,
and to erase them one by one from the train window,
like so much steam, empty pictures. To remove
the addressee from the envelope, to empty the folders,
eradicate the computer's hard drive,

smash the telephone. Burn every note,
sketch, scrap of paper, manuscript. Then, if everything is ready,
sit down for while, like the Russians, before setting off.
Outside the basket is tied up, the light carriage, the heavy blanket on top,
the old horse harnessed. Grovel, proud man!
Then to look out one more time onto the rooftops across the street.

In that prospect, tranquillity resided. To bid farewell to them,
rise from the chair, wash off the table and shelves
with much water. To leave here so that no readable trace
shall remain. In this way the true story of the road travelled may
possibly be preserved. Because nothing is ever taken back
by death, only changed. Once I underlined

this sentence in a book. Now I know already:
this too is different. Death takes back that
which has no life, and it does not change that which lives:
faces stronger than my own life were written within me by love.
I give thanks that I could live with them, turning grey unto death.
Like smoke, like a summer cloud, so then it can disperse.

Translated by Ottile Mulzet



Foto © iz avtorjevega arhiva / from the author's archive

Robert Schindel

Robert Schindel se je rodil leta 1944 v Bad Hallu v Avstriji kot Robert Soël, sin judovskih komunistov. Po prijetju staršev, ki sta bila poslana v koncentracijsko taborišče, je bil nameščen v judovsko otroško bolnišnico, kjer je dočakal konec vojne. Med letoma 1961 in 1967 je bil aktiven član Komunistične stranke Avstrije (KPÖ). Študiral je filozofijo in bil eden od pobudnikov dunajskega študentskega gibanja. Schindel, ki velja za enega od sodobnih avstrijskih klasikov, v svojih delih pogosto tematizira šoo in svoj ambivalentni odnos do Dunaja, ki mu pravi *prestolnica pozabe* (nem. *Vergessenshauptstadt*), ter do tam še vedno razširjenega antisemitizma. Piše poezijo, prozo, drame in eseje. Njegova zadnja pesniška zbirka *Scharlachmutter* (Škrlatni gož) je izšla leta 2015, zadnji roman *Der Kalte* (Mrzli) leta 2013 in zadnja zbirka esejev *Man ist viel zu früh jung* (Vse prezgodaj si mlad) leta 2011. V slovenščini je leta 1996 pri založbi Wieser izšel njegov roman *Gebürtig* (*Gebirtig*) v prevodu Štefana Vevarja. Schindel je dobitnik mnogih nagrad (nagrada Heinricha Manna) in priznanj, soustanovitelj literarnega festivala Literatur im Nebel (Literatura v megli), ki vsako leto gosti svetovno znane literate (Rushdie, Oz, Atwood), med letoma 1999 in 2002 pa je bil tudi predsednik žirije za nagrado Ingeborg Bachmann.

Robert Schindel, a son of communist Jewish parents, was born in 1944 in Bad Hall, Austria, with his birth name listed as Robert Soël. After his parents were captured and interred in a concentration camp, he was brought to a Jewish children's hospital, where he saw the end of the war. He was a member of the Austrian Communist Party (KPÖ) between 1961 and 1967. He studied Philosophy and was one of the initiators of the student movement in Vienna. Schindel, who is considered as one of the most highly esteemed classic contemporary Austrian authors, frequently writes about the Shoah and his ambivalent attitude towards Vienna, which he refers to as the "Capital of Oblivion" (Ger. *Vergessenshauptstadt*). He writes poetry, prose, plays and essays. His most recent collection of poetry, *Scharlachmutter* (The Scarlet Snake), was published in 2015. His most recent novel, *Der Kalte* (The Cold One), was published in 2013, while his most recent collections of essays, *Man ist viel zu früh jung* (One Is Too Young Much Too Soon), was published in 2011. In 1996, his novel *Gebürtig* (Born-Where) was translated into Slovene by Štefan Vevar and published by the Wieser Verlag publishing house. Schindel has received many awards for his work (among them, the Heinrich Mann Prize), co-founded the literary festival Literatur im Nebel, which hosts world famous authors every year (Rushdie, Oz, Atwood), and was the president of the jury for the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize from 1999 until 2002.

Beim Besilben

Da meine Toten versintern
Merk ich, dass die Wunden veralten
Auch wenn die Schmerzen überwintern
Kann ich Narben verwalten

Der Fluchtsprung ins Leid
Mag nicht mehr gelingen
Der Schrei jener Zeit
Hallt bloß in den Dingen

So entspringen die Worte
Die vom Schmerze künden
Wie aus der Retorte

Meine Toten verschwinden
Doch mag ich noch finden
Beim Besilben die Borke

Ob die Zeit

Ob die Zeit entweicht
Oder ob ich sie vertreib
Ob ich an der Birne
Den Wurmbenag
Beim Hemdenwechsel merke

Ob du hinter diesen Schultern
Verschwunden oder gar
Verloren bist
Im Wetterwechsel

Und ob
Als da der Mond aufzieht
Die Ewigkeiten sich

In unsern Münderecken
Anreichern beim herzzerstossenden
Gelächel welches

Überbleibt von unsrer Zeit
Der klangarm entwichenen

Gedenkkerze

Die Gedenkkerze
Speist ihre Flamme
Aus dem Inneren aus dem
Moderknochenparadies

Kein Lichtwind
Bringt
Sie zum
Erlischen

Wenn sie stark flackert
Bisweilen ist ein Auflachen
Vernehmbar entfährt dem Sperrmaul
Von Mengele Josef

Julilegende vom achten Jahrzehnt

Für Christoph Meckel

Und der Juli zieht herauf und mein achties Jahrzehnt
 Genauer seh ich auf die Gräser schärfer den Käfer darin
 Unmerklich überholen die Schultern die Knie und
 Viel zu lang klebt mein Blick auf Vorbeigeherinnen
 Wenn auch hinter dem Wimpernvorhang verborgen als glimmte
 Der Sehnsuchtssachverhalt bloß nur noch und erlischt als Blicknis
 Ein flüchtiges Wahrnehmen zwischen Hier und Verschwunden
 Lässt mich dahin gehen und schön ist im Juli in Wiens warmen Straßen
 Wenn gegen Abend die Hitze sich hebt und vom Westen wie immer
 Der Wind das Gesicht streift der später nach Osten hin wegdampt

Und der Juli zieht ab und tiefer und flacher umgibt mich
 Mein achties Jahrzehnt die Bagatelle mit Verstärkung aber bloß
 Nachts in unserer Schüttelhütte wenn ich wache und sinne
 Indes meine Frau Wolkenbänke herausschläft mit ihrem Atem
 Auf denen meinesgleichen erschöpft Platz nahm und schaute
 Wie die Zeit vergeht wie die Stunden sich mit ihrem Ursprung verbinden
 Und ihre Minuten kitzeln mich in den Nüstern versäumt ist der Moment
 Als da ich einschlief gewogen vom achten Jahrzehnt
 Nicht unzärtlich sodass ich auch die Traumgestalten musterte im Dussel
 Muttchen hatte braune Augen Papá eine Glatze der doch mit

Fünfunddreißig hin gemacht wurd auch trug keiner meiner im Öden
 Verschwundnen Familie die Kornblume im Knopfloch und in den Augen
 Allesamt fideles Traumpersonal bisweilen lachend Zithter spielend

Großvater Salomon

Erzählt Witze erstmals in seinem zerbrochenem Leben Jahrzehnte
 nach seiner

Erschossenheit Buchhalterwitze vom Vierer der sich im Einser verbirgt
 Und knallend lacht das Büro und dass er erstmals im Rumbulawald
 bei Riga

Totentrompeten fand Sohn Georg bloß ertrunkene Fleischfliegen in
 Pfützen

Mitten in jenem Wald mit dem Gesicht nach unten Gras drüber
 Andere der Meinen blass in der Gestaltung und wie verschwunden Gisela
 Irma die ganzen Rebenwurzeln und Thorsche Hajeks Schindeln
 August zieht

Ins Land mehr Regen oder nicht wer sieht in die Zukunft wer sieht ins
Vergangne

Wer sieht Gegenwärtiges anders als irgendwie und deshalb verspreizt sich
Im Fluge mein achties Jahrzehnt lässt Federn herunter krächzt es hebt
Hast du nicht gehört die Zweite Mahler an und bestückwerkt meine Seele
Sodass ich auf den Bänken sitzend mitwippe zu den Terzverhauen die Leute
Bemerken das und wollen mir helfen führen mich mit Blaulicht nach
Grinzing

Im Traum der mir beim Erwachen zwischen Fingern und Zehen klebt meine
Frau ist schon im Bad und als ich herauskomme aus dem fröhlichen Jagen
Hat sie schon für uns das Müsli auf den Küchentisch gestellt wir laufen
Die Stiegen hinunter und es geht in den Neunten

Verstaut im Büro, verstaut im Café der Vormittag im späten Sommer
Fließt seinem Mittag zu ich lese die Zeitungen und finde Berichte
Vom Aneinanderreiben der einen Satzskelette an anderen tief beuge ich mich
Selber bereits im Kaffeehausstuhl sitzend ins Innere der Zeitung vor mir
Damit sich die Drohwelt der Meinerei hinter meinen Wimpern
verbergen mag

Und die Schlagzeilen in Buchstaben verschwinden wie damals mit
sechs da ich

Beim Wort Krambambuli lange wandern musste kommt ein Freund
schlägt mir

Seine Hand auf die linke Schulter und sagt na? und selbstverständlich erhebe
Ich mich stelle mich ihm gegenüber kneife den Arsch zusammen drück ihm
Die Hand und wir setzen uns gegenüber nieder verschwinden hinter
der Zeitung

Mit dem Beil im Nacken nähert sich der Abend was lebt und tanzt
und schuftet

Findet heim und hin und wieder tritt das Hin und Wieder aus dem Alleinsein
Heraus und liegt wie ein einsamer Pfirsich in der Schale die steht auf dem
Küchentisch meine Frau legt einige Marillen dazu ich paar Aschanti bevor
Wir uns vorm Fernsehen begütigen ein Film ein Video müd ist man bald
Und wir schlafen samt Wolkenbänken und dem Anderen und am Beginn
Meines achten Jahrzehnts sind wir zwei uns gewogen sodass die Wohnstatt
Nicht unangenehm uns birgt inmitten der Hubereien der Fechtereien aber
Versteckt sind wir nicht, denn versteckt ist niemand

Vorhanden sind wir und in den September mit uns kein Federlesen
keine Gnade

Pri zlogovanju

Ko moji mrtvi sintrajo se v sprimek,
se starajo mi, vidim, ureznine,
čeprav je zima ranam drag oprimek,
ne morejo mi blizu brazgotine

Ubežni skok v bolečino
mi zdaj nič kaj ne uspeva,
v stvareh samo, po njih edino
krik tistih let še odmeva

Tako besede mezzoforte
o mukah pričujoč
kapljajo kakor iz retorte

Moje mrtve jemlje noč,
a vendar rad bi zlogujoč
še našel skorjo alias *Borke*.

Da se čas

Da se čas krade med prsti
ali da ga preganjam,
ali da na hruški
opazim objedenost od črvov,
ko si preoblačim srajco

Ali da ti kar izgineš
za temi rameni
ali se sploh izgubiš,
ko se sprevrže vreme

Ali da se,
ko vzide mesec,
v koticčkih najinih ust

nakopičijo večnosti
ob srce parajočem
smehljanju, ki

je preostanek najinega časa,
skoraj neslišno ubeglega.

Sveča v spomin

Sveča v spomin
napaja svoj plamen
iz notranjosti, iz
paradiža strohnele kosti

Noben piš
svetlobe
je ne
ugasi

Ko močno plapola,
včasih plane v krohot,
ki se slišno izvije iz gobca
na zapahe Josefa Mengeleja.

Julijska legenda o osmem križu

Za Christopherja Meckla

In bliža se julij in moje osmo desetletje
in bistreje vidim trave, ostreje hrošča sredi njih
neopazno mi ramena sežejo prek kolen in
veliko predolgo se mi pogled pase na sprehajalkah mimo
čeprav skrit za zaveso vek kakor da vse kar ima
opraviti s hrepenenjem le še tli in ugaša kot vidnost
bežna zaznava med tukajšnjim in izginulim me popelje
na zrak in že me julij spremlja po toplih ulicah Dunaja
ko se proti večeru vzdigne vročina in ti kot vedno veter zaveje
v obraz zahodnik seve ki ga pozneje odpihne proti vzhodu

In julij se umakne in globlje in plitveje me zdaj obda
moje osmo desetletje bagatela pobitosti ampak samo ponoči
v najini razmajani koči ko bdim in tuhtam medtem ko
žena v snu nagomili pogorja oblakov s svojo sapo
na katerih bi človek, kakršen sem, utrujen posedel in se razgledal
kako mineva čas kako se ure vračajo v svoj začetek
in me njihove minute ščegetajo v nosnicah zamujen je trenutek
da bi lahko zaspal zaziban od osmega križa še kar
spokojno zaspal in potem omotičen meril tudi sanjske postave
mamica je imela rjave oči očka pa plešo vendar so ga

pokončali pri petintridesetih tudi ni nihče iz moje v osami
izginule družine nosil plavice v gumbnici in v očeh vsi skupaj
vesela sanjska družčina z nasmeškom ob citrah včasih ded Salomon
ki pripoveduje vice prvič v svojem razbitem življenju
desetletja potem ko so ga ustrelili knjigovodske vice o štirici
ki da se skriva v enici in pisarna poka od smeha in da je nekoč
v gozdu Rumbula pri Rigi našel mrtvaške trobente sin Georg samo
utopljene mesarske muhe v lužah sredi tistega gozda z obrazom
navzdol nad njim trava drugi moji zbledelih potez in kot izginuli
Gizela in Irma in vse korenine trte in skodle Thorscheja Hajeka avgust

prinese več dežja ali tudi ne kdo vidi v prihodnost kdo vidi v preteklost
 kdo v sedanjost drugače kot pač nekako in zato se v letu razpne
 moj osmi križ osmuka se perja zakraka in se dvigne in mi
 – nisi poslušal Mahlerjeve Druge? – restavrira dušo da se sedeč
 na klopeh zibljem v ritmu razbijanja v tercah ljudje to opazijo
 in mi hočejo pomagati in me z modro lučjo odpeljejo na Grinzing
 v snu ki se mi med prebujanjem lepi med prste rok in nog
 žena je že v kopalnici in ko se iztrgam iz veselega pogona
 naju na kuhinjski mizi že čaka müsli hitro se spustiva
 po stopnicah in že jo ubirava proti Devetemu

V pisarno strpan v kavarno stlačen dopoldan poznega poletja
 se izteka v svoj poldan, berem časopis in najdem poročila
 o drgnjenju stavčnih skeletov drugih ob druge že sedeč
 na kavarniškem stolu se nizko potopim v notranjost časopisa
 pred sabo da bi se grozeči svet mnenj in mnenjkovanj morda skril
 za mojimi vekami in bi se veliki naslovi utopili v črkah kot takrat
 pri šestih ko sem moral dolgo romati po besedi abrakadabra,
 mimo pride prijatelj me z roko potreplja po levi rami in reče kako?
 in seveda vstanem se postavim predenj, stisnem ritnice
 njemu pa roko in sedeva si nasproti in izgineva za časopisom

S sekiro v tilniku se bliža večer kar živi in pleše in gara
 najde domov in tu in tam izstopita *tu in tam* iz samote
 in obležita kot osamljeni breskvi v skodeli, ki stoji na
 kuhinjski mizi, žena priloži nekaj marelic in oreškov,
 preden se razkomodiva pred televizorjem neki film video
 kmalu si ga sit in zaspiva skupaj s kopastimi oblaki
 in vsem drugim in na začetku mojega osmega desetletja sva
 si naklonjena da bivališče ni neprijetno in naju skriva
 sredi prask iz pričkarij ampak skrita nisva, kajti skrit ni nihče
 tako sva tako se brez milosti in izmikanja opotekava v september

Prevedel Štefan Vevar

Silvering

As my dead men sinter
I note the wounds ageing
Though griefs overwinter
I master the scars

One leap into torment
May not free me later
The cry of that moment
Is stubborn in matter

The words that tell sorrow
Come bubbling and spilling
As a vessel spills vapour

My dead men go over
Yet I may discover
Thick bark when they silver

Translated by Timothy Adès

Does Time

Does time disperse
Or do I make it pass
Do I see where the worm
Has gnawed the pear
As my shirt gets changed

Have you disappeared
Behind these shoulders
Are you even lost
As the weather gets changed

As the moon climbs up
Do eternities

At the crease of our mouths
Enrich by the heart-shattering
Laughter which

Is left from our time
That soundless dispersed

Translated by Timothy Adès

Remembrance Candle

The remembrance candle
Feeds its flame
From inside from the
Paradise of rotting bones

No wind of light
Is brought to
Douse it

When it flares fiercely
Sometimes a burst of laughter
Perceptibly exits the mouthtrap
Of Josef Mengele

Translated by Timothy Adès

July Legend of My Eighth Decade

For Christoph Meckel

July and my eighth decade approach
 I can see the beetle in the grass more clearly and sharply
 Imperceptibly my shoulders overtake my knees and
 My glance lingers far too long on women passing
 Though concealed behind the curtain of eyelashes as if
 The circumstances of my longing were diminished to a mere glow,
 snuffed-out by a tiny glimpse
 A fleeting realization between the here and the disappeared
 Allows me to walk on and it's lovely in July in Vienna's warm streets
 When towards evening the heat lifts and from the west as usual
 The wind strokes one's face and later steams off towards the east

And July fades and more deeply and evenly I'm surrounded
 By my eighth decade and the mere fact of falling apart but only
 At night in our *Schüttelhütte* when I wake and think
 While my wife sleeps out banks of clouds in her breathing
 On which people like me exhausted took a seat and watched
 Time passing how the hours connect to their origin
 And the minutes tickle my nostrils and the moment is missed
 As I fell asleep rocked by the eighth decade
 Not ungently so that I could also survey dream images in my stupor
 Mama had brown eyes Papa a bald head who at

Thirty-five was killed and none of my family missing in the
 Wasteland wore a cornflower in the button-hole and in the eyes
 Of all the jolly dream personnel now and then laughing zither-
 playing grandfather Salomon
 For the first time in his broken life decades after being shot dead
 Tells jokes bookkeeper jokes about the figure four hidden in the
 figure one
 And the office laughs loudly and that he for the first time in the
 Rumbula forest near Riga
 Found the music of death son Georg merely drowned flesh-flies in
 puddles
 Deep in that forest face down grass growing over
 Others in my family pale in shape and almost vanished Gisela
 Irma and all the vine-roots and Thorsche Hajek's wooden shingles

August comes more rain or not who can predict the future who sees
into the past

Who sees the present differently than somehow and therefore
My eighth decade in a flash pulls apart drops feathers croaks rises
Have you not heard Mahler's Second arming my soul
So that I sit on benches jiggling my feet to the mis-tuned third
People notice it and want to help drive me with flashing blue light to
Grinzing

In my dream that at waking sticks between my fingers and toes
My wife is already in the bathroom and when I emerge from the merry hunt
She has already laid out the muesli for us on the kitchen table
We run down the stairs and into the ninth

Stowed in the office, stowed in the café the morning in late summer
Flows into lunchtime I read the papers and find reports
Of skeletons of sentences rubbing against each other
Already in the coffeehouse chair I lower myself into the inside pages in
front of me

So that the threatening world of opinions might be hidden behind my
eyelashes

And the letters of headlines disappear as when I was six and
Had to linger a long time at the word *Krambambuli* a friend comes
Pats me on the left shoulder says *Well?* And of course I
Get up face him clench my buttocks shake his hand
And we sit down opposite one another and disappear behind the paper

With an axe at its neck the evening approaches what is alive and
dances and slaves away

Walks home and now and then the Now and Then emerges from being
alone

Lies like a lonely peach in the bowl that stands on the
Kitchen table my wife adds a few apricots I a few peanuts
Before we calm down in front of the telly a film a video one soon gets tired
And we fall asleep together with the banks of clouds and all the rest
And at the onset of my eighth decade we are well-disposed to one another
So that our dwelling shelters us not unpleasantly amidst the
exaggerated actions and delusions

But we are not hidden for no one is

We exist and are into September no hanging around for us no mercy

Translated by Christine McNeill



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Korana Serdarević

Korana Serdarević se je rodila leta 1982 v Zadru na Hrvaškem. Diplomirala je iz hrvaške in primerjalne književnosti na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Zagrebu. Delala je kot novinarka v kulturnih redakcijah *Večernjega lista* in *Foruma*. Od leta 2013 je zaposlena kot gimnazijska profesorica, poleg tega prevaja iz angleščine. Leta 2013 je prejela nagrado Ranka Marinkovića za kratko zgodbo *Krivosas* (Progasti gož) in nagrado Zlatka Tomičića za kratko zgodbo *Ptice*. Njena proza je bila objavljena v več literarnih revijah in predstavljena v literarnih oddajah na Tretjem programu hrvaškega radia (HR). Avtoričin prvenec, zbirka kratkih zgodb *Nema se što učiniti* (Ni kaj storiti), je izšel leta 2015.

Korana Serdarević was born in 1982 in Zadar, Croatia. She graduated in Croatian and Comparative Literature from the Faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb. She worked as a journalist for the culture sections of the newspapers *Večernji list* and *Forum*. Since 2013 she has worked as a university preparatory school teacher and also translated from the English. In 2013 she won the Ranko Marinković Prize for the short story *Krivosas* (Four-Lined Snake) and the Zlatko Tomičić Prize for the short story *Ptice* (Birds). Her prose has been featured in many literary journals and on literature shows broadcast on the Third Channel of the Croatian national radio (HR). Her debut collection of short stories *Nema se što učiniti* (Nothing Can Be Done) was published in 2015.

Franka

Ujutro sam ispao iz autobusa kao da me netko gurnuo nogom u leđa. Zateturao sam prema kolodvorskom betonu i s mukom uhvatio ritam suvisloga hoda. Popio sam noćas cijelu tabletu protiv mučnine, a moje ju je tijelo još uvijek poslušno probavljalo. Vani se spustila gusta bijela magla, pa sam vidio samo sitni dio svijeta ispred sebe. To je dovoljno da dođem na svoj cilj; prostor mi se otvara kad nogom već zagazim na novo mjesto. Nema dalekih vidika ni praznina koje bih pokrivaio plahtama nostalgичnih prisjećanja. Grad mojeg djetinjstva bio je zakriven niskim oblakom i to mi je odgovaralo. Takav je bio i u mojoj svijesti.

Zrak hladan, vlažan. Zvukovi mi se približavaju iz potpune nepoznanice. Sve do nove autobusne stanice vukao sam za sobom torbu kao da je preteško tijelo mrtvaca, stalno svjestan njezine unutrašnjosti, onoga što se tiskalo između mojih majica. Četiri mjeseca premještao sam po stanu kuvertu koja je stigla preporučeno, potpisano i otpisano, sa sudskim žigom na poleđini. Nevoljko svjestan da to ne smijem zgužvati i baciti, ostavljao sam sadržaj pošiljke po radnim površinama stana, samo da vidim može li se nekako zametnuti ili zaboraviti. Nije uspjelo. Štoga radio, štampa tih papira doplazila bi mi pod ruku izabadala se u svijest poput nedovršene domaće zadaće. Morao sam nešto učiniti, otpisati, potpisati, nazvati nekoga, ili otići na lice mjesta i riješiti sve odjednom. Neočekivano i s dozom prkosa prema samome sebi, ovo posljednje je prevagnulo.

Gradski autobus još je uvijek bio javno predvorje. Ispred mene su se tiskali mlohavi ljudi, obješeni kao kaputi na vješalicama, zgužvani od grubog buđenja, a dovoljno budni za suvišne razgovore. Umor me razmazao po sjedalu kao pijanog balavca. Moja je stanica pretposljednja, nakon nje se limena čekaonica okreće i vraća natrag, na početak svoga kruga.

Ostalo je samo još nekoliko koraka do kuće. Izranja iz magle kao mokra fotografija. Mali bakin vrt, već posve trulo stablo smokve i obrisi jednokatnice koja je prema papirima u mojoj torbi sada bila samo moja.

Mama i ja uglavnom smo bili sami u prizemlju. Otac je radio od sedam do sedam, a njegovi povratci doma nisu uključivali toplu idilu, društvene igre ili gledanje komedija na večernjem programu. Bilo je ključno da ga se ostavi na miru i mama me nježno opominjala svaki put kad bih mu se htio približiti.

Baka, tatina mama, živjela je sama u potkrovlju i njezine su se biljke spuštale s balkona sve do moje sobe. Jednako tako, njezin je utjecaj sezao do najintimnijih kutaka mojih roditelja. Baka je bila ponosna vlasnica kuće, ona je sve znala i pratila, svemu je dodavala spektakularnu interpretaciju, koju bi nam onda mirno referirala za nedjeljnih ručkova. Mama se očekivano vrijeđala tim upletanjem, potom se ljutila, pa i smijala, a onda ju je jednoga dana, na naše čudo, počela ignorirati. Pretpostavljam da je u tom trenu baka počela umirati. Njezina zabadaanja u život više nisu imala snagu da zatalasaju tuđe živote i, kada je zaspala one godine noć uoči Uskrsa, više se nije probudila.

Pokucao sam na susjedova vrata punom šakom. Magla se već dizala i prisjećao sam se te kuće preko puta, njezinih golih neožbukanih zidova i prenisko postavljenih prozora. Na ulici još nije bilo nikoga s kime bih morao prolaziti mučno preispitivanje gdje sam bio i što sam radio, pa sam se zgrčio od pomisli na razgovor koji slijedi.

Otvorila mi je Franka.

Franka je ružna. Pogledao sam je izbliza, i zaista: nju njezina ružnoća određuje više nego ikoga.

“Dobar dan?”

Imala je visoko čelo, plosnato lice uokvireno sitnim plavim kovčama, male oči duboko usađene i predaleko od korijena nosa. A najveću je pažnju privlačio veliki madež na lijevom obrazu koji je curio iz oka kao gigantska smeđa suza. Taj tužni klaun buljio je u mene s vrata, čekajući. Predstavio sam se.

“Marko? Naš Marko? Isuse, nikad te ne bih prepoznala!” ciknula je i rastegnula zubati osmijeh, koji njezinu fleku razmaže do uha. Nisam imao pojma tko je ona i sekundu sam se predomišljao trebam li joj to priznati. Sumnjam da bih zaboravio takvo lice. Iz lijenosti sam se odlučio samo nasmiješiti. Pozvala me unutra, a ja sam nervozno objasnio da trebam ključ od kuće, da sam umoran, da neću ništa piti i da ću navratiti kasnije. Frankina velika stražnjica zanjihala se prema ormaru u hodniku, odakle je izvadila snop ključeva. Dok je brbljala, trudio sam se da ne zurim u madež.

“Ako bilo što trebaš...”

“Da... Hvala lijepa!”

Otključao sam vrata i snažno povukao torbu za sobom u dugački hodnik. Sve je bilo kako sam ostavio poslije mamina preseljenja. Četiri godine kuća je tražila svog stanara, mirno je taložila prašinu na svoje površine i čekala. Prije nekoliko mjeseci stričevi su konačno

odlučili da će mirovati u svojoj preookeanskoj zemlji i prepisati je potpuno na mene. Na Borina sina. On je ionako tamo odrastao. Neka malome, tko će mu pomoći ako neće familija. Gdje je uopće? Što radi? Neka, neka bude cijela kuća Borinom Marku, možda se i oženi pa da ima gdje začeti obitelj. Neka, neka njemu. Dogovorili su se, dirnuti vlastitom darežljivošću.

Upalio sam svjetlo, progutao slinu i zakoračio prema dnevnom boravku. Nisam ni primijetio da je Franka još uvijek iza mene.

Moj pubertet protekao je u neoriginalnim okršajima s ocem, koji se nalazio prozvanim da, tako naglo zainteresiran, verbalno usmjerava i komentira moj put k zrelosti. Nikada s dovoljno objašnjenja, rezao mi je svaku ambiciju u korijenu, koliko god je majka u tajnosti zalijevala brižnim suzama. Na cijelom tom putu ja nikada nisam ciljao previsoko, ali ponekad iskrena želja da odem na skijanje ili na kampiranje, ugušila se očevim tupim prezirom i zatvaranjem novčanika. Iako više ne razmišljam o tome, mislim da je tako činio jer me nije volio.

Sjećam ga se kako maše s vrata dok majka i ja sjedimo u susjedovu prekrzanom peugeotu. Rat je došao preblizu i samo su pravi muškarci ostali da ga gledaju u facu. Posve sam, strog i tih, ostao je i otac. Bila je skoro ponoć i ulice su bile potpuno uronjene u tminu, a mi nismo palili svjetla na automobilu. Sjećam se trudnice koja je sjedila lijevo od mene, na stražnjem sjedalu, njezina velikog tamnog trbuha, mokrih obraza i majčine ruke koja me stiskala. Pobjegli smo.

Kad smo se konačno vratili, mama se brzo pobrinula da zamijeni betonsku ploču na groblju mramornom, što otac nikada ne bi dozvolio. Takvo bacanje novca na mrtve.

Koliko se god upinjao u svojoj odluci da bude tvrd, koliko god odolijevao gnjecavoj kaljuži osjećaja, čovjek je u svojoj srži uvijek mekan. Osjetio sam to dok sam gledao drveni stol u kutu, vitrinu s majčinim kristalnim čašama koje nikada nismo upotrebljavali, kauč isfucan od samotnoga gledanja sapunica, predugo kukičane zavjese. Otvorio sam prozore. Magla se povlačila.

“Usisala sam prošle nedjelje”, rekao je odjednom glas iza mene. Ustuknuo sam.

“He-he”, iskesila se. “Došla sam vidjeti je li sve okej. Upalit ću ti frižider, mogu i namjestiti postelju...”

Franka je prtljala po kuhinji svojim debelim prstima, svjetlo je polako otkrivalo svu starost poznatog prostora i sve sam se više osjećao kao uvučen u neki davni život koji me sad žulja kao kriva cipela.

“Stvarno ne treba ništa!... Ne mislim se zadržavati”, procijedio sam.

“A je li?” provirila je iza frižidera onim svojim obilježenim obrazom, kao neka tužna opsjena. Gledajući je kako viri s tog mjesta gdje je najčešće boravila moja majka, obuzme me tiha jeza. Meni posve nepoznata i strana, Franka je sa svojom ružnoćom zaposjela našu kuću. Njezina figura ovdje je izgledala još upečatljivija, prostor koji sam držao simbolom intimne katastrofe njezino je lice obilježilo maskom tužnoga klauna.

“Mislila sam da ćeš malo ostati, vidjeti kako se ovdje diše, sad kad je kuća tvoja”, progovorila je Franka. Približavala mi se, zapiljena ravno u moje zjenice, sve dok mi nije stala preblizu. Vidio sam tamne dlačice na njezinu madežu i to me ispunilo reskim gađenjem.

“Došao sam srediti papire da mogu prodati kuću”, rekao sam, brzo zaobišao njezino bačvasto tijelo i krenuo prema svojoj sobi. U kuhinji je hladnjak zabrundao kao da se netko značajno nakašljao.

Kad sam otišao na faks, mama je nekoliko godina živjela sama, boreći se s visokim režijama i predugim danima u koje je raspoređivala sitne obveze. Povremeno bi otišla nekome počistiti kuću da nadopuni svoju službeničku plaću, a kad sam konačno dobio posao, mirno je otišla u prijevremenu penziju i preselila se baki u Split. Zapravo, mislim da je cijeli život čeznula za tim gradom, živjela je svjesno iščupana iz svoje sredine, u nepoznatom gradu i u tuđoj kući. Razumio sam je.

Znao sam da se vlasništvo kuće mora riješiti i pristojno sam odgovarao na pozive svojih stričeva. Ničime im se nisam nametao, očekujući da će podijeliti kuću na sitne prostore, da će je izrezati kao rođendansku tortu i razdijeliti na kušanje. Svoju bih mrvicu odmah pljunuo nazad. Ja nikada više neću živjeti u ovoj ulici, u ovoj kući. Nikada više neću biti dijete, dječak, mladić. Od svih vrata kroz koja ću proći, neću se vraćati onima iz kojih sam istrčao. Ne, ta se kuća mora riješiti. I mama se slaže. Šteta da propada. Neka ode u druge ruke, neka se napuni novim ljudima, neka je sravne sa zemljom. Kuća mora otići.

U sobi se osjećao ustajali zrak, pa sam širom otvorio balkonska vrata. Ravno ispred mene samo su kuće, a na ulici djeca. Iza mojih leđa sredina sobe zjapila je prazna, a na rubovima se se stisnuli krevet, malo zidno ogledalo, pa pisaći stol i ormar. Sve čisto, ostavljeno, samo. Izvadio sam iz torbe papire i sjeo da odlučim što mi je činiti.

Kad sam se opet okrenuo, vidio sam da na mom krevetu sjedi Franka. Nervoza mi je protresla tijelo.

“Oprosti, trebaš li nešto?”

Šutjela je.

“Tko si ti uopće?”

“Franka”, rekla je mekano i pogledala me prijekorno.

U tom trenu učini mi se da je zapravo puno starija od mene, možda je već gospođa ili nečija majka. Šutjeli smo. Širokim dlanom mazila je goli madrac na mom krevetu.

“Trebaš li što?” ponovio sam, već jasno nemiran. Odmahnula je ružnom glavom, ali je ostala sjediti. Njezin dlan povlačio se po madracu preprisno, lagano šušteći, ostavljajući za sobom ravnine.

Gledao sam je s tom novom mržnjom što je u meni rasla i gušila svaku empatiju prema kovrčavoj nakazi koja sjedi na krevetu, tamo gdje sam toliko puta oplakao svoje djetinjstvo. Kao da je pročitala moje misli, Franka je spustila ramena i tužno se zagledala kroz balkonska vrata, a njezina smeđa suza objesila se do brade.

“Hvala na pomoći, Franka, ali stvarno bih htio biti malo sam”, omekšao sam ton i ustao. “Imam puno posla.”

Uglovi usana opet su joj se popeli u nezgrapan osmijeh. Svojim vodenim pogledom šeta mi po licu i tijelu i obuzima me osjećaj kao da se po meni premještaju mokri pipci hobotnice.

Stajao sam nasred sobe, otrovan gadljivom nelagodom, zatočen.

“Nisi ti kriv što je kuća prazna”, Franka šapne i ustane. Zagrli me jako, svom snagom.

Propuh je pritvorio balkonska vrata. Vani se sunce probijalo kroz naslage oblaka, dopirali su glasovi i prolazili automobili. Jutro je bilo zrelo.

Kad sam povratio dah i pogledao preko Frankine glave, vidio sam svoj odraz u malom zidnom ogledalu. Stajao sam tamo potpuno sâm.

Prodao sam kuću.

Kad sam poslije otišao mami, upitao sam je sjeća li se neke Franke iz susjedstva. Mama me prvo dugo gledala, a onda je neko vrijeme plakala.

Franka

Zjutraj sem padel z avtobusa, kakor da bi me kdo z nogo sunil v hrbet. Opoitek sem se proti postajnemu betonu in stežka ujel ritem usklajenih korakov. Sinoči sem vzel célo tableto proti slabosti, moje telo pa jo je še vedno ubogljivo prebavljalo. Zunaj se je spustila gosta bela megla, zato sem videl zgolj droben del sveta pred sabo. To je zadostovalo, da sem prišel na cilj; prostor se mi je odpiral, ko sem naredil korak naprej. Ni bilo daljnih pogledov niti praznin, ki bi jih prekrival z rjuhami nostalgčnih spominjanj. Mesto mojega otroštva je bilo zakrito z nizkim oblakom in to mi je ustrezalo. Takšno je bilo tudi v moji zavesti.

Zrak mrzel, vlažen. Zvoki so se mi bližali iz popolne neznanke. Vse do nove avtobusne postaje sem za sabo vlekel torbo, kakor da je pretežko truplo, in se ves čas zavedal njene notranjosti, tistega, kar se je mečkalo med mojimi majicami. Štiri mesece sem po stanovanju prestavljal kuverto, ki je prispela priporočeno, podpisano in odpisano, s sodnim žigom na hrbtni strani. Nerač sem se zavedal, da tega ne smem pomečkati in odvreči, in puščal vsebino pošiljke na delovnih površinah stanovanja, samo da bi videl, ali se lahko nekako založi ali pozabi. Ni uspelo. Ne glede na to, kaj sem storil, mi je tisk teh dokumentov prihajal pod roko in se mi zabadal v zavest kakor nedokončana domača naloga. Moral sem nekaj storiti, odpisati, podpisati, koga poklicati ali oditi na kraj sam in urediti vse hkrati. Nepričakovano in z dozo kljubovanja samemu sebi je pretehtalo slednje.

Mestni avtobus je bil še vedno javno preddverje. Pred mano so se drenjali mlahavi ljudje, obešeni kot plašči na obešalnikih, pomečkani zaradi grobega bujenja, vendar v zadostni meri budni za odvečne pogovore. Utrujenost me je razmazala po sedežu kakor pijanega smrkavca. Moja postaja je bila predzadnja, po njej se pločevinasta čakalnica obrne in odpelje nazaj, na začetek svojega kroga.

Do hiše je bilo le še nekaj korakov. Iz megle je vstajala kakor mokra fotografija. Majhen babičin vrt, že povsem strohnel figovec in obrisi enonadstropne hiše, ki je po dokumentih v moji torbi zdaj samo moja.

Z mamo sva bila v glavnem sama v pritličju. Oče je delal od sedmih do sedmih, njegove vrnitve domov pa niso vključevale tople idile, družabnih iger ali gledanj komedij na večernem programu. Ključno ga je bilo pustiti pri miru in mama me je nežno opominjala vsakič, ko sem se mu hotel približati.

Babica, očetova mama, je živela sama v podstrešnem stanovanju in njene rastline so visele z balkona vse do moje sobe. Ravno tako je njen vpliv segal do najintimnejših kotičkov mojih staršev. Babica je bila ponosna lastnica hiše, vse je vedela in spremljala, vsemu je dodajala spektakularno razlago, ki nam jo je potem mirno predstavila ob nedeljskem kosilu. Mamo je to vpletanje pričakovano žalilo, potem se je jezila, tudi smejala, nato pa jo je nekega dne, na naše presenečenje, začela ignorirati. Domnevam, da je v tistem trenutku babica začela umirati. Njena vpletanja v življenje niso imela več moči, da bi vzvalovila tuja življenja, in ko je tistega leta v noči pred veliko nočjo zaspala, se ni več zbudila.

Močno sem potrkal na sosedova vrata. Megla se je že dvigala in spominjal sem se te hiše čez cesto, njenih golih neometanih zidov in prenizko vstavljenih oken. Na ulici še ni bilo nikogar, s komer bi moral prestajati mučno izpraševanje, kje sem bil in kaj sem delal, in kar stresel sem se ob misli na pogovor, ki bo sledil.

Odprla mi je Franka.

Franka je bila grda. Pogledal sem jo od blizu – in res: njo je grdota opredeljevala bolj kot kogarkoli drugega.

»Dober dan?«

Imela je visoko čelo, ploščat obraz, uokvirjen z drobnimi svetlimi kodri, majhne oči, globoko vsajene in predaleč od korena nosu. Največ pozornosti pa je pritegovalo veliko znamenje na levem licu, ki ji je polzelo iz očesa kakor gigantska rjava solza. Ta grdi klovn je z vrat strmel vame in čakal. Predstavil sem se.

»Marko? Naš Marko? Jezus, nikoli te ne bi prepoznala!« je vzkliknila in raztegnila zobat nasmeh, ki je njen madež razmazal do ušesa. Pojma nisem imel, kdo je, in kakšno sekundo sem tehtal, ali bi ji moral to priznati. Dvomim, da bi pozabil takšen obraz. Iz lenobe sem se odločil, da se bom samo nasmehnil. Povabila me je naprej, jaz pa sem živčno pojasnil, da potrebujem ključ od hiše, da sem utrujen, da ne bom nič pil in da bom prišel pozneje. Frankina velika zadnjica je zanihala proti omari na hodniku, iz katere je vzela šop ključev. Ko je klepetala, sem se trudil, da ne bi strmel v znamenje.

»Če karkoli potrebuješ ...«

»Da ... Hvala lepa!«

Odklenil sem vrata in močno potegnil torbo za sabo na dolgi hodnik. Vse je bilo tako, kot sem pustil po mamini preselitvi. Hiša je štiri leta iskala stanovalca, na svoje površine je mirno nalagala prah in čakala. Pred nekaj meseci so se strici končno odločili, da bodo mirovali v svoji čezoceanski deželi in hišo v celoti prepisali

name. Na Borovega sina. Tam je odrastel. Naj jo ima mali, kdo mu bo pomagal, če mu ne bo žlahta. Kje sploh je? Kaj dela? Naj jo ima, célo naj ima Borov Marko, mogoče se bo tudi poročil, pa si bo imel kje ustvariti družino. Naj jo ima on. Domenili so se, ganjeni zaradi lastne darežljivosti.

Prižgal sem luč, pogoltnil slino in stopil proti dnevni sobi. Niti opazil nisem, da je Franka še vedno za mano.

Moja puberteta je potekala v znamenju neizvirnih sporov z očetom, ki je menil, da je poklican, da me, nenadoma tako zainteresiran, besedno usmerja in komentira mojo pot k zrelosti. Vedno je z nezadostno količino pojasnil zatrl vsako mojo ambicijo v kali, ne glede na to, v kolikšni meri jo je mati na skrivaj zalivala s skrbnimi solzami. Na vsej tej poti sam nikoli nisem meril previsoko, kakšno iskreno željo, da bi šel smučat ali kampirat, pa sta utišala očetov topi prezir in zapiranje denarnice. Četudi o tem ne premišlujem več, mislim, da je to počel zato, ker me ni imel rad.

Spominjam se ga, kako maha z vrat, midva z mamo pa sediva v sosedovem prenapolnjenem peugeotu. Vojna je prišla preblizu in samo pravi moški so ostali, da bi jo gledali v fris. Čisto sam, strog in tih, je ostal tudi oče. Bila je skoraj polnoč in ulice so bile v globoki temi, mi pa nismo prižgali luči na avtomobilu. Spominjam se nosečnice, ki je sedela levo od mene, na zadnjem sedežu, njenega velikega temnega trebuha, mokrih lic in materine roke, ki me je stiskala. Pobegnila sva.

Ko sva se končno vrnila, je mama hitro poskrbela za zamenjavo betonske plošče na pokopališču z marmorno, česar oče ne bi nikoli dovolil. Takšno razmetavanje denarja za mrtve.

Ne glede na to, v kolikšni meri človek vztraja pri odločitvi, da bo trd, ne glede na to, v kolikšni meri se upira lepljivi mlakuži občutkov, je v svojem jedru vedno mehak. To sem čutil, ko sem gledal leseno mizo v kotu, vitrino z materinimi kristalnimi kozarci, ki jih nismo nikoli uporabljali, kavč, obrabljen od samotnega gledanja limonad, predolgo kvačkane zavese. Odprl sem okna. Megla se je umikala.

»Prejšnji teden sem posesala,« je nenadoma rekel glas za mano. Zdrznil sem se.

»Haha,« se je zarežala. »Prišla sem pogledat, a je vse v redu. Priključila ti bom hladilnik, lahko tudi posteljem ...«

Franka je z debelimi prsti brkljala po kuhinji, svetloba je počasi razkrivala vso starost znanega prostora in vse bolj sem se počutil, kot da sem potegnjjen v neko davno življenje, ki me zdaj žuli kot neroden čevlj.

»Res ni treba nič! ... Ne nameravam se zadrževati,« sem rekel skozi zobe.

»A tako?« je pokukala izza hladilnika s tistim zaznamovanim licem kakor kakšna žalostna utvara. Ko sem jo gledal, kako kuka z mesta, kjer je najpogosteje bivala moja mati, me je obšla groza. Franka, meni povsem neznana in tuja, je s svojo grdoto zavzela našo hišo. Njena postava je tukaj naredila še večji vtis, prostor, ki sem ga imel za simbol intimne katastrofe, je njen obraz zaznamoval z masko žalostnega klovna.

»Mislila sem, da boš malo ostal, da boš videl, kako se tukaj diha, zdaj, ko je hiša tvoja,« je spregovorila Franka. Bližala se mi je in strmela naravnost v moje zenice, dokler se ni ustavila preblizu. Videl sem temne dlačice na njenem znamenju in to me je navdalo z rezkim gnusom.

»Prišel sem uredit dokumente, da bom lahko prodal hišo,« sem rekel, hitro obšel njeno sodčkasto telo in se napotil proti svoji sobi. V kuhinji je hladilnik zabrundal, kakor da se je kdo pomenljivo odkašljajal.

Ko sem odšel na faks, je mama nekaj let živela sama, mučila se je z visokimi stanovanjskimi stroški in predolgimi dnevi, v katere je razporejala drobne opravke. Včasih je šla komu počistiti hišo, da si je dopolnila uradniško plačo, ko pa sem končno dobil službo, se je mirno predčasno upokojila in se preselila k babici v Split. Pravzaprav mislim, da je vse življenje hrepenela po tem mestu, živela je zavestno izruvana iz svojega okolja, v neznanem mestu in v tuji hiši. Razumel sem jo.

Vedel sem, da je lastništvo hiše treba urediti, in vljudno sem odgovarjal na klice svojih stricev. Z ničimer se jim nisem vsiljeval, pričakoval sem, da bodo hišo razdelili na majhne prostore, da jo bodo razrezali kot rojstnodnevno torto in jo razdelili v pokušino. Svojo drobtinico bi takoj pljunil nazaj. Nikoli več ne bom živel v tej ulici, v tej hiši. Nikoli več ne bom otrok, deček, mladenič. Od vseh vrat, skozi katera bom šel, se nočem vrniti k tistim, od katerih sem zbežal. Ne, to hišo je treba urediti. Tudi mama se strinja. Škoda, da propada. Naj gre v druge roke, naj se napolni z novimi ljudmi, naj jo zravnajo z zemljo. Hiša mora oditi.

V hiši je bilo zatohlo, zato sem na stežaj odprl balkonska vrata. Naravnost pred mano so bile samo hiše, na ulici pa otroci. Za mojim hrbtom je zevala prazna sredina sobe, ob robovih pa so se stiskali postelja, majhno stensko ogledalo, pisalna miza in omara. Vse čisto, zapuščeno, samo. Iz torbe sem vzel dokumente in se usedel, da bi se odločil, kaj mi je storiti.

Ko sem se znova obrnil, sem videl, da na moji postelji sedi Franka. Živčnost me je stresla po vsem telesu.

»Oprosti, bi kaj rada?«

Molčala je.

»Kdo sploh si?«

»Franka,« je mehko rekla in me očitajoče pogledala.

V tistem trenutku se mi je zazdelo, da je pravzaprav precej starejša od mene, mogoče je že gospa ali čigava mati. Molčala sva. S široko dlanjo je božala golo vzmetnico na moji postelji.

»Bi kaj rada?« sem ponovil, že jasno nemiren. Odkimala je z grdo glavo in še naprej sedela. Njena dlan je po vzmetnici drsela preveč pristno, rahlo je šelestela in za sabo puščala ravnine.

Gledal sem jo z novim sovraštvom, ki je rastlo v meni in dušilo vsakršno empatijo do skodrane spake, ki je sedela na postelji, tam, kjer sem tolikokrat objokoval svoje otroštvo. Franka je, kakor da bi prebrala moje misli, povescila ramena in se žalostno zagledala skozi balkonska vrata, rjava solza pa se ji je spustila do brade.

»Hvala za pomoč, Franka, ampak res bi rad bil malo sam,« sem zmehčal ton in vstal. »Veliko dela imam.«

Kotički njenih ust so se znova dvignili v neskladen nasmešek. Z vodénim pogledom se mi je sprehajala po obrazu in telesu in imel sem občutek, kakor da bi se po meni prestavljale mokre lovke hobotnice.

Stal sem sredi sobe, zastrupljen z gnusnim nelagodjem, ujet.

»Nisi ti kriv, da je hiša prazna,« je šepnila Franka in vstala. Trdno me je objela, z vso močjo.

Prepih je priprl balkonska vrata. Zunaj se je sonce prebijalo skozi plasti oblakov, slišali so se glasovi in mimo so vozili avtomobili. Jutro je bilo zrelo.

Ko sem znova zadihaval in pogledal prek Frankine glave, sem videl svoj odsev v majhnem stenskem ogledalu. Tam sem stal čisto sam.

Prodal sem hišo.

Ko sem potem šel k mami, sem jo vprašal, ali se spominja neke Franke iz sosedstva. Mama me je najprej dolgo gledala, nato pa je nekaj časa jokala.

Prevedla Đurđa Strsoglavac

Franka

I dropped out of the bus as if someone had kicked me in the back. As I stumbled towards the bus terminal's concrete, I caught the rhythm of purposeful walk only with trouble. Last night I took the entire anti-nausea pill, and my body was still obediently digesting it. There was a dense white fog outside, so only a tiny part of the world around me was visible, but it was enough to reach my destination. Space opened under my feet with each step. There were no far horizons or empty spaces to cover with sheets of nostalgic memories. The city of my childhood was hidden by the low cloud, which soothed me. That's what it was like in my mind, too.

Air cold and wet. Sounds approaching out of the complete unknown. I dragged my bag like an overweight corpse all the way to the new bus station, constantly aware of its insides, of what was squeezed between my shirts. For four months I'd been moving the envelope that came by special delivery, signed and signed-off with a court seal on the back, from one place in the apartment to another. Reluctantly aware that I wasn't allowed to just crumple it up and throw it away, I'd been leaving the contents of the envelope on various flat surfaces of the apartment, just to see if it could be lost or forgotten. No such luck. No matter what I did, those papers kept finding themselves in my hands, their words stuck in my consciousness like an unfinished homework. I had to do something, sign something off, call, or just go there personally and settle it down. Completely unexpectedly and with a certain dose of defiance (towards myself), the latter prevailed.

The city bus was still the same public lobby it always was. Limp people squeezed in front of me, sagging like coats on hangers, wrinkled by the rough awakening, yet awake enough to lead empty conversations. Weariness smudged me all over the seat, like a drunken kid. My station was second to last, after which the tin waiting room was to turn around and start back towards the beginning of its circle.

Only a few steps left to the house, which emerged from the fog like a wet photograph: Grandma's small garden, a fig tree (now completely rotten), and the outlines of the two-story house, which, according to the papers in my bag, was now all mine.

Mum and I were always alone on the ground level. Dad worked from 7 to 7, and his returns to home did not include warm idyllic

scenes, social games or watching sitcoms with the family. Leaving him alone was essential, and Mum would gently warn me every time I wanted to get close to him.

Grandma, Dad's mum, lived alone in the loft. Her plants reached from the balcony all the way to my room. Equally, her influence reached the most intimate corners of my parents' lives. Grandma was the proud house owner; she knew everything and monitored everything. She also had her own interpretation of everything, which she would calmly convey to us during Sunday lunches. Mum would be predictably offended by this meddling, after which she'd get angry or laugh. And then one day, to our surprise, Mum began to ignore Grandma. I suppose that was when Grandma started dying. Her meddling could no longer influence others' lives. When she fell asleep that year, a night before Easter, she did not wake up.

I knocked on the neighbour's door with my fist. The fog was already rising and I began to remember that house across the street: its naked, unplastered walls and too-low windows. There was no one in the street to ask me bothersome questions about where I'd been and what I'd been doing, so I cringed at the thought of the conversation that was about to follow.

Franka opened the door.

Franka was ugly. I looked at her closely, and, really, ugliness defined her like no one else.

"Hello?"

She had a high forehead, a flat face framed with tiny blond curls, and small, deeply set eyes that were too far from her nose. What attracted attention the most was the big birthmark on her left cheek that leaked from her eye like a giant brown tear. This sad clown stared at me, waiting at the door. I introduced myself.

"Marko? Our Marko? Jesus, I would've never recognized you!" She squeaked and stretched her lips into a smile filled with teeth, which smudged the blotch all the way to her ear. I had no idea who she was, and for a second, I wondered if I should admit it. I doubt I'd forget such a face. Being lazy, I decided to simply smile. She invited me in, and I nervously explained that I needed the house key, that I was tired, that I wouldn't have anything to drink and that I'd drop by later. Franka's big butt swayed towards the closet in the hall, where she took out a set of keys. As she babbled, I tried not to stare at the birthmark.

"If there's anything you need..."

“Right. Thanks!”

I unlocked the door and pulled the bag forcefully into the long hallway. Everything was as I'd left it after Mum had moved away. For four years, this house had been waiting for a new tenant, calmly collecting dust on its surfaces. A few months ago, my uncles finally decided to stay where they were across the ocean and sign the house over to me. To Bora's son. He grew up there anyway; let the kid have it. Who'll help him, if not his family? Where is he, anyway? What's he doing? Let Bora's Marko have the entire house. Maybe he'll get married, so at least he'll have a place to start a family. Yes, let him have it. They agreed, touched by their own generosity.

I turned on the light, swallowed hard and stepped towards the living room. I didn't even notice that Franka was still behind me.

I spent my puberty in unoriginal conflicts with Father, who, suddenly interested in me, felt obliged to steer me verbally in the right direction and comment on my journey to adulthood. Never offering satisfactory explanations, he simply uprooted all my ambitions, no matter how much Mum secretly watered them with caring tears. I'd never aimed too high, but occasionally, an honest desire to go skiing or camping was smothered by Father's dull contempt and the closing of his wallet. Although I don't think about it anymore, I believe he did that because he didn't love me.

I remember him standing at the door and waving at us as Mum and I sat in the neighbour's stuffy Peugeot. The war had come too close, and only the real men stayed to stare it in the face. Utterly alone, strict and silent, father stayed too. It was almost midnight and the streets were immersed in darkness, so we didn't turn the headlights on. I remember the pregnant woman who sat to my left on the back seat, her big dark belly, wet cheeks and mother's hand that pressed me close. We ran away.

When we returned, mother quickly replaced the concrete gravestone with the marble one, which father never would've allowed: wasting money on the dead.

As much as man tries to stay true to his decision to be hard, as much as he resists the soggy quagmire of feelings, he is still soft in his core. I felt that as I stared at the wooden table in the corner; the cabinet with Mum's crystal glasses that we never used; the couch worn by the lonely watching of soaps; the curtains that took too long to crochet. I opened the windows. The fog was receding.

"I vacuumed last Sunday," the voice behind me said. I flinched.

"Hehe," she grinned. "I came to see if everything was okay. I'll turn the fridge on. I can also make your bed..."

As Franka tinkered around the kitchen, the light slowly revealed the decrepitude of the familiar space, and I felt as if I was being sucked into an ancient life that now rubbed me like a shoe that didn't fit.

"No need, really! ... I won't be staying," I managed.

"Is that so?" She peeked from behind the fridge with that marked cheek of hers, like a sad mirage. Watching her stand in that place where my mother used to spend most of her time, I felt chills rising up my spine. Franka, completely unfamiliar and strange, haunted our house with her ugliness. She seemed even more bizarre where she was standing, for the space that I deemed to be the symbol of a personal catastrophe painted her face into a Greek tragedy mask.

"I thought you'd stay awhile, see how it feels now that the house is yours," Franka said. She approached, staring directly into my pupils, until she stood too close. I could see the dark hairs on her birthmark, which filled me with acrid disgust.

"I came to get the papers so I can sell the house," I said, quickly stepping around her barrel-like body on my way to my bedroom. The fridge in the kitchen grunted as if someone had coughed significantly.

After I went to college, my mum lived by herself for a few years, struggling with the too-high household bills and too-long days, which she filled with her small duties. Occasionally, she cleaned houses to make some extra cash on top of her clerk salary, and when I finally got a job, she retired early and peacefully, and moved in with her mum in Split. Actually, I think she had been yearning for that city the entire time she lived here, torn out of her natural habitat, in an unknown city and someone else's house. I understood how she felt.

I knew that the ownership of the house had to be settled, so I answered my uncles' calls calmly. Expecting they'd split the house into tiny little spaces, cut it like a birthday cake and share it for tasting, I did not impose myself. I'd spit my crumb back in an instant. I will never live on this street, in this house, again. I will never be a child again, nor a young man. Out of all the doors I'll ever walk through, I will never go back to those I ran away from. No, this house had to go, and Mum agreed. It would be a pity to let it crumble. Let

someone else have it; let it be filled with new people, or let them tear it down. The house had to go.

The air in the room was stale, so I opened the balcony door wide. In front of me were just houses, in the street, children. The middle of the room emanated emptiness behind my back, while all the furniture huddled against the walls: a bed, small mirror, a writing table. A closet. Everything clean, abandoned, alone. I took the papers out of my bag and sat down to decide what to do.

When I turned around again, I saw that Franka was sitting on my bed. A nervous shudder passed through me.

"Excuse me, do you need something?"

She kept her silence.

"Who are you, anyway?"

"Franka," she said softly, giving me a reproachful look.

At the moment, it seemed to me that she was a lot older than me, perhaps already married or a mother. We both fell silent. She was caressing the uncovered mattress of my bed with her wide palm.

"Do you need anything?" I asked again, now evidently distressed. She shook her ugly head, but remained sitting there. Her palm traced the mattress a bit too intimately, making a soft rustling noise, leaving creases in its trail.

I watched her with hate that suddenly started to grow inside me, smothering every remnant of empathy for that curly freak that sat on my bed, where I have mourned my childhood so many times. As if reading my thoughts, Franka gazed through the balcony door, her shoulders sagging, her brown tear sinking to her chin.

"Thank you for your help, Franka, but I'd really like to be alone for a while." I softened my tone and got up. "I have a lot of work to do."

The corners of her lips lifted into another awkward smile. Her watery gaze trailed my face and body, making me feel as if the wet tentacles of an octopus moved all over me.

I stood in the middle of the room, poisoned by the nauseous discomfort, trapped.

"It's not your fault that the house is empty," Franka whispered as she got up. She hugged me with all her might.

The draft closed the balcony door. Outside, the sun pushed through the clouds. Voices spoke; cars passed by. The morning was ripe.

When I caught my breath and looked over Franka's head, I saw my reflection in the small wall mirror. I stood there completely alone.

I sold the house.

When I went to visit my mum some time later, I asked her if she remembered Franka from the neighbourhood. Mum watched me for a long time, and then she cried for a while.

Translated by Iva Gjurkin



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Mariusz Sieniewicz

Mariusz Sieniewicz se je rodil leta 1972 v Olsztynu na Poljskem in velja za enega najzanimivejših sodobnih poljskih avtorjev. Napisal je romane *Prababka* (Prababica, 1999), *Czwarte niebo* (Četrta nebesa, 2003), *Rebelia* (Punt, 2007), *Miasto Szklanych Słoni* (Mesto steklenih slonov, 2010), *Spowiedź Śpiącej Królowny* (Trnuljčičina spoved, 2012) in *Walizki hipochondryka* (Hipohondrovi kovčki, 2014) ter zbirko kratkih zgodb *Żydówek nie obsługujemy* (Židinjam ne strežemo, 2005). Je dvakratni nominiranec za literarno nagrado Nike, trikratni finalist nagrade potni list tednika *Polityka* za književnost ter prejemnik literarne nagrade Varmije in Mazurije. Med letoma 2011 in 2015 je deloval kot strokovni sodelavec na poljskem Nacionalnem inštitutu za filmsko umetnost. Štirje njegovi romani so zaživelj tudi na gledališkem odru: igra *Wszystkim Żygmuntom między oczy* (Vsem Żygmuntom v frisu), ki je nastala po predlogi romana *Czwarte niebo*, je bila uprizorjena v Poljskem gledališču v Wrocławu, *Rebelia* pa v Šlezijškem gledališču v Katowicah. V zborniku se predstavlja z odlomkom iz nastajajočega romana *Plankton*. Živi in ustvarja v Olsztynu.

Mariusz Sieniewicz was born in 1972 in Olsztyn, Poland. He is considered one of the most intriguing contemporary Polish writers. His works include the novels *Prababka* (Great Grandmother, 1999), *Czwarte niebo* (The Fourth Heaven, 2003), *Rebelia* (Rebellion, 2007), *Miasto Szklanych Słoni* (City of Glass Elephants, 2010), *Spowiedź Śpiącej Królowny* (Sleeping Beauty's Confession, 2012) and *Walizki hipochondryka* (Suitcases of a Hypochondriac, 2014), and the collection of short stories *Żydówek nie obsługujemy* (No Service for Jewish Women, 2005). He was nominated for the Nike Literary Award on two occasions, was a three-time finalist of the "Polityka" Passport prize and is also the recipient of the Warmia and Mazury award for literature. He was appointed expert consultant at the Polish National Institute of Cinematic Arts between 2011 and 2015. Four of his novels were brought to life on stage, among them: *Wszystkim Żygmuntom między oczy* (In the Face of All the Żygmunts), which was based on the novel *Czwarte niebo* (The Fourth Heaven) and performed in the Polish Theatre in Wrocław, and *Rebelia* (Rebellion), which was performed in the Slaski Theatre in Katowice. This year's *Vilenica Almanac* features an excerpt from his novel-in-progress *Plankton*. He lives and works in Olsztyn.

Plankton

(fragment powieści)

Pędzimy przez miasto! Pędzimy aż strach... Christe, dimitte nobis... Ona i ja!

Pędzimy ścieżką, alejką, chodnikiem. Z górki pod górkę, po prostej i łukiem. Brzdąkają błotniki, skrzypi siodelko, łańcuch szwargocze jak młynek do pieprzu. Ona pierwsza, ja za nią! Uciekamy, choć nikt nie goni. Gonimy, choć nikt nie ucieka. Ona dzwonkiem wydzwania, ja dźwięcznie odzwaniem, że jestem, dzyń-dzyń, tuż-tuż. Nasze sygnały porywa wiatr i śle do nieba, wszczynając alarm u Piotrowych bram. Taka frajda, taka zabawa – świat wertykalny pomieszany z horyzontalnym! Gdy trafia się kałuża lub piach, słysząc syk i spod roweru dziewczynki wypelzają dwa splecione węże. Za siebie wolę się nie oglądać. Gnam!

Mimo mych stu dwudziestu lat, daję radę. Pochylony nisko nad kierownicą, udami boksuję brzuch, raz lewym, raz prawym kolaniem prawie dosięgam podbródka. Ależ szybka ta pchełka dziecięca! Ależ zawzięta w pedałowaniu! Ledwie nadążam. Muszę kręcić, ile sił w nogach, żeby dotrzymać jej koła.

Najukochańszy Biedaczyno z Asyżu, przechodzą mnie dreszcze. Przypuszczam, że pomimo zadyszki, na mojej twarzy maluje się uniesienie równe ekstazie świętego Teresa. Jego rzeźbę, dłuta Giovanniego Lorenzo Berniniego, miałem okazję podziwiać podczas dorocznej audiencji u arcybiskupa. W trakcie poczęstunku wikariusz biskupi odciągnął mnie oraz kilku innych braci od stołu ze słodkościami i zaproponował wycieczkę po komnatach kurii.

Najpierw zwiedziliśmy metropolitalne spa, o którym krążyły w pełni uzasadnione legendy. Okazało się ono bowiem ziemską wizualizacją biblijnego Edenu! Jego rozmach sparaliżował nam twarze, dotknięte nagłą rozdziawą... Kilka chwil spędziliśmy na wodnych materacach pod drzewem poznania dobrego i złego. Gapiliśmy się w szkarłatne jabłko, a duży solar na szklanym sklepieniu promieniał przyjemnym ciepłem. W pewnej chwili brat Wojtek zapytał z rozbijającą naiwnością, czy jabłko jest prawdziwe? Wikariusz uśmiechnął się tajemniczo i to nam musiało wystarczyć za jednoznaczną odpowiedź. Po spa przeszliśmy do basenu. Naszym oczom ukazała się wierna kopia jeziora Genezaret z Jordanem i nieodległą Tyberiadą, zilustrowaną na glazurowych płytkach. Niech tak nie dożyję dwustu lat! – miejsce godne epickiego chorału. Wikariusz-przechera zapytał

mimochodem, czy może ktoś ma ochotę na kąpiel, zaoferował nawet kąpielówki z wyszywanym złotą nicią logo diecezji. Odmówiliśmy stanowczo, acz delikatnie. Z basenu, sekretnym korytarzykiem, trafiliśmy do pokutnej izby samoudręczeń stylizowanej na jerozolimski gaj oliwny. W izbie wyświetlano projekcje nagiej Ewy i siedmiu jej córek, które stanowiły egzempla siedmiu grzechów głównych. Nie wiedzieliśmy, gdzie oczy podziąć. Zwłaszcza grzech drugi i szósty budziły grozę, pomieszaną z odrazą. Brat Grzegorz nie wytrzymał – naciągnąwszy na głowę kaptur, zakwilił jak dziecko. Zaprawdę, szatan w kobiecie ma upodobanie do przerażających i nader przekonujących fantazji... Każdy pogryzał swoją trufłę, nerwowo szeleścił papierkiem. Na koniec: *creme de la creme* wycieczki. Dotarliśmy do saloniku kontemplacji. Tam właśnie znajdowała się rzeźba świętego Teresa z aniołem. Obok stał purpurowy szezlong, na jego poręczy leżał czytnik e-booków z wyświetlonym brewiarzem. Salonik wypełniała miła dla ucha muzyka relaksacyjna – msza gregoriańska w wykonaniu popularnego boysbandu diakonów Just 12. Jeśli wierzyć słowom wikariusza, dzieło Berniniego zostało cudem uratowane w 2032 roku z plądrowanego przez muzułmanów Rzymu. Patrzyliśmy zauróczeni i jednocześnie pełni onieśmienia na twarz mężczyzny, gotowego by serafin zanurzył grot włóczni w jego piersi.

– Ból i ekstaza, drodzy bracia! Ból, ekstaza i nie mniej ważna uległość! – huknął wikariusz z wyraźną emfazą, chrupiąc cynamonowe ciasteczko.

Rzecz jasna, mój kilkuletni anioł nie przebija mnie włócznią, mój serafinek jedzie na rowerze, dając wystarczający powód, bym smakował owoc duchowej ekstazy. Łzy nabiegają mi do oczu i wypełniają brzegi powiek... Niech mnie diabli porwą, niech tłukę się po daniejskich kręgach bez mapy!... Co za szalona jazda! Na rowerze, przez miasto, z wiatrem, pod wiatr, który zmienia resztkę włosów na mojej głowie w postrzępiony gałgan babiego lata. Gnać bez mszy, pacierzy i rorat, bez żebrów na byle smart-tacę i próśb o światłowodową jałmużnę, bez wycierania kolan przed arcybiskupem, od którego zależy rating zbawienia oferowanego przez nasz charyzmat, wreszcie – bez połajanek prowincjała, kończących się zawsze ojcowskim memento: dziękuj Bogu, mój synu, że należysz do duchowej elity narodu, ale też miej świadomość, że przy dwustuletnich mędrcach franciszkańskiej reguły jesteś tylko młodzikiem, bratem mniejszym z najmniejszych. Przecież sam wiem, że głęboka wiara i długowieczność odróżniają sługi Boże, od reszty ludu, który – pomimo naszych usilnych

starań – nie może wykaraskać się ze śmiertelnej doczesności, nie-
 rzadko tkwi jeszcze po uszy w mrokach prostackiej konsumpcji. I
 coś z tego, że stawiamy pierwsze kościoły na Księżycu, skoro tu, na
 Ziemi, nie jesień, a wiosna średniowiecza nastała. Vanitas vanita-
 tum, et omnia vanitas... Niby każdy dom rozświetlają hologramy
 Jezusa i Najświętszej Dziewicy, ale wirtualne konfesjonały pękają w
 szwach. Nie ma też dnia, żeby Antyhejterska Komisja Wiary nie blo-
 kowała chatów z neoherezją. Część apokryficznych memów po ze-
 skanowaniu dogmatoforem okazuje się niczym innym, jak tylko za-
 wirusowaną kontrabandą nihilistów. Dotarły też do mnie pogłoski,
 że w telewizji publicznej zagnieździło się kilku lajfstajl-libertarian.
 Pax! – powiadam sobie. Pax!... Nie powinienem myśli zaprawiać
 wątrobianą goryczą. To paskudny grzech defetyzmu.

Jeśli ktokolwiek wspomniałby coś o spacerowym tempie, napraw-
 dę, nie ręczyłbym za siebie. Zadałbym tak okrutną pokutę, że niego-
 dziwiec przestałby odróżniać jutrznię od komplety i nie wykpiłby się
 byle twitem pochwalnym na profilu naszego zakonu. Bo mkniemy
 przez miasto z szybkością międzygalaktycznych aniołów, po których
 zostają świecące trajektorie. I jeśli listonosze niebiescy muszą uwa-
 żać, żeby nie wytracić swej anielskości na kosmicznych wirażach, tak
 ja muszę pilnować, żeby habit nie wkręcił się w łańcuch. Dlatego
 połę sukni przytrzymuję kciukiem na kierownicy, odsłaniając sandały
 i trochę łydki. W zakonnym stanie to dopuszczalna ekshibicja. Szka-
 plerz faluje, płaszcz mam rozwiany. Pewnie wyglądam jak płaszczka.

Nasz pęd zmienia ulice i domy w wyślizganą taflę obrazów. Wiatr
 świszczy w uszach, zgłuszając patriotyczne pieśni, które niosą się z wiel-
 kich głośników na skrzyżowaniach ulic. Przejeżdżamy wzdłuż lasero-
 wych ogrodzeń apartamentowców, mijamy grupki pątników-morsów.
 W ramach fitnessowego katojoggingu okrążają codziennie centrum, w
 pobliskiej rzece dokonują oblucji pod okiem jednego z sobowtórów
 Jana Chrzciciela. Śmigamy obok ledowych billboardów Chrystusa i re-
 klam najnowszej nanotelefonii, obok kaznodziejów głoszących Słowo
 w patetycznych pozach, obok archetradyków na rogach ulic. Ci, dzie-
 ki genetycznym skłonnościom do anoreksji, ukazują moc wstrzemięź-
 liwości i na świętych wagach zliczają marność zbędnych kilogramów.
 Przejeżdżamy aleją drzew z liśćmi zaplecionymi w dizajnerskie różań-
 ce, prowadzącą do Galerii świętej Marty. W jej wnętrzach bulimiści
 biczują się przed witrynami słow-gospód. Mijamy pieszych i dywizje
 samochodów stacjonujące w korkach. Suniemy wzdłuż dźwiękoszczel-
 nych ekranów, na których rozsiadły się drony-wrony.

Im bliżej rogatek miasta, tym czarniej od szpiegowskich stad. Aż niebo staje się czarne i stanowczo za ciasne. Fruną ostentacyjnie wolno, w konarach drzew do złudzenia przypominają ciężkie kule jemioly. Wrony nie ustają w tropieniu najdrobniejszych przejawów herezji i rasowego zamętu, bo wciąż żywa jest pamięć o czasach religijnej wojny. Zaraz po pontyfikacie Franciszka I, ojca naszego Bergolio, cała Europa stanęła w ogniu. Nowy Ojciec Święty wraz z całym Watykanem musiał przenieść się do Szwecji i tam, pod Sztokholmem, założył nową Stolicę Apostolską. Południe Italii i Grecja wpadły w łapy innowierców, wróg podszedł aż pod granice Austrii i Węgier. Palił, gwałcił i stawiał fallusowe meczety. Gdyby nie męska prawica Opatrzności, gdyby nie powrót do chrześcijaństwa zjednoczonych narodów północnej Europy, nie wiadomo, jakiemu kłaniałibyśmy się Bogu, w jakich świątyniach?... A raczej wiadomo. Aż za dobrze! Wreszcie na coś przydali się jezuici, ponieważ przez ostatnie czterysta lat popadli w lenistwo własnego pijaru. Ich czarny papież stanął na czele Sojuszu Północnoatlantyckiego i porozumiał się z Cyrylem V, Patriarchą moskiewskim i całej Rusi. Straszne to były czasy, znaczone nekropoliami i zastępami świętych męczenników. Nikt nie żałował krwi, modlitw i datków, nawet wielkie koncerny pozbyły się węża z kieszeni. Naszą wiarę na nowo musieliśmy wypalić ogniem – świętą krucjatą prawych i sprawiedliwych. Na szczęście wojna minęła, pozostawiając po sobie wdowy i pomniki. W Najwyższym nadzieja, że minęła bezpowrotnie. Jednak Włochy z Grecją, i część Bałkanów są raczej nie odzyskania.

Na mój stu dwudziestoletni nos, połowa należy do Jego Ekscencji, druga – do burmistrza miasta i rządzącej partii. Trzeba przyznać, że parytet władzy jest skrupulatnie przestrzegany we wszystkich dziedzinach życia, w tym i w dziedzinie koniecznej panoptykizacji. Ludzie wreszcie pojęli, że Anioł Stróż to nie żadna metafizyczna figura czy też postać z dziecięcego paciorka. To bardzo konkretne i reglamentowane urządzenie. Rano, wieczór, we dnie, w nocy, jest nam zawsze ku pomocy.

Któraś z wron ma nas na oku. Już pewnie archiprezbiter in sancte invigiliare kręci pilotem drona, wpatrzony bacznie w monitor. Jak nic, będzie mail suspensyjny do prowincjała. Jednak nie czuję strachu przed niechybną karą za samowolne oddalenie się od bram klasztoru. To przecież dzień widzenia z moją córką. Szczególny, jeden z nielicznych, od kiedy poczęła ją siostra Małgorzata. Śluby posłuszeństwa odkładałam ad acta.

Gnamy, lecz wciąż mało nam świata! Przekraczamy granice miasta, pedałujemy dalej, przez całą diecezję, gdzie liściasto-zielone wygrzywa z pleksbrukiem. Już cichną patriotyczne dźwięki, już w soczystych głębiach lasu odzywają się ptaki. To rzadkość w naszych czasach, bo byle zięba, byle trznadel, strzyżyk, rudzik to biały kruk! Przemierzamy gęstą, łopoczącą Prowincję Warmii. Leśną, lesistą, wilgotną. Jezioro po lewej, jezioro po prawej, jezioro na wprost, za plecami. Słoneczne refleksy i cienie grają w kółko i krzyżyk. A my gnamy z czerwonymi pieczęciami wiatru na policzkach.

Przysiągłbym, że jeziora i leśne stawy to oczy świętych olbrzymów, wybudzonych ze snu naszym rowerowaniem.

Plankton

(odlomek iz romana)

Drviva čez mesto! Drviva, kot da nama gori za petami ... Christe, dimitte nobis ... Ona in jaz!

Drviva po stezicah, po potkah, po pločniku. Navzdol in navkreber, po premici in v krogu. Žvenkljajo blatniki, sedež škripa, veriga klepeče kot mlinček za poper. Ona spredaj, jaz pa za njo! Beživa, čeprav naju nihče ne goni. Goniva, čeprav nihče ne beži. Ona z zvončkom zvončklja, jaz ji zvonko odzvanjam, češ da sem, cin cin, že tik tik. Najine signale trga veter in jih pošilja v nebo, vzdiguje alarm pred Petrovimi durmi. Kakšno veselje, kakšna zabava – vertikalni svet je pomešan s horizontalnim! Kadar naletiva na lužo ali pesek, se zasliši sikanje in izpod punčkinega kolesa se splazita dve prepleteni kači. Prek rame se raje sploh ne oziram. Ženem!

Kljub svojim sto dvajsetim letom zmorem. Nagnjen nizko nad balanco se s stegni boksam v trebuh, zdaj z levim, zdaj z desnim kolenom skoraj dosegam podbradek. Pa kako hitra je ta otroška bolhica! Pa kako zavzeto poganja pedala! Komaj jo dohajam. Vrteti moram, kolikor imam moči v nogah, da lahko vozim v zavetju njenega kolesa.

Preljubi Ubožec iz Assisija, spreletava me srh. Domnevam, da na mojem obrazu navkljub zasoplosti odseva vznosenost, enaka ekstazi svetega Tereza. Njegov kip, izpod dleta Giovannija Lorenza Berninija, sem imel priliko občudovati med vsakoletno avdienco pri nadškofu. Med sprejemom je škofov vikar odpeljal mene in nekaj drugih bratov od mize s slaščicami in nam predlagal sprehod po sobanah nadškofije.

Najprej smo obiskali metropolitni spa, o katerem so krožile popolnoma utemeljene legende. Izkazalo se je namreč, da je zemeljska vizualizacija biblijskega edena! Njegov razmah nam je paraliziral obraze, zadete od nenadnega zazijaja ... Nekaj trenutkov smo preživeli na vodnih blazinah pod drevesom spoznanja dobrega in zla. Buljili smo v škrlatno jabolko, velik solarni kolektor na steklenem svodu pa je izžareval prijetno toploto. V nekem trenutku je brat Wojtek z razorožujočo naivnostjo vprašal, ali je jabolko pravo. Vikar se je skrivnostno nasmehnil in to nam je moralo zadoščati za nedvoumni odgovor. Po spaju smo se preselili v bazen. Pred očmi se nam je prikazala verna kopija Galilejskega jezera z Jordanom in bližnjo Tiberijo, upodobljeno na glaziranih ploščicah. Naj me vrag pocitra! – kraj, vreden epskega

korala. Vikar-lisjak je mimogrede vprašal, ali bi se kdo mogoče rad skopal, ponudil nam je celo kopalke z logom škofije, izvezenim z zlatim sukancem. Odločno, toda diskretno smo odklonili. Z bazena smo po skrivnem hodničku prišli v spokorniško izbo samomrtvičenja, stilizirano na jeruzalemski oljčni gaj. V izbi so predvajali projekcijo gole Eve in njenih sedmih hčera, ki so predstavljale eksemple sedmih naglavnih grehov. Nismo vedeli, kam bi gledali od zadrege. Zlasti drugi in šesti greh sta budila grozo, pomešano z gnusom. Brat Grzegorz ni zdržal – nategnil si je kapuco na glavo in zavekal kakor otrok. Resnično, satanu v ženski ugajajo grozljive in nadvse prepričljive fantazije ... Vsakdo je grizljal svoj trufel, živčno šelestel s papirčkom. Na koncu: *crème de la crème* ekskurzije. Prispeli smo v salonček kontemplacije. Prav tam je bil kip svetega Tereza z angelom. Zraven je stal škrlaten šezlong, na njegovem naslonjalu pa je ležal bralnik e-knjig z brevirjem na ekranu. Salonček je napolnjevala ušesu prijazna relaksacijska glasba – gregorijanska maša v izvedbi popularnega bojbanda diakonov Just 12. Če verjamemo vikarjevim besedam, se je Berninijevo delo leta 2032 čudežno rešilo iz Rima, ki so ga oplenili muslimani. Uročeni in hkrati polni plahosti smo zrli v obraz moškega, pripravljenega na to, da mu bo serafin zabodel ost sulice v prsi.

»Bolečina in ekstaza, dragi bratje! Bolečina, ekstaza in nič manj pomembna vdanost!« je zagrmel vikar z izrazitim poudarkom, pri tem pa hrustljal cimetrov kolaček.

Jasna stvar, moj nekajletni angel me ne prebija s sulico, moj serafinček se pelje na kolesu, s čimer mi daje zadosten povod za to, da okušam sad duhovne ekstaze. Solze mi navrejo v oči in napolnijo robove vek ... Naj me pobere hudič, naj se vlačim po Dantejevih pekelskih krogih brez zemljevida! ... Kakšna nora vožnja! Na biciklu, skozi mesto, z vetrom, proti vetru, ki preostanek las na moji glavi spreminja v scufano krpico babjega leta. Hiteti brez maše, očenašev in zornic, brez beračije na zanikrni smart tasi in prošnji za svetlovodno miloščino, brez drgnjenja kolen pred nadškofom, od katerega je odvisen rejting zveličanja, ki ga nudi naša karizma, končno – brez hruljenj provinciala, ki se vedno končajo z očetovskim opominom: Zahvaljui se Bogu, sin moj, da pripadaš duhovni eliti naroda, vendar se tudi zavedaj, da si v primeri z dvestoletnimi modreci frančiškanskega reda samo žoltokljun, manjši brat med najmanjšimi. Sam vendar vem, da se po globoki veri in dolgovečnosti Božji služabniki ločijo od preostalega ljudstva, ki se – navkljub našim mukotrpnim prizadevanjem – ne zmore izkobacati iz smrtne minljivosti, neredko

še do vratu tiči v temini prostaške konsumpcije. In kaj potem, če postavljamo prve cerkve na Luni, ko pa je tu, na Zemlji, napočila ne jesen, pač pa pomlad srednjega veka. Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas ... Vsako hišo kobajagi razsvetljujejo hologrami Jezusa in najsvetejše Device, virtualne spovednice pa pokajo po šivih. Prav tako ne mine dan, da ne bi Antihejterska verska komisija blokirala četov z neoherezijo. Za del apokrifnih memov se po skeniranju z dogmoforjem izkaže, da niso nič drugega kot samo z virusi okužena kontrabanda nihilistov. Dosegle so me tudi govorice, da se je na javni televiziji ugnezdilo nekaj lajfstajlovskih libertincev. »Pax!« si rečem. Pax! ... Ne bi smel misli začinjati z grenkim žolčem. To je odvratni greh defetizma.

Če bi kdo pripomnil kaj o sprehajalnem tempu, potem, resnično, ne bi več jamčil zase. Naložil bi mu tako strogo pokoro, da fakin ne bi več ločil jutrnjice od kompletorija in se ne bi izmazal z navadnim pohvalnim tvitom na profilu našega reda. Kajti drviva čez mesto s hitrostjo medgalaktičnih angelov, za katerima ostajajo bleščeče tirnice. In kakor morajo nebeški pismoonoše paziti, da ne bi potolkli svoje angelskosti v kozmičnih ovinkih, tako moram jaz paziti, da se mi ne bi habit zapletel v verigo. Zato pole kute s palcem pridržujem na balanci, pri tem pa razkrivam sandalo in del meč. V redovniškem stanu je to dopustna ekshibicija. Škapulir plapolala, plašč imam razvihran. Gotovo izgledam kot ploščič.

Najino drvenje spreminja ulice in hiše v zgajeno površino podob. Veter žvižga v ušesih in zaglušuje domoljubne speve, ki se širijo iz velikih zvočnikov na križiščih ulic. Peljeva se vzdolž laserskih ograj stanovanjskih stolpnic, puščava za sabo gručice božjepotnikov-knajparjev. V okviru katoliškega fitnes džoginga vsak dan obkrožajo center, v bližnji reki opravljajo obredno umivanje pod nadzorom enega izmed dvojnikov Janeza Krstnika. Švigava mimo led bilbordov Kristusa in reklam najnovejše nanotelefonijske, mimo pridigarjev, ki v patetičnih pozah oznanjajo Besedo, mimo arhetradicijcev na uličnih vogalih. Ti zaradi genetičnih nagnjenj k anoreksiji predstavljajo moč vzdržnosti in na svetih tehtnicah preračunavajo nečimrnost odvečnih kilogramov. Peljeva se skozi drevored z listjem, spletenim v dizajnerske rožne vence, ki pelje k Nakupovalnemu centru sive Marte. V njegovi notranjščini se bulimisti bičajo pred izložbami slow krčem. Za sabo puščava pešce in divizije avtomobilov s postojankami v prometnih zamaških. Drsiva vzdolž zvokotesnih ekranov, po katerih so se posedli droni-vrani.

Čim bližje sva robovom mesta, tem bolj se črni od vohunskih jat. Dokler vse nebo ne postane črno in odločno pretesno. Letajo izzivalno počasi, v rogovilah dreves do neprepoznavnosti spominjajo na težke krogle omele. Vrani ne nehajo izsledovati najdrobnejših znamenj herezije in rasne zmede, kajti še zmeraj je živ spomin na čase verske vojne. Takoj po pontifikatu Frančiška I., našega očeta Bergolia, je vsa Evropa vzplamenela. Novi sveti oče se je moral skupaj s celotnim Vatikanom preseliti na Švedsko in tam je v bližini Stockholma ustanovil novo apostolsko stolico. Jug Italije in Grčija sta padla v kremplje drugovercem, sovražnik je prodril vse do meja Avstrije in Madžarske. Požigal je, posiljeval in postavljfal falusne mošeje. Če ne bi bilo možate desnice Previdnosti, če se združeni narodi severne Evrope ne bi vrnili h krščanstvu, kdo ve, kateremu Bogu bi se klanjali in v katerih svetiščih? ... Ali bolje, ve se. Še vse predobro! Končno so se jezuiti izkazali za nekaj koristne, saj so v zadnjih štiristo letih zapadli v lenobo lastnega piarja. Njihov črni papež je stopil na čelo Severnoatlantske zveze in se sporazumel s Cirilom V., patriarhom Moskve in vse Rusije. To so bili strašni časi, ki so jih zaznamovale nekropole in trume svetih mučencev. Nihče ni skoparil s krvjo, molitvami in prostovoljnimi prispevki, celo veliki koncerni so razbili šparovčke. Svojo vero smo morali na novo prekaliti v ognju – sveta križarska vojna poštenih in pravičnih. Na srečo je vojna minila in za sabo pustila zgolj vdove in spomenike. Bog daj, da je minila dokončno. Vendar pa Italije, Grčije in dela Balkana ni več mogoče osvojiti nazaj.

Če me moj stodvajsetletni nos ne vara, jih polovica pripada Njegovim ekscelenci, druga pa – županu mesta in vladajoči stranki. Treba je priznati, da se sorazmernost oblasti skrupulozno upošteva na vseh področjih življenja, med drugim tudi na področju nujne panoptikizacije. Ljudje so končno doumeli, da angel varuh ni nikakršen metafizični lik niti pojava iz otroške molitvice. To je zelo konkretna in regulirana naprava. Stoj mi noč in dan ob strani, vsega hudega me brani.

Eden od vranov naju ima na očeh. Gotovo arhiprezbiter in sancte invigiliare že upravlja drona z daljincem, pozorno zagledan v monitor. Kot amen bo provincialu priletel suspenzijski mail. Vseeno ne občutim strahu pred neizogibno kaznijo za samovoljno oddaljitev od samostanskih vrat. To je vendar dan snidenja z mojo hčerko. Poseben, eden izmed maloštevilnih, odkar jo je sestra Małgorzata spočela. Zaobljubo poslušnosti dajem ad acta.

Drviva, vendar nama je kar naprej premalo sveta! Prevoziva meje mesta, poganjava pedala naprej, skozi celo škofijo, tja, kjer listnato zelena premaguje plekstlak. Že potihujejo domoljubni zvoki, že se v sočnih globinah gozda oglašajo ptiči. To je redkost v naših časih, saj je bela vrana vsak ščinkavec, vsak strnad, stržek, taščica! Premerjava gosto, lopotajočo varmijsko deželo. Gozdno, gozdnato, vlažno. Jezero na levi, jezero na desni, jezero spredaj, za hrbtom. Sončni zajčki in sence se igrajo krožce in križce. Midva pa drviva z rdečimi pečati vetra na licih.

Prisegel bi, da so jezera in gozdni ribniki oči svetih velikanov, ki jih je predramilo iz spanca najino kolesarjenje.

Prevedla Jana Unuk

Plankton

(excerpt from the novel)

We rush through the town! We rush like mad... Christe, dimitte nobis... She and I!

We rush along paths, trails, pavements. Downhill, uphill, in a straight line, in a circle. Mudguards clatter, the seat creaks, the chain rattles like a pepper mill. She in front, I behind her! Fleeing, although no one is chasing us. Fleeing, though no one is running away. She tinkles her bell, I respond to her ringing, that I am, ring ring, right behind her. The wind is hijacking our signals, sending them to the sky, triggering an alarm at Piotr's door. What thrills, what fun – the vertical world blends with the horizontal! Two intertwined snakes hiss from under the baby girl's bike when hitting a puddle or sand. I prefer not to look back. I belt!

Despite my one hundred and twenty years, I cope. Bent low over the handlebars, I keep hitting my stomach with my thighs, nearly reaching my chin with my knee, once the left one, once the right one. How fast this little childish beetle is! So eagerly pedalling! I can barely keep up. I must turn the wheels using all my legs' force to catch up with her.

My dearest little fool from Assisi, I'm shivering. I assume that, despite feeling short of breath, there's ravishment that could equal the ecstasy of Saint Terry painted all over my face. I had the opportunity to admire the statue, chiselled by Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, during the yearly audience with the archbishop. At the reception, the diocesan vicar took me and a couple of other brethren away from the dessert table and suggested a walk through the halls of the curia.

We first visited the metropolitan spa, the subject of completely reasonable legends. It proved to be the earthly visualization of the biblical Eden! Its span paralyzed our faces, as they were hit by the sudden gawking... We spent a few moments on the water mattresses under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We stared at the purple apple and the solar collector on the glass vault beamed with pleasant warmth. At a certain moment, Brother Wojtek asked with disarming naivety whether the apple was real. The vicar smiled mysteriously and that unambiguous answer had to satisfy us. After the spa, we moved to the pool. Our eyes beheld a faithful copy of the Sea of Galilee with Jordan and nearby Tiberias illustrated on glazed tiles. Stone the crows! – A place worthy of an epic choral! The

vicar – the stunning fox asked in passing whether anyone possibly felt like having a dip, he even offered us bathing trunks, the diocese's logo embroidered on them with a golden thread. Decisively, yet discretely, we refused. From the pool, through a small secret hallway, we reached the repenting chamber of self-mortification stylized as a Jerusalem olive grove. The chamber played projected images of naked Eve and her seven daughters, representing the seven deadly sins. We didn't know which way to look. The second and the sixth sin particularly aroused a sense of dread mixed with disgust. Brother Grzegorz couldn't stand it – pulling the hood over his head, he whimpered like a child. Certainly, Satan has a liking of the dreadful and unusually convincing fantasies in a woman... Each of us nibbled on his own truffle, nervously rustling its paper. At the end: *crème de la crème* of the tour. We arrived at the small saloon of contemplation. Right there was the statue of St. Terry with an angel. Next to it stood a purple chaise longue, and laid on its back an e-reader displaying a breviary. The small saloon was filled up with relaxation music pleasing to the ear – a Gregorian mass performed by a popular boyband of deacons, Just 12. If we are to believe the vicar's words, Bernini's work was miraculously saved from Rome, which was plundered by Muslims in the year 2032. We looked at the face of the man who was ready for the seraph to stab the point of its spear into his chest, as if we were under a spell but also with complete shyness.

"Pain and ecstasy, dear brethren! Pain, ecstasy and not less important, devotion!" – the vicar cried out with distinctive emphasis while munching on a cinnamon bun.

No doubt about it – my few-year-old angel does not pierce me with its spear, my little seraph is riding a bicycle, offering me a sufficient reason to taste the fruit of my spiritual ecstasy. My eyes brim with tears and fill the edges of my eyelids... Let the devils take me, let me drag around Dante's circles without a map!... What a crazy ride! On the bike, through the town, with the wind, against the wind that changes the rest of the hair on my head into a ragged patch of an Indian summer. To belt without masses, Lord's Prayers and Rorate Masses, without begging for at least a smart-collection plate and asking for holy water alms, without rubbing one's knees in front of the archbishop, on whom the rating of our redemption offered by our charisma depends, and last – without scoldings of the provincial, which always end with a fatherly admonition: thank the

Lord, my son, for you belong to the spiritual elite of the nation, but also have the awareness that compared to the two-hundred-year-old wise men of the Franciscan order you are only the smaller brother of the smallest, still wet behind the ears. After all, I know very well that deep faith and longevity separate the servants of God from the rest of the folk, who – despite our painful efforts – cannot extricate themselves from the mortal worldliness, and often still stuck up to the ears in the gloom of oafish consumption. And what about building the first churches on the moon, when here, on earth, not autumn, but spring of the Middle Ages came about. *Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas...* Every home is supposedly lit up with holograms of Jesus and the Holiest Virgin, but virtual confessionals are full to bursting. Not a day passes by without the Anti-hater Committee of Faith blocking chats with neo-heresy. After scanning it with a dogma-for, a part of the apocryphal memes shows it to be nothing more than the contraband of virus-infected nihilists. Rumours reached me of a couple of lifestyle-libertines nestling down at the public television. Pax! – I tell myself. Pax!... I shouldn't contaminate my thoughts with bitter gall. It's a disgusting sin of defeatism.

If anyone should mention something about a walking tempo, truly, I couldn't vouch for myself anymore. I would impose such a cruel penance upon the layabout that he or she couldn't tell lauds from compline and redeem with an ordinary praising tweet on our order's profile. We are but streaking across the town with the speed of intergalactic angels leaving shinny trajectories behind. And just as the heavenly postmen must be careful not to lose their angelicness on cosmic bends, I have to pay attention not to entangle my habit in the chain. That is why I hold the edges of the gown on the handlebars with my thumb, uncovering my sandal and a part of my calf. The monastic state allows such an exhibition. The scapular flutters, my coat is floating in the wind. I must look like a manta ray.

Our rush changes the streets and homes into a blurred sheet of images. The wind whistles in our ears, deafening the patriotic songs emanating from the large loudspeakers on crossroads. We ride by the laser-fenced apartment blocks, passing little groups of pilgrims-winter swimmers. As a part of their morning Catholic fitness jogging, they encircle the town every day, performing a ritual bath in the nearby river under the supervision of one of John the Baptist's look-alikes. We shoot past the LED billboards of Christ and ads for the newest nanotechnology, past the preachers teaching the Word in

pathetic poses, past the arch-traditionalists on street corners. Owing to their genetic tendencies towards anorexia, they represent the power of abstinence, counting the triviality of redundant pounds on holy scales. We ride through an alley of trees with leaves plaited into designer rosaries leading to the Gallery of Saint Martha. In the gallery, bulimics whip themselves in front of glass displays of slow-pubs. We pass the pedestrians and the divisions of cars based in traffic jams. We waft along the soundproof screens with drone-crows sitting on them.

The closer the edges of the town, the darker it gets with flocks of spies. Until the sky becomes black and decisively too crowded. Flying defiantly slow, in forked tree branches, they look like heavy balls of mistletoes beyond recognition. With the memory of the times of the religious wars still alive, the crows don't cease in tracking the tiniest displays of heresy and race havoc. Right after the pontification of Francis I, our father Bergolio, the whole of Europe went up in flames. The new Holy Father, along with the whole Vatican had to move to Sweden and establish a new Apostolic Capital. The south of Italy and Greece fell into the hands of heterodoxy and the enemy even reached the borders of Austria and Hungary. The enemy smoked, raped and built phallic mosques. Were it not for the manly right of Prudence and were it not for the return of the united nations of northern Europe to Christianity, who knows what God we would bow down before and in what shrines?... Or better to say, we know. We know all too well! Finally the Jesuits came to use, since during the last four hundred years they fell into the laziness of their own PR. Their black pope was the head of the North Atlantic Alliance and came to an agreement with Cyril V, the Patriarch of Moscow and the whole of Russia. Those were terrible times, marked with necropolises and hosts of holy martyrs. No one was sparing blood, prayers or voluntary contributions, and even the big concerns smashed their piggy banks. We had to burn out our faith anew with fire – the holy crusade of the lawful and the just. Fortunately, the war has passed, leaving widows and monuments behind. We hope to God that it passed irretrievably. However, Italy and Greece, as well as a part of the Balkans are probably not to be reconquered.

If my one hundred-and-twenty-year-old nose does not deceive me, a half of them belong to His Excellency, and the second half to the town's mayor and the governing party. Let's admit it: the proportionality of the government is scrupulously considered in all

areas of life, as well as in the area of the final panoptization. People finally came to understand that the Guardian Angel is no metaphysical figure or a character from a childish prayer. It is a very concrete and regulated device. Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard and rule and guide.

One of the crows has its eyes on us. Surely the archpresbyter and the sancte invigiliare manages the drone with the remote control, keenly staring into the monitor. Soon a suspension email from the provincial superior will come. Yet I have no fear of the inevitable punishment for the arbitrary digression from the monastery's door. It is but the day of seeing my daughter. A specific one, one of the few, since she was conceived by sister Małgorzata. I'm putting away the vow of obedience, *ad acta*.

We rush, but there is still too little of the world for us! We cross the borders of the town, we pedal on, over the whole diocese, where leafy-green wins over the plexi-sidewalk. The patriotic sounds are growing silent already, birds are speaking out in the juicy depths of the forests. It is a rarity in our times, since every finch, every yellow-hammer, every wren, every robin is a white raven! We're measuring the thick, undulating Warmia province. Foresty, woody, damp. A lake on the left, a lake on the right, a lake in the front, behind my back. Sunny reflections and shadows are playing tic-tac-toes. And us two, we rush with wind's red stamps on our cheeks.

I'd swear that the lakes and the forest ponds are the eyes of holy giants, awakened from their sleep by our cycling.

Translated by Petra Meterc



Foto © Andrei Păcuraru

Bogdan Suceavă

Bogdan Suceavă se je rodil leta 1969 v kraju Curtea de Argeș v Romuniji. Živi v ZDA, kjer je doktoriral iz matematike, zaposlen pa je kot profesor na Kalifornijski državni univerzi v Fullertonu. Suceavă, ki piše v romunščini, je na pisateljsko pot stopil v devetdesetih letih z zbirko kratkih zgodb in esejev *Teama de amurg* (Strah pred mrakom, 1990), ki so ji med drugim sledili romani *Sub semnul Orionului* (Pod znakom Oriona, 1992), *Venea din timpul diez* (Prihaja iz časa višaja, 2004) o življenju v Romuniji po padcu Ceaușescujevega režima, zbirka kratkih zgodb *Imperiul generalilor târzii și alte istorii* (Imperij zapoznelih generalov in druge zgodbe, 2002), za katero je prejel nagrado Romunskega literarnega sklada za prozo ter zbirka esejev *Scrisori de la Polul Est* (Pisma z Vzhodnega pola, 2015). Njegova dela so prevedena v več jezikov; v slovenščini sta v prevodu Aleša Mustarja izšli kratka zgodba *Bunicul s-a întors la franceză* (Dedek se je vrnil k francoščini) v antologiji *Zgodbe iz Romunije*, ki jo je izdala založba KUD Sodobnost International leta 2011, in leta 2016 mitska družinska zgodba *Miruna, o poveste* (Miruna, povest) pri založbi Modrijan, za katero je avtor prejel nagrado za najboljšo prozno delo Društva pisateljev Bukarešte.

Bogdan Suceavă was born in 1969 in Curtea de Argeș, Romania. He lives in the United States, where he works as a Professor in the Department of Mathematics, California State University, Fullerton. Suceavă, who writes in Romanian, began his literary career in the 1990s with the collection of short stories and essays *Teama de amurg* (Fear of Sunset, 1990), which was followed by the novels *Sub semnul Orionului* (Under the Sign of Orion 1992), *Venea din timpul diez* (Coming from an Off Key Time, 2004), in which he depicts life in Romania after the demise of Ceaușescu's regime, the collection of short stories *Imperiul generalilor târzii și alte istorii* (Empire of Late Generals and Other Stories, 2002) for which he received the Romanian Literary Fund Award for Fiction, and the collection of essays *Scrisori de la Polul Est* (Letters from the East Pole, 2015). Two of his works have been translated into Slovenian by Aleš Mustar: the short story '*Bunicul s-a întors la franceză*' (*Grandfather Goes Back to French*) featured in the anthology *Zgodbe iz Romunije* (Stories from Romania), published by the KUD Sodobnost International publishing house in 2011 and the mythical family tale *Miruna, o poveste* (Miruna, a Tale), published by the Modrijan publishing house in 2016, for which he received the Bucharest Writer's Association Fiction Award.

Bunicul s-a întors la franceză

(un fragment dintr-o poveste scurtă)

„Vrei să spui că nu a mâncat nimic de azi dimineață?” , făcu el ochii mari. „O să se distrugă.”

„Am încercat să-i duc ceva la ora zece. Dar de la ora șapte s-a în-cuiat în camera de la pod. Nu mai răspunde. Dacă ar fi prima oară când face asta, îți dai seama, aș fi îngrijorată. Dar a mai făcut așa și-n lunile din urmă. Îl ține câteva zile.”

Ea se înclină ușor și-i spuse cu același glas preocupat:

„E bunicul tău. Stai de vorbă deschis cu el, chiar acum. Știi ce a spus doctorul.”

El se gândi câteva clipe. Clătină din cap, apoi zise:

„Nu ascultă de nimeni. E ca un copil. La aproape optzeci de ani, parcă îl cuprind, pentru câteva zile, valuri de entuziasm. Nu mai știu ce să cred.”

Oftă adânc, de parcă și-ar fi vărsat sufletul.

„O să vorbesc cu el.”

Urcă cele douăsprezece trepte care duceau către mansarda cu miroso de umezeală. Bătu la ușă.

„Deschide, bunicule. Sunt eu, Matei.”

Pentru câteva clipe nu se mai auzi nimic. Apoi, câțiva pași făcură să scârțâie podeaua de lemn vechi. Ușa se deschise și Matei îl văzu în penumbră, cu părul lui alb vâlvoi, cu ochii sticlind de febră, cu pulloverul maro atârănându-i până la genunchi și cu tremuratură ușor al mâinilor pe care-l căpătase în ultimii ani.

„Nu vrei să mănânci ceva?”

Bătrânul clătină din cap, în semn că nu, în nici un caz. Mușete, arată către stomac. Spuse:

„Mă arde după ce mănânc și nu mai pot lucra.”

„Dar nu munca e problema, bunicule!”, zise Matei. „Nu mai suntem tineri, trebuie să ne îngrijim.”

Se auzi un hohot înfundat și răspunsul: „Nu mai suntem tineri. Dar onoarea? Am de apărut onoarea. Pentru mine, datoria patriotică înainte de toate. Și atunci am greșit o dată. Acum nu mai vreau să greșesc. Lucrurile se cer îndreptate. E o datorie de onoare.”

Matei clătină din cap și îi răspunde: „Medicamentele se iau de dimineață, și nu pe stomacul gol. Ai făcut-o rău de tot în ultimele trei zile. Știi că eu trebuie să plec la serviciu, să fiu acolo la opt dimineața, și Magda rămâne să vadă de dumneata.”

Matei își îngropă fața în palme. Bătrânul stătea ușor aplecat, ținând ușa cu mâna, ca și cum ar fi ascuns în spatele lui un sanctuar.

„De ce stăm de vorbă în ușă?“, zise Matei, cu glas istovit. „Lasă-mă înăuntru, să stau pe un scaun. Am alergat toată ziua.“

„Nu, nu“, răspunse bătrânul. „E curent în mansardă.“

Ieși din încăpere și închise ușa. Se întoarse cu spatele, scoase cheia din buzunarul larg al puloverului și încuie cu gesturi lente.

„Să coborâm și să vorbim în sufragerie.“

Matei îi întinse mâna să-l ajute să coboare. Coșmarul lui era că, într-o zi, bunicul se va rostogoli pe scări.

„Lasă-mă-n pace“, făcu el. „Pot coborî și singur. Nu sunt o legumă.“

Matei coborî în micul hol întunecos și, fără a mai privi înapoi, se duse în sufragerie. Auzea în urma lui târșitul papucilor de pâslă, semn că venea după el.

„De ce nu o ascuți pe Magda? De ce nu stai de vorbă cu ea?“

Făcu un gest de lehamite. Cu glasul lui de bariton, îi răspunse:

„Nici răposata, femeia mea, nu înțelegea nimic. Capul lor de femei nu poate pricepe. Nici maică-ta, Dumnezeu s-o ierte, cât era ea sânge din sângele meu, nu a priceput niciodată nimic. Sunt doar femei și atât.“

Magda tocmai intră din bucătărie.

„Slavă Domnului!“, zise când dădu cu ochii de bătrân. „Aduc numaidecât micul-dejun și medicamentele.“

„Nu“, spuse Matei. „Lasă-ne puțin în pace. Vorbim noi mai încolo.“

„Dar e târziu.“

„Vorbim mai încolo“, zise el, privind-o insistent.

Ea închise ușa, și podeaua de lemn ducând către bucătărie se auzi scârțâind ca și cum o fantomă roasă de carii s-ar fi îndepărtat în semiîntunericul culoarului. Nici n-ai fi zis că e vorba de pașii unei femei tinere.

„Acum, rămâne doar între noi“, spuse Matei. „Explică-mi și jur că voi înțelege în întregime ce s-a întâmplat.“

„Nici nu e greu“, zise bătrânul. „Onoarea mea, a maiorului în retragere Aristide Ioan, decorat la Odessa în 1942, după atâția ani de reproșuri și deziluzii, poate fi salvată. Am o promisiune și acum mă țin de ea.“

Matei se adânci în fotoliu. Bătrânul stătea pe scaun, cu mâinile încheștate de genunchi, ca să le potolească tremurul.

„Îmi pare rău“, zise Matei, „am avut niște zile oribile, foarte aglomerate. Am avut mult de muncă. Nu-mi merge prea bine la serviciu. Poate că mi-a scăpat ceva. Poți să-mi explici ce s-a întâmplat?“

„Mda“, făcu bătrânul, cu evidentă plăcere că a fost rugat. Duse mâna la buzunarul din stânga al puloverului și scoase o batistă mototolită. O duse la obraz și își șterse un fir subțire de salivă.

„Din ianuarie 1990, am înțeles că scrierea cărții e o datorie de mare onoare.“

„Foarte bine“, zise Matei. „Dar ai scris-o. De la asta ți s-a tras problema cu inima. Știi despre ce vorbim. Ai muncit atâta vreme la carte...“

„Nu mă mai întrerupe“, zise bătrânul, devenit deodată nervos. „Mă întrerupi mereu! Prost te-a mai învățat maică-ta.“

Trase aer în piept și continuă: „Colonelul Vișoianu era un bărbat impunător, un tip teribil. Trebuia să fie și el în comandament atunci când a avut loc atentatul de la Odessa, după cucerirea orașului. Știi, clădirea comandamentului a sărit în aer, fusese minată de ruși. Dar cu o săptămână înainte, el fusese împușcat în piept, rană bărbătească, și avea să stea mult timp în spital, după operație. Mai târziu s-a pus pe picioare și a comandat cercetașii cavaleriei până în Gruzia, când frontul a ajuns către Caucaz. Atunci s-au întâmplat unele lucruri pentru care rușii l-au pus pe lista lor și de aceea l-au căutat după '46.“

Respiră din nou adânc, de parcă ar fi tras în coșul pieptului briza trecutului. Reluă: „Din tot statul lui major de la începutul războiului s-a ales praful. Eu sunt, azi, singurul care a supraviețuit. Mie îmi rămâne să scriu istoria, fără cenzură și, păcatele mele, fără recunoașterea unor acuzații inventate. A avut loc acel proces, în 1947. Ce am semnat atunci, la procesul lor, au fost prostii. De aceea nici n-au avut ce folosi, nici n-au folosit. Nu a fost așa. Nu! Trebuie să spun eu cum a fost!“ Ridică degetul, arătând către tavan. Tocmai atunci, lustra începu să se clatine ușor, și sticlele ei începură să cânte. Când trecea tramvaiul la capătul străzii Mântuleasa, casa se scutura din rădăcini.

„N-o să pună nimeni mâna pe mine, trebuie că și-a zis colonelul. Și s-a dus în munți, în Făgăraș, de unde a trimis vorbă tuturor ofițerilor lui, cei cu care luptase pe front.“

Matei știa istoria foarte bine: o auzise de foarte multe ori. Doar că îi îngăduia bătrânului să o mai spună încă o dată, știind că asta îl liniștește întotdeauna. Oricum, ascultându-l acum povestind, altceva îl preocupa.

„Scrisoarea lui a ajuns la mine prin căpitanul Datcu, mi-a adus-o în februarie 1948. Era scrisă în linia de cod folosită în 1941, când cu trecerea Nistrului. În caz de interceptare, nimeni n-ar fi înțeles despre ce e vorba. Scria că este o datorie de onoare a unui ofițer al armatei române să ia arma în mână atunci când țara e sub ocupație și coroana umilită. Spunea că am depus jurământ Regelui și a venit vremea să desăvârșim războiul pe care l-am dus în Răsărit. Spunea că americanii vor veni în curând, că un desant e iminent și că ar trebui să organizăm rezistența armată care să le faciliteze un cap de pod în Făgăraș. Din punct de vedere strategic, parașutarea unor trupe acolo era foarte plauzibilă.“

Bătrânul lăsa capul în pământ. Continuă:

„Am ars scrisoarea. Nu m-am dus. Ei cincisprezece, atâția câți au fost, au rezistat până în aprilie 1956, când numai prin trădare au fost prinși. Că nu m-am dus și nu m-am alăturat niciodată lor nu a fost o dovadă de lipsă de curaj. Frontul dovedește că nu am fost un laș. Dar la începutul anilor '50, lucrurile stăteau cu totul altfel. Maică-ta trebuia să meargă la școală, avea nevoie de multe lucruri, după război a fost sărăcia care se știe. Nu am fost un laș, doar că atunci eu am ales familia. Erau altfel de obligații... Am ars scrisoarea, dar în anii ce au urmat m-am purtat ca un camarad al celor din munți, însărcinat cu o altfel de misiune: am stat de vorbă cu martori și am strâns informații, și acum eu sunt cel care are imaginea exactă a întregii alcătuiți a faptelor. Știu cine a fost căpitanul de trupe de Securitate care a organizat încercuirea la ultimul asalt și știu și cum a fost avansat general ofițerul care le-a organizat procesul. Am descoperit la Bacău pe unul dintre soldații care a făcut parte din plutonul de execuție și l-am convins să-mi povestească.”

Dedek se je vrnil k francoščini

(odlomek iz kratke zgodbe)

»Hočeš reči, da danes zjutraj nisi nič jedel?« je debelo pogledal.

»Pobralo ga bo.«

»Ob desetih sem mu poskušala dati hrano. Toda že od sedmih je zaprt v podstrešni sobi. Nič več ne odgovarja. Če bi to počel prvič, bi me skrbelo. Toda to je počel že v preteklih mesecih. Nekaj dni ga bo držalo.« Rahlo se skloni in mu zavzeto reče: »Tvoj dedek je. Odkrito se pogovori z njim, zdajle. Veš, kaj je rekel zdravnik.«

Nekaj trenutkov je razmišljal, zmajal z glavo in rekel: »Nikogar ne poslušaj. Kot otrok je. Skoraj osemdeset jih že ima, a je videti, da ga je za nekaj dni zajel val navdušenja.«

Globoko je zavzdihnil, kot bi spustil dušo. »Govoril bom z njim.«

Povzpel se je po dvanajstih stopnicah, ki so vodile do podstrešne sobe z vonjem po vlagi. Potrkal je na vrata. »Dedek, odpri. Jaz sem, Matei.«

Nekaj trenutkov je vladala tišina. Nato se je pod koraki zaslišalo škripanje tal iz starega lesa. Vrata so se odprla in Matei ga je zagledal v poltemi, s sivimi kodrastimi lasmi, oči so se mu svetile od vročice, v rjavem puloverju, ki mu je segal do kolen, in z rahlim tresenjem rok, ki ga je pridobil v zadnjih letih.

»Ali ne bi kaj pojedel?«

Starec je zmajal z glavo, češ, nikakor ne. Nemo je pokazal na trebuh. Rekel je: »Če kaj pojem, me potem žge in ne morem delati.«

»Saj ni v tem težava, dedek!« je ugovarjal Matei. »Čas beži, nismo več mladi, moramo skrbeti zase.«

Zaslišalo se je pridušeno krohotanje in potem odgovor: »Nismo več mladi. Kaj pa čast? Moram braniti čast. Tudi takrat sem se enkrat zmotil. Zdaj nočem več delati napak. Stvari je treba popraviti. Gre za častno nalogo.«

Matei je zmajal z glavo. »Zdravila je treba jemati zjutraj, in to ne na tešče. Zadnje tri dni delaš hudo narobe. Veš, da moram v službo, da moram biti tam ob osmih in da bo Magda pazila nate.«

Matei je zakopal obraz v dlani. Starec je stal rahlo sklonjen, z roko je zgrabil vrata, kot da bi za seboj skrival svetišče.

»Zakaj govoriva pri vratih?« je vprašal izmučeno. »Spusti me noter, da se usedem. Ves dan sem tekal naokrog.«

»Ne, ne,« mu je odvrnil starec. »Na podstrešju je prepih.«

Stopil je iz sobe in zaprl vrata. Obrnil mu je hrbet, iz velikega žepa na puloverju vzel ključ in s počasnimi kretnjami zaklenil vrata.

»Pojdiva dol. V jedilnici se bova pogovarjala.«

Matei mu je podal roko, da bi mu pomagal po stopnicah. Njegova mōra je bila, da se bo dedek nekega dne zvalil po stopnicah.

»Pusti me pri miru,« mu je pokazal. »Sam grem lahko dol, saj še nisem za staro šaro.«

Matei se je spustil po stopnicah do temačnega hodnika in ne da bi se ozrl, vstopil v jedilnico. Za seboj je zaslišal drsenje polstenih copat, kar je pomenilo, da prihaja za njim.

»Zakaj ne poslušáš Magde? Zakaj ne govoriš z njo?«

Zamahnil je z roko. Z baritonom mu je odvrnil: »Tudi moja pokojna žena ni nič razumela. Ženske glave ne morejo razumeti. Tudi tvoja mama. Gospod naj ji da večni mir in pokoj, ki je bila moja kri, ni nikoli nič razumela. Samo ženske so in nič več.«

Magda je ravno prišla v kuhinjo.

»Hvala bogu!« je rekla, ko je uzrla starca. »Takoj bom prinesla zajtrk in zdravila.«

»Ne,« je rekel Matei. »Pusti naju malo pri miru. Potem se bomo vse dogovorili.«

»Ampak pozno je že.«

Zaprta je vrata in leseni pod, ki je vodil do kuhinje, je škripal, kot da bi se v predsobi oddaljevala prikazen, ki jo je načel karies. Daleč od tega, da bi lahko pomislil, da gre za mlado žensko.

»To ostane med nama,« je nadaljeval Matei. »Pojasni mi in prisežem, da bom popolnoma razumel, kaj se je zgodilo.«

»Saj ni težko,« je nadaljeval starec. »Moja čast, čast majorja v pokoju Ioana Aristidea, odlikovanega v Odesi leta 1942, je po tolikšnih letih očitkov in razočaranj lahko rešena. Dobil sem obljubo.«

Matei se je potopil v naslanjač. Starec je sedel na stolu z rokami, prekrizanimi na kolenih, da bi pomiril tresavico.

»Žal mi je,« je rekel Matei, »za menoj je nekaj grozljivih, natrpanih dni. Veliko dela sem imel. Morda sem kaj preslišal. Mi lahko pojasniš, kaj se je zgodilo?«

»Hm, ja,« je rekel starec, vesel, da je bil naprošen. Z roko je segel v levi žep puloverja in iz njega potegnil pomečkan robec. Približal ga je obrazu in si obrisal tanko nit sline.

»Kot je meni znano, je od januarja leta 1990 pisanje knjige vojaška dolžnost.«

»Že dobro,« je rekel Matei. »Saj si jo napisal. In od tod težave s srcem. Saj veš, o čem govorim.«

»Ne prekinjaj me več,« mu je rekel starec, ki je naenkrat postal živčen. »Nenehno me prekinjaš! Tvoja mati te je slabo vzgojila.«

Zajel je sapo in nadaljeval: »Štab bataljona, ki je v bitki pri Odesi obkolil levi breg ustja, je v celoti prihajal iz Argeşa. Veš, kako so takrat sestavljali regimente. Polkovnik Vişoianu je bil veličasten možakar, grozljiv tip. Tudi on je moral biti v poveljstvu, ko se je zgodil atentat, ko so Rusi zavzeli mesto in stavbo poveljstva pognali v zrak. Toda teden dni pred tem so ga ustrelili v prsi, moška rana, zato je moral po operaciji dolgo ostati v bolnišnici. Postavil se je na noge in pozneje poveljeval konjeniški izvidnici v Gruziji, ko se je fronta pomikala proti Kavkazu. Takrat so ga dali na seznam Rusi, zato so ga iskali po letu 1946.«

Znova je zajel sapo, kot da bi hotel prsni koš napolniti s pišem preteklosti. In nadaljeval: »Ves štab se je spremenil v prah. Danes sem jaz edini preživel. Na meni je, da pišem zgodovino, brez cenzure in, moj greh, brez priznavanja izmišljenih obtožb. To, kar sem podpisal na njihovem procesu, so čisto navadne bedarije. Zato pričanje ni imelo čemu služiti in ničemur ni služilo. Ni bilo tako. Ne! Jaz ti bom povedal, kako je bilo, jaz!«

S prstom je pokazal proti stropu. Šele takrat se je lestenec rahlo zamajal in steklo na njem je začelo igrati. Ko je tramvaj pripeljal na konec ulice Mântuleasa, se je hiša stresla do temeljev.

»Name nihče ne bo položil roke, je rekel polkovnik. In je šel v gore, v Făgăraş, od koder je pošiljal sporočila vsem svojim častnikom, s katerimi se je boril na fronti.«

Matei je dobro poznal zgodbo: velikokrat jo je že slišal. Je pa starcu rekel, naj mu jo pove še enkrat, saj je vedel, da ga to vselej pomiri. Vseeno ga je, ko ga je poslušal, zanimalo nekaj drugega.

»Do mene je njegovo pismo prišlo prek stotnika Dacua, prinesel mi ga je februarja 1948. Napisano je bilo v šifrah, če bi nas leta 1941 prestregli, ko smo prečkali Dnester, nihče ne bi vedel, za kaj gre. Pisalo je, da je častna naloga častnika romunske vojske, da zgrabi za orožje, ko je država okupirana in krona ponižana. Pisalo je, da smo prisegli kralju in da je napočil čas, da končamo vojno, ki smo jo ponesli na Vzhod.«

Starec je sklonil glavo k tlom in nadaljeval: »Pismo sem zažgal. Nisem šel. Petnajst, kolikor jih je že bilo, jih je zdržalo do aprila 1956, ko so jih prijeli samo zato, ker so jih izdali. Da nisem šel in se jim nisem pridružil, ne pomeni, da nisem imel poguma, tudi fronta dokazuje, da nisem bil strahopetec. Toda na začetku petdesetih so bile razmere čisto drugačne. Tvoja mama je morala v šolo, toliko stvari je potrebovala, ve se, kakšna revščina je vladala po vojni.

Nisem bil strahopetec, toda takrat sem se odločil za družino. To so bile drugačne obveznosti ... Tisto pismo sem zažgal, v letih, ki so sledila, sem se do onih v hribih obnašal kot tovariš, imel sem drugačno poslanstvo: govoril sem s pričami, zbiral informacije in zdaj sem jaz tisti, ki ima popolno podobo o poteku dogodkov. Vem, kdo je bil stotnik varnostnih čet, ki je organiziral obkolitev pri prvem napadu, in vem, kako je bil ta klicalec dežja, ki jim je pripravil proces, povišan v generala. V mestu Bacău sem našel vojaka, ki je bil v strelskem vođu za usmrnitev, prepričal sem ga, da mi je povedal, kaj se je zgodilo.

Prevedel Aleš Mustar

Grandfather Goes Back to French

(excerpt from the short story)

"You mean he hasn't eaten anything at all this morning?" Matei's eyes were wide. "He'll do himself in."

"I tried to take him something at ten o'clock. He locked himself in the attic at seven. He won't answer me. If this were the first time, I'd be worried, of course. But how many times has he done this in the last few months? Staying up there days on end."

She leaned forward slightly and said, in the same worried voice: "He's your grandfather. Tell him the truth, right now. You know what the doctor said."

He thought for a moment. He shook his head: "He won't listen to anyone. He's like a child. Almost 80 years old, but he gets caught up in these waves of excitement for days on end. I don't know what to think." He sighed deeply. "I'll talk to him."

He climbed twelve steps to the dank attic and knocked.

"Open the door, grandpa. It's me, Matei."

For a few moments, nothing. Then a few footsteps made the old floorboards creak. The door opened and Matei saw him in the dark, his white hair disheveled, his eyes feverish and glistening, his brown sweater hanging to his knees, his hands gently trembling, as they had in recent years.

"Don't you want to eat anything?"

The old man shook his head, no, nothing. He gestured toward his stomach. "Food gives me acid and then I can't work."

"But you have to eat, grandpa," said Matei, "We aren't young anymore, we have to take care of ourselves."

He heard his grandfather stifle a laugh. "We aren't young anymore, true. But honor? We have to protect our honor. For me, my duty to my country comes before anything else. I made a mistake once. I don't want to do it again. Things have to be set right. It is a duty of honor."

Matei shook his head. "You have to take your pills every morning, and you can't do it on an empty stomach. You've really messed things up the past three days. You know I have to be at work by eight, and Magda goes in late so she can watch over you." Matei buried his face in his hands. The old man leaned forward slightly, holding the door with his hand, as though he were guarding a sanctuary. "Why are we talking here at the door? Let me come in and sit down. I've been running around all day."

"No, no." responded the old man. "There's a draft in the attic."

He came out of the room and shut the door. He turned, took a key out of the big pocket of his sweater and locked the door slowly.

"We'll talk in the kitchen."

Matei held out his hand to help him. He was terrified that one day his grandfather would fall down the stairs.

"Leave me alone," he said, "I can go down stairs by myself. I'm not a vegetable."

Matei reached the small, dark hall and went, without looking back, into the kitchen. He could tell his grandfather was following by the slippers shuffling behind him.

"Why won't you listen to Magda?" asked Matei. "Why don't you talk to her?"

His grandfather made a gesture of disgust. He responded, in his baritone, "Not even my late wife understood. Women's heads just can't do it. Not even your mother, may she rest in peace, blood of my own blood, could ever understand a single thing, ever. They're just women, nothing more."

Magda came into the kitchen and saw the old man. "Praise the Lord. I'll get some breakfast and his pills."

"No," said Matei, "leave us for a second. We'll talk later."

"But it's late already."

"We'll talk later," he said, looking at her intently.

She shut the door, and the wood floor groaned in the half-darkness as though a ghost was walking the termite-ravaged hallway. You would not have said they were the footsteps of a young woman.

"Now, just between us," said Matei, "Explain to me what happened. I swear, I will understand completely."

"It's not that hard to understand," said the old man. "My honor, the honor of retired Major Ioan Aristide, decorated at Odessa, 1942, during the war against the Soviet Union, after so many years of reproach and disappointment, may be saved. I made I promise and now I must keep it."

Matei sunk into his chair. The old man sat on a stool, his hands in his lap, clenched to stop the shaking.

"I'm sorry," said Matei, "it's been awful lately, really busy; I've had a lot of work to do. Maybe I've missed something. Can you tell me what happened?"

"Well, yes," said the old man, clearly pleased to have been asked. He put his hand into the left pocket of his sweater and took out

a crumpled handkerchief. He brought it to his cheek and wiped a thin line of saliva.

"In January 1990, I realized that writing this book is a duty of honor."

"Sure, the book," said Matei, "but you wrote it already. That's how you got your heart problems. You know what we're talking about. You worked at that book so long..."

"Don't interrupt me," said the old man, suddenly angry, "You're always interrupting me! Your mother didn't teach you any manners." He pulled air into his chest and continued. "Colonel Vișoianu was a commanding presence, fantastic. He was supposed to be at headquarters after the fall of Odessa, when the assassination was attempted. The building flew straight up in the air, the Russians had it wired to the roof with explosives. But one week earlier, he had been shot in the chest, a manly wound, and after surgery he stayed in the hospital for a long recovery. Later, when he was on his feet, he commanded the cavalry scouts as far as Georgia, when the front had reached the Caucasuses. That's when some things happened that made the Russians put him on their list after '46."

He breathed deeply again, pulling into his ribcage all the air of the past, and picked up his story. "By now, all the rest of the general staff from the beginning of the war is six feet under the ground. I am, today, the only survivor. It remains to me to write the history, uncensored, and reveal my sins, without admitting to any invented accusations. There was that trial, in '47. What we signed then, at the trial, was a lot of bull. That's why they couldn't use any of it, why they didn't. It was nothing like that. No! I, I have to tell how things really were!" He raised his finger toward the ceiling. Just then, the chandelier started to shake, and its glass began to ring. Whenever streetcars passed the end of Mântuleasa Street, the house shook to its roots. "No one will lay their hands on me, that's what the colonel said. He went into the mountains, in Făgăraș, where he sent orders to his officers at the front."

Matei knew the story well, he had heard it many times. But he let the old man tell it again, knowing how telling it always relaxed him. It kept him occupied, in any case.

"The letter reached me through Captain Datcu, who brought it to me in February 1948. It was written in a code from '41, when we crossed the Nistru. If it had been intercepted, no one would have understood a word. The letter said it is a duty of honor for every

officer in the Romanian army to come to arms when the nation is occupied and the crown humiliated. It said I had sworn an oath to the King, and the time had come to finish the war we fought in the East. It said the Americans would come soon, that a paratroop was immanent and we should organize the armed resistance and secure one end of a bridge in Făgăraș. Strategically speaking, it was the most likely place for paratroopers to land.”

The old man let his head drop. He continued:

“I burned the letter. I didn’t go. Some fifteen, however many there were, held out until April 1956, when they were caught only because someone turned them in. The fact that I never joined them is not proof of a lack of courage. The front proved I was no coward. But at the beginning of the ’50s, everything changed. Your mother had to go to school, she needed lots of things, after the war there was poverty, as you know. I was no coward, just that, at that time I chose my family. There were other obligations.... I burned the letter, but in the years that followed I considered myself a part of those in the mountains, entrusted with a different mission: I spoke with witnesses and gathered information, and now I have a precise image of the entire collection of facts. I know who commanded the Securitate troupe that surrounded them and mounted the final assault, and I know how he was promoted thereafter. I found one of the soldiers from the platoon at Bacău and made him tell me the story.”

Translated by Sean Cotter



Foto © Vojtěch Vlček

Kateřina Tučková

Kateřina Tučková se je rodila leta 1980 v Brnu na Češkem. Leta 2006 je diplomirala iz umetnostne zgodovine in češke književnosti in leta 2014 doktorirala iz umetnostne zgodovine na Inštitutu za umetnostno zgodovino Karlove univerze v Pragi. Njen romaneskni prvenec *Montespaniáda* (Montespanijada) je izšel leta 2006. Prepoznavnost ji je prinesel drugi roman *Výhnání Gerty Schnirch* (Izgnanstvo Gerte Schnirch, 2009), ki je postal kritiške pohvale in bil odlikovan z nagrado Magnesia Litera po izboru bralcev, avtoričin tretji roman *Žitkovské bohyně* (*Žitkovske boginje*, 2012) je postal prodajna uspešnica, zanj pa je prejela nagrado Josefa Škvoreckega, nagrado čeških bralcev in nagrado Magnesia Litera po izboru bralcev. Roman je bil preveden v trinajst jezikov in prirejen za gledališki oder, kjer je prav tako doživel velik uspeh. *Žitkovske boginje* so leta 2015 izšle tudi pri založbi Sanje, in sicer v prevodu Anjuše Belehar. Izid avtoričinega zadnjega romana *Fabrika* (Fabrika, 2014) pa je spremljala razstava z naslovom *Brno – Moravski Manchester* v Moravski galeriji v Brnu. Tučková živi v Brnu in Pragi ter dela kot samostojna kustosinja.

Kateřina Tučková was born in 1980 in Brno, Czech Republic. She graduated in Art History and Czech Literature and obtained a PhD in Art History from the Institute of Art History at Charles University in Prague in 2014. Her debut novel, *Montespaniáda* (Montespaniada), was published in 2006. She gained recognition with her second novel, *Výhnání Gerty Schnirch* (The Expulsion of Gerta Schnirch, 2009), which was met with critical acclaim and won the Magnesia Litera Reader's Prize. Her third novel, *Žitkovské bohyně* (The Žitková Goddesses, 2012), became a bestseller and was awarded the Josef Škvorecký Award, The Czech Book Reader's Award and the Magnesia Litera Reader's Prize. It was translated into thirteen languages and adapted as a successful theatre play. It was also translated into Slovene by Anjuša Belehar and published under the title *Žitkovske boginje* by the Sanje publishing house in 2015. The publishing of her most recent novel, *Fabrika* (The Factory, 2014), was accompanied by an exhibition titled *Brno-Moravian Manchester* in the Moravian Gallery in Brno. She lives in Brno and Prague and works as a freelance curator.

Žitkovské bohyně

(úrvyky z románu)

Prolog

Dovnitř není pořádně vidět. Stoupá si na špičky, aby s nosíkem přilepeným na sklo nahlédla za záclonu zavěšenou z půlky okna. Mezi bohatými hlavicemi pelargonií, které se jindy kývají vyvěšené ven a dnes jsou z nepochopitelného důvodu uvězněné za skleněnými tabulkami, je tma. Ale ta tam bývá skoro vždycky. Malými okénky proniká do domu světlo jen za jasného dne.

Otočí se, aby přehlédla cestu stoupající k jejich chalupě. Surmena se taktak šourá, odjakživa nemůže na nohy a Jakoubek jí taky nepřidává. Je těžký, ona to ví, sama ho už skoro neunes.

Znovu se obrátí k oknu. Zdá se jí, že vidí nohy. Zpoza pece vykukují nohy, sotva od kolen dolů, ale ano, jsou to nohy obuté v těžkých černých holínách.

– Vidím nohy! Tatínek je doma! křikne za sebe na Surmenu. – Tak přece je doma!

– Počkej, uхни, odsune ji Surmena s Jakoubkem v náručí, když konečně vystoupá až k ní. Dlaní si zacloní oči a přitiskne tvář k nejvyšší tabulce.

– No ba, je tam. Holomek.

Narovná se, nadhodí si Jakoubka na lokti a řekne: – Tak pojď, a když se otáčí, ještě je slyšet, jak si pro sebe mumlá: – Ten ať si mě nepřeje, ožrala.

Rázným krokem se vydá kolem hrubě nahozených zdí, ona těsně za jejími sukněmi. Kroky v mokré rozbředlé půdě čvachtají. Snaží se vsakovat do Surmeniných stop, ale nestačí jejímu rázu. Vrznou vrátka a i ona se jimi prosmykne. Nechá je otevřené a běží kolem Surmeny ke dveřím domu, široká aktovka se jí na zádech kolíbá a nad ní poskakují dva štětinaté cůpky už jen s jednou mašlí. Před prahem se zastaví a s očima doširoka otevřenýma, s bradou spadlou se otočí k Surmeně. Vedle dveří stojí špalek, ale sekerka, obvykle v něm zaražená, chybí. Nafouklá těla kočky i koťat tam musí ležet už řadu hodin.

– To je Micka, řekne překvapeně, – to je naše Micka. A koťata. Ještě nám je ani nestihla ukázat!

Kočící tělo se vydouvá do tvaru balonu, krvavý otvor krku se hemží mouchami. Těla koťat by se vešla do mističky dlaně. Maličká

a plyny dokulata vydutá; kdyby dlaň naklonila, mohla by z ní vypadnout a kutálet se ze svahu dolů, až do Hrozenku.

– Ten ožrala, ten prevít, ten si to odskáče, dusí se vztekem Surmena, bere ji tvrdě za rameno, obrací od té krvavé scény a tlačí do dveří, dovnitř, do malé předsíně. – Otři si boty, ať nenaděláš, řekne jí nazlobeně, ale není třeba, ona stojí, pomalu šoupe nohama o rohožku a otáčí se, aby ještě zahlédla to, co zbylo z Micky.

– Nedívej se tam, budeš mít zlé sny! přikazuje Surmena a Dora se jako o překot rozběhne předsíní. Ve dveřích do světnice do Surmeny vrazí. Nekonečný zlomek vteřiny, v níž se v letu posledního kroku prosmýkne mezi Surmeniným bokem a rámem dveří a dokončí svůj drobný krok s pohledem náhle připoutaným k prkenné podlaze. Vedle tatínkových nohou leží maminka, sukni má vykasanou nad stehna a kolem ní, všude kolem ní kaluž temné, zaschlé krve. Ticho. A oni tři ve dveřích jako sousoší.

– Vééén! projede jí najednou jako ostrí nože Surmenin vysoký hlas, škubne jí, až celá poskočí, klepne hlavičkou o futra a běží ven, nohy o sebe škobrtají, div že neupadne. Za sebou slyší Jakoubkův vyděšený pláč a Surmenin křik, který se zasekl na jediném slově: – Vééén! Ven! A ona běží, kolem Micky a jejích koťat, podél dřevěného plotu, proběhne vrátky, běží okolo chalupy, po cestě rozmoklé letním deštěm, cestou dolů, dál. Až k Surmeninu. Tam se zastaví, způsobně otevře a zavře vrátka a pomalým krokem jako vždycky zajde k lavičce na násplí. Usadí se a s pohledem upřeným do protějšího kopce čeká. Vidí, jak cestou, kterou právě běžela, pajdá Surmena ohnutá Jakoubkovou tíží, ale rychle, tak rychle, jak ji ještě nikdy neviděla. A už se k ní nese bratrův pláč i Surmenino supění.

Surmena ztěžka dosedne na lavici a s jednou rukou na Jakoubkově hlavě a druhou na jejím rameni je konejší.

– To nic, to nic, říká.

Ale ona jí nevěří. To není nic, toto.

Slunce už zapadlo a do hor se vkrádá tma. Sedí na lavičce a Jakoubkův pláč pomalu utichá, jen tu a tam ještě vybublá v drobném, trhaném vzlyku. Za chvíli už Dora slyší jen jeho pravidelný dech šramotící soplíkem. Surmena už oddechuje klidně, ale ruka objímající Dořinu ramínka opásaná řemeny aktovky se jí stále chvěje. Na těch řemenech jsou velké červené odrazky, tak jak si přála. Velké červené placky, které odrážejí světlo, když na ně někdo posvítí, takové, jaké mají děcka zdola, z Hrozenku. Jely pro tu brašnu s maminkou až do Uherského Brodu, to bylo minulé léto.

Nad jejich chalupou na protějším svahu se už setmělo, noc se vynořila zpoza kopce v pomalém, nezastavitelném proudu, jako by ji někdo vyléval od Bojkovic.

– Zůstanete u mě, řekne pak Surmena.

A když ji ukládá do dek a vydělaných ovčích kůží za pecí, do tepla, které se rozlévá všude kolem ní a po spařeném máku i v útrokách jejího žaludku, stačí Dora ještě zaslechnout: – Nic se neboj, však my to spolu zvládneme. Budeš mi dělat *andzjela*. A budeš se mít dobře. Uvidíš.

Surmena

Surmena se jich ujala, když jí bylo osm a Jakoubkovi čtyři. Určitě ani nepomyslela na to, že by mohli jít k někomu jinému, tím si je Dora jistá. Tehdy ještě nebyla tak stará, aby je nezvládla, a její široké srdce by jí nedovolilo zachovat se jinak. Navíc svoje děti neměla a Dora je dodnes přesvědčená, že jí je vlastně nahradili.

Tenkrát, když k ní přišli, to bylo v šestašedesátém, bylo Surmeně něco přes padesát. Ale bylo v ní cosi, co z ní dělalo stařenu už tenkrát. Možná to bylo těmi vlasy zavnutými v šátku, který ke kopačnickému kroji nosila, i když nebyla nikdy vdaná, tou sítí drobných vrásek křížících se v nepravděpodobných, jedinečných cestách po jejích tvářích, a tím způsobem držení těla, kterým se snažila skrýt sama v sobě. Chodila schoulená, s propadlým hrudníkem, a chůze se tomu říkat skoro nedalo, spíš to bylo takové vrabčí poskakování, za které mohla ta noha, co se jí při každém našlápnutí trošku podlomila, až to vypadalo, jako by hopsala. Říkávala, že je to památka na válku, když se utíkala schovat do lesa a spadla tak nešťastně, že ani ona si neuměla pomoci. Široko daleko vyhlášená *napravjačka* a kulhá, říkali si lidi potom. Jenže jak by si mohla sama správně trhnut vykloubenou nohou, trhnout a prudce otočit, aby vyjetý kloub přesně zapadl na svoje místo? Udělala, co se dalo, sklínla si nohu dlouhými větvemi a čekala – tři dny a tři noci, sama v lese, než se přezene fronta.

Později byla Dora několikrát svědkem, jak Surmena podobný zá-
krok prováděla. Stála rozkročená nad zraněným a v hlubokém před-
klonu objímala jeho stehno nebo lýtko, podle toho, který kloub byl
vymknutý, a pacientův kotník svírala v podpaží. Vší silou zatáhla,
trhla a stočila nohou, zraněný zakřičel tak, až Dora myslela, že umí-

rá, a pak byl najednou klid – kloub vjel zpátky. Ptala se jí, kde se to naučila, a Surmena se tehdy nad tou vzpomínkou tak zvláště ušklíbala. Bylo to prý to jediné, co se nenaučila od své matky, bohyně Justýny Ruchárky. Naučila se to díky hrozenkovskému hrobníkovi a vlastně přímo od lidí. Od mrtvých lidí. Vybral si ze všech bohyní na Žitkové zrovna ji, protože v chalupě žila sama jen s mladší sestrou Irenou. Tak jí je tam jednou večer přivezl. Slyšela prý už zdálky, jak tenkrát kosti hrkaly jedna přes druhou ve třech dřevěných bednách poskládaných na rykši, na které jí je přivezl rovnou ze hřbitova a složil v sednici. A že prý ho napadlo, že by se na nich naučila, jak se jednotlivé kosti skládají k sobě. Nedal si vymluvit, že je to v kraji potřeba. Zvlášť v časech, kdy hrozila válka. Nejdřív byla Surmena zděšená. Tři bedny jí stály ve světnici tři dny. Zavřeně, tak jak je tam hrobník složil, a ona s Irenou spávaly na půdě, aby s nimi nemusely být v jedné místnosti. Jenže hrobník přicházel každý večer, aby se podíval, jak pokročila, a ten třetí den už to nevydržel, vypáčil víka beden a sám začal brát vybělené, jen hlínou trochu zamazané kosti do rukou a skládat je k sobě. Surmena prý nejdřív myslela, že omdlí. Ale pak jí to nedalo. Vytrhla nešikovnému hrobníkovi, který kosti pletl a bezvýsledně přikládal jednu k druhé, z rukou, a dala se do skládání sama, podle toho, co do té doby z lidského těla znala. Rýpala se v nich prý tak dlouho, neúnavně zkoušela zaklínit jednu kost do druhé, drátovala je rozstříhanými oky z plotu, až jí do sebe sedly a v sednici jí stáli tři krasavci, a byli to tihle tři, kvůli kterým se prý už nikdy nevдалa. Jen její věhlas se díky nim roznese ještě dál a k napravování k ní pak přicházeli lidé z moravské i slovenské strany. A přicházeli i potom, co se roznese, že sama se na nesrovnanou nohu už nikdy pořádně nepostaví.

Žitkovske boginje

(odlomka iz romana)

Prolog

V hišo se komaj kaj vidi. Povzpne se na prste in z noskom, prislonjenim ob šipo, pokuka za zaveso. Med velikimi cvetovi pelargonij, ki po navadi razbohoteno silijo skozi okna, danes pa so stisnjeni za njimi, vlada tema. Sicer pa je v hiši skoraj vedno temno. Skozi ta okenca sonce posveti le ob jasnih dneh.

Ozre se proti dolini na cesto, ki vodi do njihove kmečke bajte. Vidi Surmeno, kako s težavo premaguje klanec. Že od nekdaj ima slabe noge in z Jakoubkom v naročju ji ne gre prav nič lažje. Ve, da je težak, tudi sama ga še komaj dvigne.

Nato znova pogleda skozi okno in zazdi se ji, da vidi noge. Izza peči molijo, da jih vidi le do kolen, a ve, da so to noge v težkih črnih škornjih.

– Vidim noge! Atek je doma! čez ramo zakliče proti Surmeni. Pa je le prišel!

– Počakaj, umakni se, jo Surmena odrine na stran, ko z Jakoubkom le prilezeta na vrh. Z dlanmi si zastre oči in se s čelom prisloni ob najvišjo okensko lino.

– Ja, pa je res. Klatež frdaman.

Naravna se, si posadi Jakoubka na roke in reče: Pridi, gremo, kakor hitro pa se obrne, sama pri sebi zamomlja: Le naj se me pazi, pijandura.

Odločno zakoraka okoli grobo ometanih zidov, ona pa tik za njenimi krili. S težkimi koraki rije po razmočeni, blatni zemlji, da jo, medtem ko se trudi stopati v sledi Surmeninih čevljev, komajda dohaja. Urno se izmuzne skozi škripajoča vrtna vratca, in ne da bi jih za seboj zapahnila, že steče mimo Surmene do hišnih vrat. Na hrbtu ji poskakuje široka šolska torba, nad njo pa hopsata razkuštrana čopka, ki se ju drži le še ena pentlja. Pred pragom se nenadoma ustavi in se odprtih ust prestrašeno ozre proti Surmeni. Postavi se ob štor, v katerega je navadno zasajena sekira. Toda danes je izginila. Na tleh gotovo že ure in ure ležijo napihnjena trupla njihove mačke in vseh njenih mladičev.

– Micka, začudeno šepne, to je naša Micka. In njeni mucki. Še vidi jih nismo! Mačji trup je napihnjen kot napet balon, s preklanega mačjega vratu pa zeva krvava rana, prekrita z mrčesom. Trupelca

mačjih mladičev niso dosti večja od dlani. Majhna so in od plinov okroglo napeta; če bi jih vzel v dlan in jo le malo prevalil na stran, bi se skotalila po hribu vse do Hrozenkova.

– Ta pijanec, ta gnida, to si bo še zapomnil, se Surmena duši od besa, njo pa trdno zagrabi za ramena, jo obrne proč od krvavega prizora in potisne skozi vrata v majhno vežo.

– Obriši si čevlje, da ne boš vsega zasvinjala, ji jezno reče. A ji ne bi bilo treba. Dora počasi podrsava po predpražniku in se ozira, da bi videla, kar je še ostalo od njene Micke.

– Ne glej tja, mora te bo tlačila! ji Surmena ukaže, Dora pa v ihti steče skozi vežo in se pred vrati v izbo zaleti v Surmeno. Tisti kratki trenutek, ko se izmuzne med njenim bokom in podbojem vrat, njen drobn korak in pogled, prikovan na deske tal, pa naenkrat obstaneta, traja v neskončnost. Ob očetovih nogah na tleh leži mamica. Krilo ima zavihano nad stegna, vse naokoli nje pa je mlaka njene temne, zasušene krvi. In tišina. In oni, ki kakor prikovani obstanejo pred vrati.

– Veen! kot z rezilom noža zareže v zrak Surmenin visoki glas. Zdrzne se, da od tega vsa poskoči, se z majhnim čelom zaleti ob podboj in steče proč. Med begom se ji noge motajo, da se komaj drži na njih. Za seboj sliši Jakoubkov prestrašeni jok in Surmenin krik, ki se je zataknil v besedi Veen! Ven! Ona pa teče, steče mimo Micke in njenih mladičev, ob lesenem plotu, skozi vratca, okoli bajte, po poti, razmočeni od poletnega dežja, navzdol, dol, k Surmenini. Šele tam se ustavi, nežno odrine vratca, jih za seboj znova zapahne in počasi stopi h klopi pred pragom Surmenine kmečke hiše. Sede, se zazre v griče pred seboj in čaka. Po poti, koder je ravnokar pritekla, zagleda krevsati Surmeno. Približuje se ji zgrbljena pod Jakoubkovo težo, a je tako urno vseeno še ni videla stopati. Sliši, kako se ji bližata bratov jok in Surmenino sopenje. Z vso težo se Surmena sesede na klop in ju prične tolažiti. Ena roka ji počiva na Jakoubkovi glavi, z drugo pa okoli ramen objame Doro.

– Vse bo še dobro, vse bo dobro, jima govori.

Toda tega ji ne verjame. Zdaj ne more biti nič več dobro, prav nič.

Sonce je zašlo in nad hribe se je spustila tema. Ko tako sedijo, prične Jakoubkov jok počasi slabeti, le sem ter tja se še oglasi kakor drobno in trzajoče ihtenje. Čez čas Dora sliši le še njegovo enakomerno, smrkavo dihanje. Surmena se je pomirila, a njena roka, s katero jo objema okoli ramen, opasanih z naramnicami šolske aktovke, ne preneha drhteti. Na naramnicah ima velike rdeče odsevne kresničke, točno takšne, kakršne si je želela. Velike rdeče ploščice,

ki posvetijo, kadar se vanje ujame svetloba, in točno takšne, kot jih imajo tudi otroci od spodaj, iz Hrozenkova. Z mamico sta se po torbico odpravili vse do Uherskega Broda. To je bilo lansko poletje.

Na sosednjem bregu se je nad njihovo bajto že stemnilo, noč se je počasi in vztrajno valila izza hribov, kot bi jo nekdo k njim zlival iz Bojkovic.

– Pri meni ostaneta, nato spregovori Surmena. In ko ju za pečjo pokriva z dekami in s strojenimi ovčjimi kožami, od katerih gre toplota kot od poparjenega maka in iz njenega trebuha, Dora zasliši le še:

– Nič se ne boj, skupaj bova zmogli. Postala boš moj *andzjel*. In lepo ti bo. Boš videla.

Surmena

Surmena ju je posvojila, ko je imel Jakoubek štiri in ona osem let. Gotovo ni niti pomislila, da bi ju lahko vzel kdo drug kot ona, o tem je Dora prepričana. Takrat še ni bila tako stara, da ne bi zmogla skrbeti zanju, in njeno široko srce ji ne bi dovolilo storiti drugače. Poleg tega Surmena ni imela svojih otrok in Dora je danes prepričana, da sta ji tedaj z Jakoubkom te nadomestila.

Šestinsdesetega leta, ko sta prišla k njej, je imela Surmena nekaj čez petdeset let. A že takrat je v sebi nosila nekaj, kar jo je spreminjalo v starko. Morda je bilo tako zaradi njenih las, zavitih v ruto, ki jo je nosila skupaj s svojo kopaniško nošo, pa čeprav se ni nikdar poročila, ali zaradi mreže drobnih gub, ki so se v nepričakovanih in edinstvenih smereh križale na njenem obrazu, ter drže telesa, s katero se je trudila skriti sama vase.

Hodila je sključeno, s pobešenimi rameni, in težko bi se temu reklo hoja, ko pa je bilo videti kot kakšno vrabčje skakljanje, česar je bila kriva njena noga, ki je ob vsakem koraku malo poskočila, da se je zdelo, kot da hopsa.

Govorila je, da je to spomin na vojno, na tistikrat, ko je tekla v gozd, da bi se skrila, pri tem pa tako nesrečno padla, da si niti sama ni znala pomagati. Daleč naokoli znana *naravnalka*, pa šepa, so kasneje govorili. Toda le kako bi mogla svojo izpahnjeno nogo sama pravilno cukniti, sunkovito potegniti, potem pa še močno obrniti, da bi se izpadli sklep vrnil na svoje mesto? Naredila je, kar se je dalo, prepletla si je nogo z dolgimi vejami in tri dni in tri noči sredi gozda čakala, da se bo fronta pregnala mimo.

Kasneje je bila Dora še nekajkrat priča temu, kako je Surmena opravljala podobne posege. V globokem predklonu je razkrečena nad ranjencem objemala njegovo nogo na mestu, kjer je bil sklep izpahnen, pacientov gleženj pa ob tem držala pod pazduho.

Z vso silo jo je potegnila, cuknila in zvila, da je ranjenec tako zakričal, da je Dora mislila, da umira, potem pa se je kar naenkrat naokoli razlegla tišina – sklep je bil znova na svojem mestu. Ko je teto vprašala, kje se je tega naučila, se je Surmena le čudno skrivila ob svojem spominu. Bajje je bila to edina stvar, ki se je ni naučila od svoje mame, boginje Justýne Ruchárke, temveč od hrozenkovskega grobarja in neposredno od ljudi. Od mrtvih ljudi. Izmed vseh boginj na Žitkovi si je izbral prav njo, saj je v bajti živela sama s svojo mlajšo sestro Ireno. In tako jih je nekega večera pripeljal. Bajje da se je že od daleč slišalo, kako so v treh lesenih zabojih, zloženih na prikolico, s katero jih je pripeljal naravnost s pokopališča in jih zložil v kamro, druga poleg druge rožljale kosti. Posvetilo se mu je, da bi se lahko tako učila, kako se zlagajo človeške kosti. Prepričan je bil, da je to nujno treba znati. Še posebej v časih, ko jim grozi vojna. Sprva je to Surmeno navdalo z grozo. Tisti trije zaboji so tri dni čakali nanjo. Še pritaknila se jih ni, zato so ostali natanko tam, kjer jih je grobar pustil. Tiste dni sta z Ireno spali na tleh, samo da jima ne bi bilo treba biti z njimi v istem prostoru. A vsak večer se je grobar vrnil, da bi preveril, kako napreduje njeno delo. Ko mu je tretji dan zmanjkalo potrpljenja, je sam odkril pokrove ter skušal pobeljene in malo glinaste kosti zložiti skupaj.

Surmeni se je menda sprva zdelo, da bo kar omedlela. Potem pa ji ni dalo miru. Iztrgala je okornemu grobarju kosti iz rok in jih pričela zlagati skupaj na podlagi tistega, kar je vedela o človeškem telesu. Neumorno je poskušala eno kost sklopiti z drugo, vezala jih je z žico razrezane žičnate ograje in jih tako dolgo sukala, dokler se niso poklopile in dokler niso sredi izbe stali trije lepotci. To so bili tisti trije, zaradi katerih se ni nikdar poročila. A zaradi njih se je njen sloves raznesel daleč naokoli in k njej so si prihajali naravnat kosti tako z moravske kot s slovaške strani meje. Tudi po tem, ko se je razneslo, da zna vsem drugim ravnat kosti, na svojo zvito nogo pa ne bo nikdar več prav dobro stopila, jih ni prišlo nič manj.

Prevedla Anjuša Belehar

The Žitková Goddesses

(excerpts from the novel)

Prolog

It's not easy to see inside. She gets up on tiptoes and rests her nose against the glass. Now she can see beyond the curtain that hangs from the middle of the window. Among the lush heads of the geraniums that at other times nod into the open and today are inexplicably imprisoned behind the panes, it is dark. But it's dark in there almost always. Only on bright days does the light get through the little windows.

She turns to get a view of the path that leads up to their cottage. Surmena just about manages to shuffle along: she's struggled with her legs since the year dot, and Jakoubek makes it even harder for her. She knows how heavy he is because she can barely carry him herself any more.

She turns back to the window. It seems to her that she can see legs. From behind the oven some legs are peeping out, just from the knee down. She is sure those are feet, shod in black boots that are high and heavy.

– I can see legs! Daddy's home! she shouts back to Surmena. – I told you he'd be home!

– Wait. Move out of the way. At last Surmena has caught up with her, and she pushes her aside without first putting Jakoubek down. Shielding her eyes with her hand, Surmena pushes her face against the highest pane.

– So he is. The scoundrel.

She straightens up, pitches Jakoubek on to her elbow and says: – Come on, then. As Surmena turns away the girl hears her mutter: – He won't want to cross me, the drunk.

She strides along the crude-plastered walls, in the wake of Surmena's skirts. Her feet squelch in the slushy ground. She tries to hop into Surmena's footprints, but she can't make the distance between them. The gate creaks opens and she too darts through it. Leaving it open she runs past Surmena to the front door. The broad satchel on her back rocks and above it two small brush-like plaits – held now in only a single ribbon – bob up and down. She stops before the threshold and with wide-open eyes and mouth turns back to Surmena. There is a chopping block next to the door, but the axe that

usually sticks out of it is missing. The bloated bodies of the cat and her kittens must have been lying there for several hours.

– It's Mitzi, she says in surprise. – Our Mitzi. And her kittens. She didn't even have time to show them to us!

The cat's body has swelled into the shape of a balloon and the bloody opening on its neck is teeming with flies. She could fit the kittens' bodies in the palm of her hand. Tiny and bloated to roundness with gases; if she tipped her hand they'd fall out and roll down the hill, all the way to Hrozenkov.

Surmena is choking with rage. – That drunk! That rotter! He'll pay for this! She takes her roughly by the shoulder, turns her away from the bloody scene and pushes her towards the door, inside, into the small entrance hall.

– Wipe your shoes so you don't make a mess, Surmena tells her crossly. But there is no need: she is standing where she should, scuffing her feet slowly across the mat. She turns to catch another glimpse of what happened to Mitzi.

– Look away, it'll give you nightmares! Surmena commands, and Dora darts through the hall. At the door to the room she crashes into Surmena. The never-ending split second of her last small step, which sends her between Surmena's flank and the doorframe and ends with her gaze fixed to the wooden floor. Lying next to Dad's legs is Mum with her skirt rolled up over her thighs, and around her – all around her – a pool of dark, dried blood. Silence. And the three of them in the doorway like statues.

– Out! OUT! Surmena's high voice goes through her like a sharp knife, yanks her up and dashes her head against the door jamb. She runs out, staggers, it's a wonder she doesn't fall. Behind her she hears Jakoubek's terrified wails and Surmena's screams that have stuck on a single word: – Out! OUT! And she runs, past Mitzi and her kittens, along the picket fence, through the gate, past the cottages, down a path waterlogged with summer rain, on and on. To Surmena's. Where she stops, opens and closes the gate in a well-mannered way, slowly approaches the bench on the mound, as she always does. She sits down, fixes her gaze on the hill opposite and waits. She sees Surmena, hobbling down the path she has just taken, bent under Jakoubek's weight, but moving fast, faster than she has ever seen her. Then she can hear her brother's wails and Surmena's rasping breath.

Surmena lands awkwardly on the bench. With one hand on Jakoubek's head and the other on her shoulder, she comforts them.

– It's all right, it's all right, she says.

But she doesn't believe her. It's not all right, is it?

By now the sun has gone down and dark is stealing over the mountains. They sit on the bench and Jakoubek's crying slowly quietens; just now and then it bubbles up in a small, torn sob. After a while all Dora can hear is his regular breathing and the rattle of his snot. Surmena's breathing is calm now, but the arm that embraces Dora's shoulders – which are still girded by the straps of her satchel – is trembling. On these shoulder straps are the big red reflectors she wanted. Flat pieces of plastic that reflect the light when it shines on them, just like the kids down in Hrozenkov have. She and her mum went all the way to Uherský Brod to get the satchel. That was last summer.

On the slope opposite it is dark already above their cottage. Night has come from behind the hill in a slow, unstoppable stream, as though someone in Bojkovice poured it out.

– You'll stay with me, Surmena says then.

And soon she is on top of the kitchen range and Surmena is wrapping her in blankets and tanned sheepskins, in a warmth that is all around her, even, after the steamed poppy seeds she has eaten, deep inside her tummy. Dora just hears her say: – There's nothing to be afraid of. Together we can manage. You'll be my *andzjel*. And you'll be fine. You'll see.

Surmena

Surmena took them in when she was eight and Jakoubek four. Dora is sure she never considered any other way of doing things. In those days she was not so old that she couldn't manage them, and her heart was too broad for her to behave otherwise. Besides, she didn't have children of her own, and Dora sometimes thought that in the end they came to her as a blessing. Certainly it would have been worse for her to face old age alone.

In sixty-six, when they came to her, she was a little over fifty. But already there was something about her that made her an old woman. Perhaps it was the hair rolled up in a scarf, which she wore even though she had never been married, or the network of fine wrinkles that crisscrossed her cheeks in improbable, singular routes, or her bearing, as if the body was trying to hide within itself.

She walked with her shoulders hunched and her chest hollow – you couldn't even really call it walking, it was more a kind of

sparrow's scamper, where the leg buckled slightly at every step, making it look like a skip.

She said this was a memento of the war. Forced to run and hide in the woods, she had a fall so bad that she was beyond even her own help. – A healer known far and wide, and she limp, people would say afterwards. But how could she give her own dislocated joint a violent tug and a sharp twist, thus setting it back in its right place? She had done what she could, allowed the other women to help her, made a splint for the leg of out of branches, and waited. Six days in the woods until the front moved on.

Later Dora several times witnessed Surmena performing a similar operation. She would stand astride the injured person and bend right forward to grasp the thigh or calf, depending on which joint was dislocated, all the time clenching the patient's ankle in her armpit.

With all her strength Surmena would throw, yank and turn the leg, while the person screamed so that Dora thought he or she was dying. Then silence – the joint was back in place and the pain was gone. When Dora asked Surmena where she had learned this, Surmena pulled a strange face at the memory. Apparently it was the only thing she hadn't learned from her mother, the goddess Justýna Ruchárka. She had learned it thanks to the gravedigger at Hrozenkov, in direct contact with people. Dead people. Of all the goddesses at Žitková, he had chosen her because she lived alone, but for her younger sister Irena. So one evening he brought them to her there. She said she heard in the distance the rattle of bones in the three wooden crates piled on the rickshaw; he was coming straight from the cemetery, to set them down right there in the front room. He had an idea he might learn how each of the bones fitted together. He wouldn't be dissuaded: the country needed it. Now more than ever, with a war on the horizon. At first Surmena was horrified. For three days the three crates stood in her room. Closed, just as the gravedigger had set them down. She and Irena slept in the attic, so as not to be in the same room with them. But the gravedigger came every evening to see how she was getting on. On the third day he ran out of patience, prised off the lids, handled the bones – which were blanched and spotted with soil – and proceeded to arrange them.

At first, Surmena said, she thought she was going to faint. But she couldn't hold herself back. She relieved the bumbling gravedigger by taking the bones from his hands and set about the assembly work herself, drawing on what she already knew of the human body. She

rooted around in the crates for as long as it took, with no thought of tiredness, testing the fit of one bone against another until the work was done. She said that the three beaux who appeared in the front room were the very three for whose sake she had never married. Thanks to them her fame spread further, so that people came to her from the Moravian and the Slovakian side, even after it got around that she had a crooked leg and would never again stand straight.

Translated by Andrew Oakland

Gostje
Vilenice 2016

Vilenica

Guests 2016



Foto © Simao Bessa

Alexandre Bergamini

Alexandre Bergamini se je rodil leta 1968 v mestecu Belley (departma Ain) v Franciji. Je pesnik, pisatelj in prejemnik več pisateljskih štipendij. Piše o odrekanju, izgubi in samoti. Študiral je igro, režijo in dramaturgijo na različnih francoskih gledaliških izobraževalnih ustanovah. Njegov pesniški prvenec *Fragments d'une ruine* (Fragmentsi nekega propada) je izšel leta 1999. Med njegova dela sodijo tudi poetična pripoved *Autopsie du sauvage* (Avtopsija divjaka, 2003), roman *Retourner l'infâme* (Vračanje razvpitega, 2005), dokumentarna pripoved o aidsu *Sang damné* (Prekleta kri, 2011) in zgodovinsko dokumentarno prozno delo *Quelques roses sauvages* (Nekaj divjih rož, 2015). Bergaminijeva pesem *Asile* (Zatočišče) je bila v prevodu Barbare Pogačnik objavljena v antologiji *Moral bi spet priti. Sodobna evropska gejevska poezija*, ki jo je leta 2009 izdala založba ŠKUC Lambda, še pred festivalom pa je v prevodu Igorja M. Ravnika in Andraža Ravnika ter pod okriljem založb Opportunitas in E-besede izšel intimni popotni dnevnik o Indiji in hrepenenju *Nue India, journal d'un vagabond* (Gola Indija, potepuhov dnevnik).

Alexandre Bergamini was born in 1968 in Belley (department Ain), France. He is a poet, writer and recipient of many literary fellowships. He writes about renunciation, loss and abandonment. He trained to be an actor, director and playwright at various French theatre education institutions. His debut collection of poetry *Fragments d'une ruine* (The Fragments of a Ruin) was published in 1999. His later works include the poetic narrative *Autopsie du sauvage* (The Autopsy of a Savage, 2003), the novel *Retourner l'infâme* (Return of the Infamous, 2005), the documentary narrative about AIDS titled *Sang damné* (Damned Blood, 2011), and the historical documentary story *Quelques roses sauvages* (A Few Wild Roses, 2015). Bergamini's poem *Asile* (Shelter) was translated into Slovene by Barbara Pogačnik and published in the Slovene language anthology *Moral bi spet priti. Sodobna evropska gejevska poezija* (You Should Have Come Again. Contemporary European Gay Poetry, 2009), published by ŠKUC Lambda. The Slovene translation of his intimate travel journal *Nue India, journal d'un vagabond* (Bare India, A Vagabond's Journal) by Igor M. Ravnik and Andraž Ravnik is scheduled for publication by the Opportunitas and E-besede publishing houses shortly before this year's Vilenica festival.

Quelques roses sauvages

(extrait du roman)

Faut-il mentir pour dire la vérité ?

Notre mémoire est une ruine sur laquelle se construit notre Histoire. La Shoah n'est pas un alibi littéraire, une toile de fond, pas plus que la perte d'un ami et d'un frère n'est un prétexte littéraire. La question de la survivance est une obsession. Le processus de survie, un questionnement personnel et universel. Le trou de la perte est béant et infranchissable. Nous devons vivre avec un deuil irrésolu en nous. Un gouffre infini que rien ne comblera. Ou qui sera comblé lors de notre propre chute.

Je préfère appeler le lecteur à la vigilance, contre mon propre livre et ses limites, contre moi-même, que de faire appel à sa crédulité, à son désir de crédulité. L'artifice littéraire n'est pas ce qui rapproche le plus de la vérité de l'expérience humaine ; pas dans le cas des massacres, des génocides et des pertes. Cela fait partie de la légende et du mythe de la littérature de *laisser croire* qu'elle se rapproche du vrai en annonçant et en utilisant le faux. Pour dire la vérité, il n'y a que la vérité, rien d'autre. La vérité avec sa violence, ses manques et ses traces.

Je rencontre ce qui manque aux textes de la Shoah écrits par ceux qui ne l'ont pas vécu : une vérité irréprochable.

J'aurais aimé savoir comment Rémi a survécu à Westerbork, Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen. Comment a-t-il pu survivre à trois camps ? Pour quelles raisons et comment s'est-il retrouvé à Sachsenhausen ? Comment jugeait-il le corps médical collaborateur des puissants, ces médecins allemands et nazis décorés de prix Nobel jusqu'en 1933 ? Pourquoi Rémi est-il resté à Berlin et n'est pas revenu vivre aux Pays-Bas ? Quelqu'un l'attendait-il ? Était-ce impossible de *revenir* ? Comment a-t-il vécu la vie *après* alors qu'il ne faisait plus partie du même monde ? A-t-il réussi à aimer après cela ?

Mais comment vivre sans le désir d'aimer ?

* * *

La pluie redouble. Sur le sol je crois apercevoir des taches de sang. Les flaques et la boue. Les gouttes tombent comme des obus. Ventre secoué de spasmes. Je me persuade que je suis vivant, puisque je suis sur l'autre rive. Un ciel et de la boue entourés de barbelés. Ici, pas d'horizon. L'horizon c'est l'imaginaire.

Des architectes, des historiens, des ouvriers ont reconstruit des bâtiments concentrationnaires, à l'identique. Reproduits, entretenus avec soin. Une lutte contre l'oubli, une lutte contre la disparition, et une négation de cette disparition. Ce qui disparaît, disparaît sous nos yeux, devrait avoir disparu définitivement. Recréer tels quels ces bâtiments est d'une certaine manière poursuivre l'histoire des camps, la faire perdurer. Faire réapparaître à l'identique c'est nier la disparition. Reproduire les baraques de déportés, c'est reproduire l'horreur.

Le camp fait parti des circuits touristiques, « des lieux à ne pas rater ». Certains visiteurs s'arrêtent silencieux, attentifs aux gestes, aux mots, aux présences, le visage grave, le corps retenu, la voix étouffée ; ils murmurent, cheminent le plus discrètement possible, gênés par l'écho de leurs propres pas sur les graviers. D'autres vont inconscients, bavardent, s'interpellent de loin, font résonner leurs voix, plaisantent et rient, se comportent comme s'ils étaient maîtres des lieux. Ils se plaignent, trouvent la visite trop longue, le camp trop grand, il n'y a rien à voir, il faut marcher, on pourrait y installer un petit train afin de réduire la visite à une heure. Certains visiteurs semblent adopter le comportement cynique des bourreaux. D'autres celui des victimes où il faut passer inaperçu, surtout ne pas se faire remarquer.

De quel côté de l'Histoire suis-je lorsque mes mains et mes pieds se gèlent, lorsque mon souffle devient court, mon corps se liquéfie ou se durcit tout à coup, mon sang se glace ou bouillonne, mon cœur se serre et bat plus vite, et que ma voix se brise à l'idée d'émettre un son ? De quel côté suis-je lorsque ma pensée devient farouche, fragile, confuse ? Un *Häftling*, un prisonnier en puissance ? Un nazi ? Un résistant, un survivant, un revenant, un témoin potentiel ? Les heures interminables sur la place d'appel dans le vent, le froid, la pluie, la neige, le gel. Je serais mort de froid, je n'aurais pas survécu.

Ce que je regarde me parle à moi-même, à ce qui est vivant et à ce qui est mort en moi. À ce qui répond en moi dans le fait de parler aux morts. *Plutôt l'enfer éternel parmi les miens que seul au paradis.* Notre rapport à l'Histoire répond à une affirmation de notre présence au monde. La prise de conscience de notre histoire personnelle accroît le sens de notre intégrité. Être pris à témoin par ce que l'on regarde. Répondre à ce qui nous prive de parole. Il n'y a pas d'issues définies et définitives. Le labyrinthe est à la fois hermétique et ouvert, transparent. Les lieux les plus vides sont les lieux les plus habités. Les lieux les plus habités sont ceux qui nous laissent constater le vide, éprouver la présence disparue. Seuls ces lieux nous

rendent présents, nous renvoient à notre présence. Il nous faut résister à cette tentation du néant de combler les manques de la vie comme on rem- blaie les trous des tombes.

Bâtiment des archives. Les toilettes sont chauffées, l'eau des lavabos est chaude. Le jeune homme qui se lave les mains à côté de moi ne m'adresse pas un regard. Pour les déportés, les toilettes étaient un lieu de contacts, de pauses temporaires, un lieu d'échanges furtifs, d'informations, de rencontres, un lieu à part dans le camp parce que déserté la plupart du temps par les kapos et les soldats SS, à cause de l'odeur, à cause de l'hygiène. Les nazis ne purent interdire totalement le quotidien, malgré la volonté de détruire tout ce qui pouvait ressembler de près ou de loin à un brin de vie. Le troc, les chuchotements, les peurs partagées, les disputes, parfois l'amitié, la solidarité, les rapports d'argent, de pouvoir et de sexe. L'obligation de survie créait de la vie. Ceux qui avaient foi en la vie créaient le plus grand des défis.

La responsable des archives me reçoit. J'arrive tard, les archives ferment plus tôt que les visites du camp. Elle dit connaître la photographie du musée, détient des informations sur A. B. et T. Mast, et leurs témoignages. Elle confirme qu'il s'agit de deux déportés juifs, homosexuels, hollandais, résistants communistes.

Il est 16 h, la nuit tombe. Je marche jusqu'à la gare accompagné de visiteurs silencieux. J'entends les battements de mon cœur. Mon ombre au sol. Le frère disparu dans sa tombe. Je marche au bord d'un trou noir d'un monde intérieur, un trou noir où les mots s'engouffrent et disparaissent avec les gens. Rien ne se résout en moi. L'espoir de trouver une réponse à mes questions; l'espoir qu'il faudrait repenser le pourquoi des camps où se perpétuent l'émotion, la douleur et la source du questionnement. Quelque chose s'affirme, se confirme avec la trajectoire de la recherche, par l'impossibilité d'une satisfaction. Le deuil est le même pour tous à travers le temps. Deuil individuel et collectif. Impossible à faire, irrésolu. Il y a des espaces abîmés en nous, in-comblés, comme des abîmes dans l'Histoire de l'humanité. Une plaie suinte et ne guérira pas. C'est une réalité difficile à accepter.

Je m'allonge habillé, je ne mange pas. Je pense à l'absence qui grandit, celle du frère, celle de Jean-Yves, à leur perte. Les déportés et les nazis ont envahi la chambre, assis sur le lit, la table, le canapé. « Sortez, laissez-moi tranquille », je dis à voix haute.

À cinq heures du matin, je me déshabille, me faufile dans les draps. Je me sens mourir, nu. Cette nuit je suis mort.

Nekaj divjih rož

(odlomek iz romana)

Je treba lagati, da bi povedali resnico?

Naša zgodovina se gradi na ruševinah spomina. Šoa ni literarni alibi ali ozadje dogodkov, tako kot izguba prijatelja ali brata ni izgovor za literaturo. Vprašanje preživetja je obsesija. Proces preživljanja pomeni osebno in univerzalno preizpraševanje. Izguba je kot zevajoča in nepremostljiva vrzel. Živeti moramo z nerazrešenim žalovanjem v sebi. Neskončno brezno, ki ga nič ne bo moglo zapolniti. Ki bo morda zapolnjeno, ko bomo sami padli.

Bralca pozivam, naj bo raje pozoren do moje knjige in njenih omejitev, do mene samega, kot da bi se zanašal na svojo lahkovernost, na svojo željo po lahkovernosti. Literarna izmišljotina se resnici ne more približati bolj kot človeška izkušnja; ne v primeru pokolov, genocidov in izgub. To je del legende in mita o literaturi, ki *ustvarja vtis* približevanja resnici s tem, da izgovarja in uporablja lažno. Da povemo resnico, zadostuje resnica, nič drugega. Resnica z vso svojo grobstvo in razvejanostjo, z vsemi pomanjkljivostmi.

Vidim, kaj manjka tekstom o šoi, ki so jih pisali tisti, ki je niso doživeli: neizpodbitna resnica.

Rad bi izvedel, kako je Rémi preživel Westerbork, Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen. Kako je lahko preživel tri taborišča? Čemu in kako se je znašel v Sachsenhausnu? Kaj si je mislil o sodelovanju zdravniškega zbora z okupatorjem, o nemških in nacističnih zdravnikih, ki so se še vse do leta 1933 ponašali z Nobelovimi nagradami? Zakaj je Rémi ostal v Berlinu in se ni raje vrnil na Nizozemsko? Ga je kdo čakal? Je bilo nemogoče, da bi se *vrnil*? Kako je zaživel *po tem*, ko ni bil več del istega sveta? Je po vsem tem še lahko ljubil?

Je sploh mogoče živeti brez želje po ljubezni?

* * *

Dež pada vse močneje. Zdi se mi, da na tleh vidim madeže krvi. Luže in blato. Kaplje padajo kot krogle. Trebuh se krči od bolečine. Prepričam se, da sem živ, ker sem na drugi obali. Nebo in blato, obdano z bodečo žico. Nobenega obzorja. Obzorje je namišljeno.

Arhitekti, zgodovinarji, delavci so koncentracijska taborišča obnavili do najmanjše podrobnosti. Zdaj so kot skrbno vzdrževani ponaredki. Borijo se proti pozabi, proti izginotju in zanikanju izginotja. Kar izginja zdaj, pred našimi očmi, bi moralo dokončno izginiti. Z

obnavljanjem vseh teh zgradb se zgodovina taborišč na nek način nadaljuje, utrjuje. Ponovno prikazovati preteklost pomeni zanikati njeno izginotje. Obnavljati barake deportirancev pomeni obnavljati grozo.

Taborišče je del turističnih poti, »kraj, ki ga ne smete zamuditi«. Nekateri obiskovalci obstanejo v tišini, pozorni na vsak gib, besedo, okolico, resnih obrazov, togih teles, pridušenih glasov; šepetajo, stopajo čim bolj neopazno, pri čemer jih moti odmev lastnih korakov po prodnikih. Drugi prihajajo neobremenjeni, klepetajo, se kličejo, da njihov glas odzvanja, se šalijo in smeji, obnašajo se, kot da bi bili gospodarji v lastni hiši. Pritožujejo se, ogled se jim zdi predolg, taborišče preveliko, ničesar ni, kar bi bilo vredno ogleda, treba je pešačiti, lahko bi vozil kak vlakec, tako bi se čas ogleda skrajšal na slabo uro. Zdi se, da nekateri obiskovalci prevzemajo cinično držo rabljev. Drugi se prepoznajo v vlogi žrtev in skušajo ostati čim bolj neopazni.

Na kateri strani zgodovine sem, ko mi roke in noge zmrzujejo, ko se moja sapa krajša, ko moje telo nenadoma zvedeni ali otrdi, ko moja kri zledeni ali zavre, ko se moje srce stisne in bije vse hitreje in ko se moj glas razblinja ob misli, da bi iztisnil kak zvok? Na kateri strani sem, ko postanejo moje misli plahe, krhke, zmedene? Sem *Häftling*, ujetnik s pazniškimi pooblastili? Nacist? Odpornik, preživel, duh, morebitna priča? Predstavljam si neskončne ure na sklicnem mestu, v vetru, mrazu, dežju, snegu, ledu. Tega ne bi preživel, od mraza bi umrl.

Kar vidim, nagovarja vse, kar je v meni živega in mrtvega. Med drugim nagovarja zavedanje, da govorim mrtvim. *Raje večni pekel med svojimi kot osamljenost v raju*. S svojim odnosom do Zgodovine potrjujemo svojo prisotnost v svetu. Zavedanje naše osebne zgodovine povečuje v nas občutek pripadnosti. Postanemo priča tega, kar gledamo. Odgovarjamo tistemu, ki nas prikrajša za besedo. Jasnih in dokončnih odgovorov ni. Labirint je obenem hermetičen in odprt, prozoren. Najbolj izpraznjeni kraji so obenem najbolj naseljeni. Taki, ki nam dovolijo, da se seznanimo s praznino, da občutimo izgubljeno prisotnost. Samo ti kraji nas naredijo prisotne, nas vračajo k naši prisotnosti. Upreti se moramo skušnjavi nič, da bi zapolnili vrzeli življenja, kot bi zasuli odprte grobove.

Stavba z arhivi. Stranišča so ogrevana, voda v umivalnikih je topla. Mladenič, ki si poleg mene umiva roke, mi ne nameni niti pogleda. Za taboriščnike so bila stranišča prostor srečevanj, kratkih odmorov, prostor zarotniških izmenjav informacij, stikov, odmaknjen prostor,

v katerega so kapoti in esesovci zaradi vonja in higiene le redko zahajali. Kljub želji, da bi uničili vse, kar bi od daleč spominjalo na drobec življenja, nacisti niso mogli povsem prepovedati vsakdana: blagovne menjave, govoric, skupnih strahov, nasprotovanj, včasih prijateljstva, solidarnosti ter odnosov, vezanih na denar, moč ali seks. Zavezanost preživetju je ustvarjala življenje. Tisti, ki so verjeli v življenje, so ustvarili največjega od vseh izzivov.

Sprejme me odgovorna za arhive. Zamujam, arhivi se zapirajo prej kot taborišča. Pravi, da pozna fotografijo iz muzeja, ima informacije o A. B. in T. Mast ter dostop do njihovih pričevanj. Potrди, da gre za judovska deportiranca, homoseksualca, Nizozemca, komunistična odpornika.

Ura je 16.00, večeri se. Na prehodu do železniške postaje me v tišini spremljajo obiskovalci. Slišim bitje svojega srca. Na tleh moja senca. V grobu izginuli brat. Hodim po robu črne luknje nekega notranjega sveta, črne luknje, kjer se besede požirajo med sabo in izginjajo skupaj z ljudmi. V sebi nisem ničesar razrešil. Upanje, da bi našel odgovor na svoja vprašanja; upanje, da bi premislil obstoj taborišč, kjer še naprej vztrajajo čustva, bolečina in nenehno preizpraševanje. Smer raziskave pritrdi in potrди, da obstajajo stvari, ki ne bodo nikdar prinesle olajšanja. Čez čas je žalovanje enako za vse. Osebnost in družbeno žalovanje. Nemogoče ga je izraziti, razrešiti. V nas so nezapolnjene globočine, kakor globočine v Zgodovini človeštva. Odprta rana, ki se ne bo zacelila. Dejstvo, ki ga je težko sprejeti.

Še oblečen se uležem, brez večerje. Razmišljam o naraščajoči odsotnosti, odsotnosti brata, Jean-Yvesa, o njunem izginotju. Sobo preplavijo taboriščniki in nacisti, se posedejo po postelji, mizi, fotelji. »Izginite, pustite me pri miru,« rečem na glas.

Slečem obleko, ob petih zjutraj zlezem pod rjuhe. Čutim, da umiram, gol. To noč sem umrl.

Prevedla Ana Geršak

A Few Wild Roses

(excerpt from the novel)

Must one lie in order to tell the truth?

Our memory is a ruin on which our History is being built. The Shoah is not a literary alibi, not a backdrop, just as the loss of a friend and a brother is not a literary pretext. The issue of survival is an obsession, the process of surviving, a personal and universal questioning. The hollow of the loss is gaping and unbridgeable. We have to live with an unresolved grief within us, an infinite chasm nothing can ever backfill. Or the one to be backfilled during our own collapse.

I prefer to call the reader to vigilance, against my own book and its limits, against myself, rather than to call for its credulousness, for its desire for credulousness. It is not the literary means that comes closest to the truthfulness of the human experience; not in the case of massacres, genocides, and losses. It is part of the legend and myth of literature to *suggest* it comes close to truthfulness, declaring and using falsehood. To tell the truth, there is nothing but the truth, nothing else. The truth with its brutality, inadequacies, and traces.

I encounter what is missing in the texts of the Shoah by those that did not experience it: an impeccable truth.

I wish I knew how Rémi survived Westerbork, Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen. How could he have survived three camps? For what reasons, and how, did he find himself in Sachsenhausen? What did he think of those medical professionals collaborating with the authorities, those German and Nazi doctors decorated with Nobel Prizes up to 1933? Why did Rémi stay in Berlin and not return to live in the Netherlands? Was there somebody waiting for him? Was it impossible to *return*? How did he live his life *after*, not belonging to the same world anymore? Was he able to love after all that?

How to live without a desire to love, anyway?

* * *

The rain starts to pour down. I believe I have noticed specks of blood on the ground. The puddles and the mud. The raindrops are falling like bombshells. Stomach in spasms. I convince myself I'm alive since I am on the other bank. A sky and mud surrounded by barbed wire. No horizon here. The horizon is imaginary.

Architects, historians, workers have brought the concentration premises to its previous condition. Reproduced, kept up with care. A fight against oblivion, a fight against disappearance, and a negation of this disappearance. What disappears, disappears in front of our eyes, should have disappeared for good. Recreating those premises, in some respects, means to pursue the history of the camps, to make it endure. Making it reappear in its former state means to negate its disappearance. Reproducing the barracks of the deportees means to reproduce the horror.

The camp is a part of organized tourist trips, trips to “must-see places”. Some visitors make a silent stop there, alert to gestures, words, presences, their expressions grave, body restrained, voice lowered; they whisper, walking along as discreetly as possible, uneasy about the echo of their own steps on the gravel. Others, however, walk recklessly, chatting, calling out to one another from afar, making their voices resonate, joking and laughing, behaving like they owned the place. They complain, finding the visit too long, the camp too large, nothing to see, one has to walk, a small train should be set up to reduce the visit to an hour. Some visitors seem to adopt the cynical behavior of executioners. Others, that of victims, with a need to pass by unnoticed, making absolutely sure not to draw attention.

Which side of History am I taking with my hands and feet freezing, my breath shortening, my body suddenly liquefying or hardening, my blood freezing down or boiling over, my heart sinking and beating faster, my voice breaking at the thought of emitting a sound? Which side am I taking with my mind growing timid, fragile, confused? That of a *Häftling*, prisoner in power? A Nazi? A rebel, a survivor, a ghost, a potential witness? The endless hours on the roll-call ground exposed to the wind, the cold, the rain, the snow, the frost. I would die from cold, I would not survive.

What I watch addresses me, what is alive and what is dead within myself addresses me. What responds within me in the fact of addressing the dead. *Better eternal hell among my own than solitude in paradise*. Our relation to History responds to an affirmation of our presence in the world. The awareness of our personal history increases our sense of integrity. To be called upon as a witness by what you observe. To respond to what deprives us of speech. There are no defined and definite ways out. The labyrinth is both hermetic and open at the same time, transparent. The emptiest places are the most

populated ones. The most populated places are those that let us take notice of the emptiness, making us feel the vanished presence. Only such places make us present, send us back to our presence. We need to resist this temptation of nothingness to fill up the inadequacies of life the way we backfill the holes of tombs.

The archives building. The toilets are heated, there is hot water for the sinks. The young man washing his hands next to me does not give me a single look. For the deportees, the toilets were a place for contacts, short breaks, a place for furtive exchanges, information, encounters, a detached place in the camp because, most of the time, it was deserted by the capos and the SS soldiers, because of the odor, because of the hygiene. The Nazis could not totally forbid the day-to-day existence, in spite of their determination to destroy all that would, one way or the other, look like a glimmer of life. The barter, the whispering, the shared fears, the quarrels, sometimes friendship, solidarity, the relations of money, power, and sex. The duty of survival would create life. Those having faith in life posed the greatest of challenges.

The archives manager receives me. I arrive late, the archives close before the camp visits do. She says she knows the museum's photographs and that it holds the information on A. B. and T. Mast, and their testimonies. She confirms they are two Jewish deportees, homosexuals, Dutchmen, communist resistance fighters.

It is 4 p.m., it is getting dark. I am walking toward the train station in the company of silent visitors. I can hear my heartbeat. My shadow on the ground. The brother gone in its tomb. I am walking along a black hole of an inner world, a black hole where the words rush in and vanish with the people. Nothing is resolved within me. The hope of finding an answer to my questions; the hope that one must rethink the rationale for the camps, where the emotion, the sorrow, and the source of the questioning are perpetuated. Something asserts, confirms itself with the trajectory of the research, for the impossibility of satisfaction. The grief is the same for everyone over time. An individual and collective grief. Impossible to express, unresolved. There are collapsed spaces within us, un-backfilled, like abysses in the History of humanity. A wound oozes and will not heal. A fact difficult to come to terms with.

I lie down, still dressed. I do not eat. I am thinking about the growing absence, that of the brother, that of Jean-Yves, about their loss. The deportees and the Nazis have invaded the room, now sit-

ting on the bed, the table, the sofa. "Go away, leave me alone," I say out loud.

At 5 a.m. I undress and slip in between the sheets. I feel I am dying, naked. Tonight I am dead.

Translated by Andrej Pleterski



Foto © Fran Marshall

Martin Dyar

Martin Dyar se je rodil leta 1976 v mestu Sligo na Irskem. Diplomiral je na univerzi Trinity College Dublin, kjer je tudi doktoriral iz angleške književnosti. Njegova prva pesniška zbirka *Maiden Names* (Dekliška imena) je izšla leta 2013. Uvrščena je bila med najboljše knjige leta po izboru časnikov *The Guardian* in *The Irish Times* ter nominirana za pesniški nagradi Pigott Poetry Prize in Shine/Strong Award. Leta 2001 je prejel nagrado Strokestown International Poetry Award in leta 2009 irsko pesniško nagrado Patricka Kavanagha, ki se podeljuje pesnikom brez knjižnih objav. Kot rezidenčni pisatelj je s štipendijo Mednarodnega pisateljskega programa gostoval na Univerzi v Iowi. Dyar je tudi avtor drame *Tom Loves a Lord* (Tom ljubi gospoda) o irskem pesniku Thomasu Mooru. Drama je bila leta 2011 uprizorjena v Gledališču Samuela Becketta v Dublinu. Dyarjeve pesmi so bile objavljene v antologiji *Windharp: Poems of Ireland Since 1916* (Eolova harfa: Pesmi Irske od leta 1916), ki je izšla leta 2015, uredil pa jo je Niall MacMonagle.

Martin Dyar was born in 1976 in Sligo, Ireland. He graduated from Trinity College Dublin, where he did a PhD in English Literature. His debut collection of poetry titled *Maiden Names* was published in 2013. The book was selected among the best books of the year by the newspapers *The Guardian* and the *The Irish Times* and was shortlisted for both the Pigott Poetry Prize and the Shine/Strong Award. He won the Strokestown International Poetry Award in 2001 and, in 2009, the Patrick Kavanagh Poetry Award, which is bestowed upon poets without a previously published collection. He has also been a visiting writer fellow at the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa. Dyar has also written a play titled *Tom Loves a Lord*, about the Irish poet Thomas Moore. In 2011, the play was staged at the Samuel Beckett Theatre in Dublin. Dyar's poems have been included in the anthology *Windharp: Poems of Ireland Since 1916* (2015), edited by Niall MacMonagle.

The Group Scheme

You carry these things. I knew the house in question was the home of a lad drowned in the Moy, in the sixties, and that his mother had not eaten fish since that day; they never found a body, the divers, and I knew she lived alone, though I couldn't think of her name. But you carry these things. 'I'm two days without water,' Mrs Burke told me. Burke, that's it. I apologised. I said pipes elsewhere were giving hassle and that I'd have a look, tide her over for the weekend, whatever the problem. She was firm but chatty, and intrigued that Callow Lake fed this village and more. 'A farty enough source, for the whole district to be washing and drinking and the rest, cattle and cars and windows and what have you.' 'And is it filtered?' she wanted to know. 'There'll be a brand new system going in.' Her reply to this was cool: 'Ours is not modern so. Is it even good to drink?' 'It's grand for tea,' I said, invoking tea as blesser of our nerves, and to eclipse with wryness the two days she'd been without. Then I spoke about the purifying sand and stone system that we had at the *point of extraction* for years, sidling here for terms that might downplay the blackness, the volume of the lake. But now the hole I'd dug at her door was like my own mind's eye. It needed work. I strove for greater tact and less awareness welling in my brain. She watched me strike the pipes. I sensed then a son beneath us, sinking or waiting, disturbed and now dislodged. 'Do I know your people?' she asked. 'Aren't you Doherty?' 'I am,' I said, fiercer now with the hammer. 'Your father did the search and recovery

for years,' she said. 'He did,' I said. 'God bless him,' she said. And I couldn't get over her warmth. My breath was short, in sympathy, my gut all tight, suspicious of the job.

Independence

His mother and his sisters gave up on him in his forties. There were admirers in the town, opportunities in Galway and Dublin. Yet doggedly he built his vintage solitude.

And even in the years when the odd echo of his origins could reach him still, in the dawn of his middle-age loneliness, he persevered. Suicide spoke, but he had the same deafness ready.

Lately though, at night, his blood gathers itself against that will. It ladles across his mind an early vanity: memories of being wanted, memories, some fictive, of being silver-tongued. While his heart, a kind of fox, climbs down to the lake and begs the dark to strike or bless the cottage.

Margaret and Tony

We'd been wondering, and then a text explained:
'Affairs. On both sides. Wedding off.' But then
that night it was all back on. The same sister
revealed: 'They're both gutted, but marrying still.'

If you knew Margaret and Tony, you'd appreciate
what a fine circle ours was to roll with their guff.
Both consistently bullied their confidantes.
Both were volubly prudish, obstreperously vain.

We were a fine circle, but not so absolute
in our friendships as not to welcome the valve
of this misfortune. And so we texted each other
furtively for days, astounded either had found
another to bear the hooves of their personality,
and thrilled the big day now would have such themes.

Remedia Amoris

In reaching past the loss of love,
both hands play their part;
one to jettison old hope,
one to close the heart.

Skupinska spletka

Te stvari nosiš s sabo. Vedel sem, da je v
tisti hiši živel fant, ki je utonil
v reki Moy, v šestdesetih, in njegova mati
od tistega dne dalje ni več jedla rib;
nikoli niso našli trupla, potapljači, in
vedel sem, da živi sama, čeprav se nisem mogel
spomniti njenega imena. A te stvari nosiš s sabo.
»Dva dni sem brez vode,« mi je dejala
gospa Burke. Burke, saj res. Opravičil sem se.
Rekel sem, da druge cevi povzročajo težave
in da bom pogledal, tako da bo lahko preživela
konec tedna kljub okvari.
Bila je odločna, a klepetava, in presenetilo jo je,
da jezero Callow napaja celo vas in več.
»Dovolj smrdljiv vir, da vse okrožje
pere in pije in vse ostalo,
živina in avti in okna in bogve kaj še.«
»Pa je filtrirana?« je hotela vedeti.
»Vgradili bodo čisto nov sistem.«
Njen odziv je bil hladen: »Naš ni
tako nov. Je voda sploh pitna?«
»Odlična za čaj,« sem rekel, da bi jo opomnil na čaj,
ki pomirja, in s pikro pripombo
zaobšel dneva, ki ju je preživela brez njega.
Potem sem spregovoril o prečiščevalnem pesku
in sistemu kamnov, ki smo ga imeli *na točki*
črpanja več let, previdno iskal
besede, ki bi omilile temo,
obseg jezera. A zdaj je bila luknja, ki sem jo
izkopal ob njenih vratih, že kot oko mojih misli.
Potrebna dela. Prizadeval sem si za več takta
in manj zavedanja, ki je vrelo v moji glavi.
Opazovala me je, ko sem udaril ob cevi. Takrat sem
zaznal sina pod nama, tonil je ali čakal,
vznemirjen in zdaj premaknjen. »Mar poznam
tvoje?« je vprašala. »Nisi Dohertyjev?«
»Sem,« sem rekel, zdaj bolj divji s kladivom.
»Tvoj oče je pod vodo iskal

več let,« je rekla. »Tako je,« sem rekel. »Bog naj mu povrne,« je rekla. In nisem mogel mimo njene topline. Hitro sem dihal, sočutno, s krčem v želodcu, sumničav do naloge.

Neodvisnost

Njegova mati in sestre so obupale nad njim, ko je bil v svojih štiridesetih. V mestu je imel oboževalke, priložnosti v Galwayu in Dublinu. A zagrizeno je vzdrževal svojo žlahtno samost.

In celo v letih, ko ga je nenavadni odmev njegovih korenin še vedno lahko dosegel, na pragu osamljenosti srednjih let, je vztrajal. Samomor je spregovoril, a spet je odgovoril z molkom.

Zadnje čase pa, ponoči, se njegova kri zbira proti tej volji. Po njegovih mislih zajema zgodnjo nečimrnost: spomine na nekdanjo zaželenost, spomine, nekatere neresnične, na spretno laskanje. Medtem se njegovo srce, nekakšen lisjak, spusti do jezera in prosi temo, naj že enkrat pogubi ali blagoslovi njegovo kočo.

Margaret in Tony

Spraševali smo se že, in odgovor je le prišel v sporočilu:
 »Varanje. Z obeh strani. Poroča odpade.« A potem
 še isto noč spet preobrat. Ista sestra
 je razkrila: »Oba sta preč, a se bosta poročila.«

Če bi poznali Margaret in Tonyja, bi razumeli,
 kako dobro smo se spoprijemali z njunim sranjem.
 Oba sta stalno maltretirala svoje zaupnike.
 Oba čistuna v besedah, neobvladljivo naduta.

Bili smo dobra družba, a ne tako popolni
 prijatelji, da se ne bi razveselili odprtega ventila
 te nesreče. In tako smo drug drugemu več dni
 skrivaj pošiljali sporočila, presenečeni, da sta
 sama sploh prenesla kopita svojih osebnosti,
 in navdušeni, da bo veliki dan prežet s takšnimi temami.

Remedia Amoris

Ko v ljubezni pride poslavljanje,
 potrebujemo roké;
 eno, da izvrže staro upanje,
 drugo, da zapre srce.

Prevedla Tanja Ahlin



Foto © Susan Adams

Les Wicks

Les Wicks se je rodil leta 1955 v Sydneyju v Avstraliji in sodi med najprepoznavnejše osebnosti avstralske literature. Potem ko je diplomiral iz industrijskega prava na Univerzi v Sydneyju, je od 80-ih let prejšnjega stoletja kot odvetnik zastopal več sindikatov iz različnih industrijskih panog. Leta 1977 je bil soustanovitelj združenja Poets Union, nepridobitne organizacije, ki zastopa avstralske pesnice in pesnike. Je pesnik, založnik in urednik. Izdal je trinajst pesniških zbirk, med katere sodijo *The Vanguard Sleeps In* (Predstraža zaspil, 1981), *Cannibals* (Kanibali, 1985), *The Ways of Waves* (Poti valov, 2000), *Stories of the Feet* (Zgodbe nožic, 2004), spletna e-knjiga *El Asombrado* (Osupli, 2015), ki predstavlja izbor njegove preteklosti poezije in je bila objavljena v angleškem in španskem jeziku, ter njegova najnovejša zbirka *Getting By : Not Fitting In* (Shajanje : Neprilaganje, 2016). Wicksova poezija je bila objavljena v več kot tristo časnikih, antologijah in revijah v več kot dvajsetih državah in je prevedena v dvanajst jezikov. Gostoval je tudi na številnih mednarodnih festivalih. Za svoje delo je prejel več nagrad, zadnje eno od nagrad mednarodnega makedonskega pesniškega festivala Struga leta 2014.

Les Wicks was born in 1955 in Sydney, Australia. From the 1980s, he worked as a union industrial advocate for a number of Unions after obtaining a Graduate Diploma in Industrial Law from the University of Sydney. In 1977, he helped set up the Poets Union, a not-for-profit organisation representing Australian poets. For forty years, Les Wicks has been one of the most recognizable Australian literary figures. He is a poet, publisher and editor. He has published thirteen collections of poetry, among them *The Vanguard Sleeps In* (1981), *Cannibals* (1985), *The Ways of Waves* (2000), *Stories of the Feet* (2004), the online e-book *El Asombrado* (*The Amazed*, 2015), which represents a selection of his poetry and was published in English and Spanish, as well as his most recent collection, *Getting By : Not Fitting In* (2016). His poetry has been published in over three hundred different newspapers, anthologies and magazines across more than twenty countries and translated into twelve languages. He has also been a featured guest at many international festivals. He has received many awards for his work, most recently one of the prizes awarded at the Macedonian Struga International Poetry Festival in 2014.

User Manual – Men

The trick in all this trickiness
is to deceive the nasty inner thing carried
under our hardy skins. Sure, you have access to tools, use
the river's suncut pills of tranquillity & outboards perhaps
go see a woman, take
her touch five times per day.

Painting houses & epiphanies
there is always the excuse wrapped
in a criminal shrug. One long declining tide, our story
reveals wonders & desiccates simultaneously, the horrible harmony
of our aging.

Aim for the stars... rules state we can shoot one item per day –
even just nailing an argument there's convulsion & guts.
We never clean up afterwards.

Spit flies from the driver's side window
of a metallic green Mazda. There is beauty everywhere
& trajectory within vapours. Men fearlessly remove their fellow
domestic pests – cockroaches, rodents.

We are a problem
that is not insurmountable.
Should be managed with tolerance
& vigilance... advised on appropriate clothes
or counselled down to sensitivity (what we say is what we are?).

Take us out for a run the north wind hurtling
laughter through our thinning hair. We sing badly & rarely
but with great passion. Let us repair the shower screen. Hold us
then lead us to your pleasure. We are better than cats
for most household camaraderies.

Aeolus at the Mulga

The desert wind wears a blunt dust
cantankerous yap lifts sheetmetal
from the deaths
of the snub-nosed Silverton buses all
cut like raw opal
pressed into a humiliating servitude
windbreaks for camels. Punctuation of crows
affixed on air. The land is your lungs
but flies have retired as the gale wails.
Ants flummox by vertebrae of quartz
red veined. Beneath this lee my eyes are lost. This wind is a tide
only bones bask on gasping sand – that kangaroo spine
sits prissy, 90° against the perimeters of stone.
Go deep, don't assume.
A huff of emus disperse like seeds as I approach.
This is a vacated day
feet crash on pepper. We have built much
the skipsy genes that jitter past our hands. Falter – this adamance
shuts the mouth comes over, spits
that coming shine we smelt from rocks. Death by a purpose
still destiny to bend the nuisance of new sense.
Only dry scat is left on the 100km mat.
Concession is prayer
excoriation,
we make brushes. God could be a wind
& heaven is a spot...
safely away from its hands.

Ho Ho Heil

On the station the aging Nazi skinhead
is just another baldy now, he's
finished his last minute Xmas shopping.
Poking out from his festive T-shirt
those swastika tattoos on his neck
have paled to a gunmetal grey.

Torn cotton shorts on a multicoloured rail station,
it seems like all his arguments have been fought to exhaustion.
A smiling Moslem woman & her decorated pram pass, *Excuse me.*

He carries a fist like some limp Kris Kringle
but there's no party left, his
festive ham sweats on the seat beside him.

Rejoice – like all the other energies, hate fades.
Let it rain, let it sour. Mistletoe & other plastic celebrations are
relentlessly bright. He didn't say a thing.

But this is valued knowledge. Children's feuds, the
struggles in the queues. History clutters up summer.
This season of giving hasn't given up. His phone rings,
a loving family reels him in.

Just Get Over It

My periods were always chaotic
& I was partying hard.
My baby boy had a rocky road those first months,
inside me when my life was joylessly forgotten.

Everyone promised.
Nothing was delivered, I sat by
his sickness, tiny Jim would cough like he was
expelling the world.
That shitty-toothed winter I would constantly push the pram
up/down a Victoria St that was so busy with connection.
Prostitutes & social workers tutted in the gloom.
Tony once dropped by randy & broke, hadn't seen him in years

– those years were severed strings. I once sat in St John's
crying to all those Christs who run the world.
Blood on the door was some message –
the minister sounded positive, all will have shelter

from the blights of the Lord. Jimmy cried softer
then died. There was so much sympathy
for 6 weeks. 67 “friends” “liked” the funeral arrangements.
Everyone said it was time to

Get Over It.
I will live without compartments.

Liga ljubkih žensk

Ne misli, da so njihovi ščiti ogledala.

Ljubim njihove divje bele zobe,
moje ženske rjovijo. Ob smehu iz trebuha obrazna poslikava popoka,
načrtujejo z vkopanim strmenjem, nato
odkorakajo po stopnicah brez pozibavanja, palice ali pletenja.

Zakrite v črno tkanino ognja in pisalnih miz; priigran ponos. Čudne,
čudne tovarišice posvojijo svoje rane.

Nobena žena, dekle, nuna ali mama ni udomačena; njihov vrat se
včasih prepusti,
medtem možgani že vračajo udarec. Mi, sinovi, se šopirimo,
brezskrbno topotamo po nevarnem parketu.

Še bi lahko dodal, praviš, in prav bi imel. Prisloni jih k ušesu
in prisluhni klepetanju valov. Nore kot moški,
zadovoljstvo je zavajajoča namera. Povsod so,
svetijo naključno kakor žarometi, ko se premikajo,
&č včasih se odločijo, da te osvetlijo.

Priročnik za uporabnike – moški

Pri vsej izmuzljivosti je hakeljč,
kako ukaniti to gnusno notranjo stvar, ki jo nosimo
pod debelo kožo. Seveda, na voljo so vam orodja, uporabite
tablete rečne spokojnosti, ki jih je zdrobilo sonce, in zunajkrmne
motorje, morda
greste do ženske, vzamete
njen dotik petkrat na dan.

Pleskanje hiš & razodetja,
vedno je izgovor, zavit
v nezaslišan skomig. Ena sama oseka, naša zgodba
razkriva čudeže & izsušuje sočasno grozljivo harmonijo
našega staranja.

Sezi po zvezdah ... po pravilih lahko sestrelimo eno stvar na dan –
tudi zmago v prepiru spremljata krč & drob.
Nikoli ne počistimo za sabo.

Pljunek prileti skozi voznikovo okno
iz kovinsko zelene mazde. Povsod je lepota
& tirnica med hlapi. Moški brez strahu odstranjujejo svoje tovariške
domače škodljivce – ščurke, glodalce.

Smo problem,
ki ni nepremostljiv.
Treba ga je obvladati s potrpežljivostjo
& budnostjo ... svetovati glede primernih oblačil
ali z besedami obuditi občutljivost (kar rečemo, to smo?).

Peljite nas ven en krog, severni veter biča
s smehom naše čedalje redkejša lase. Pojemo slabo & poredko,
a s silno strastjo. Naj popravimo zaveso v kopalnici. Objemite nas,
peljite do svojega užitka. Boljši smo kot mačke
za večino domačih druženj.

*Eol pod mulgo*¹

Puščavski veter nosi neoster prah,
 zlovoljen lajež dviga kovinske plahte
 s smrti
 kratkonosih Silvertonovih avtobusov, vseh
 brušenih kot surovi opali,
 stisnjenih v ponižujoče suženjstvo,
 vetrobrane za kamele. Ločila vran,
 pritrjena na zrak. Zemlja so tvoja pljuča,
 toda mušice so se umaknile, dokler neurje tuli.
 Mravlje se čudijo vretencem iz kvarca
 z rdečimi žilami. Za tem zavetrjem se moj pogled izgubi. Ta veter
 je plima,
 le kosti se sončijo na hlastajočem pesku – tista kengurujeva hrbtenica
 sedi vzvišeno, pravokotno na območje kamna.
Pojdi globlje, ne domnevaj.
 Oblaček emujev se razprši kot semena, ko se približam.
 To je izpraznjen dan,
 stopala treščijo ob poper. Veliko smo zgradili,
 preskakujemo gene, ki nam bezljajo iz rok. Opotekaj se – ta odločenost
 zapre usta, se približa, pljune
 ta bodoči sijaj, ki ga talimo iz skal. Smrt z določenim namenom,
 še vedno ukloniti usodo, nadležnost novega pomena.
 Samo suhi iztrebki so ostali na 100-kilometrskem predpražniku.
 Dopuščanje je molitev,
 dajanje iz kože,
 delamo krtače. Bog bi lahko bil veter
 &č nebesa kraj ...
 na varnem, daleč od njegovih rok.

¹ Mulga ali *Acacia aneura* je grmičje ali drevo iz rodu akacij, doma v avstralski puščavi.

Ho Ho Heil

Postarani naci skin na postaji
je zdaj le še en pleško, ki je
zadnji hip opravil božične nakupe.
Izpod praznične majice
kukajoči tatuji svastik na njegovem vratu
so zbledeli do svinčeno sive.

Strgane kratke bombažne hlače na železniški postaji vseh barv,
zdi se, da so vsi njegovi razlogi upehani od boja.
Nasmejana muslimanka & njen okrašeni otroški voziček gresta
mimo, *Oprostite*.

Dlan stiska v pest kot kak mlahav Kris Kringle,
toda zabave je konec, njegova praznična šunka
se potí na sedežu zraven njega.

Veselite se – sovraštvo kakor vse druge energije pojenja.
Naj dežuje, naj se skisa. Bela omela & drugi plastični okraski se
neizprosno bleščijo. Rekel ni niti besede.

Toda to je dragoceno vedeti. Otroški prepiri,
prerivanja v vrsti. Zgodovina zaseda poletje.
Ta čas obdarovanja se ne da. Zazvoni mu telefon,
ljubeča družina ga potegne k sebi.

Preboli že

Vedno sem imela neredne menstruacije
& žurala sem ga na polno.
Za mojega sinka je bilo napornih tistih nekaj prvih mesecev
v meni, ko je bilo moje življenje brezradostno pozabljeno.

Vsi so obljubljali.
Ničesar niso izpolnili, sedela sem ob njem
med boleznijo, mali Jim je kašljal, kot bi
hotel izpljuniti svet.
Tisto usrano škrbasto zimo sem nenehno potiskala voziček
gor/dol po Viktorijini ulici, bila je zelo prometna.
Prostitutke in socialne delavke so malodušno zmajevale z glavo,
Tony se je enkrat oglasil, pohoten in brez ficka, nisem ga videla že leta

– ta leta so bila strgane strune. Nekoč sem sedela pri Sv. Janezu
in jokala vsem tistim Kristusom, ki vodijo svet.
Kri na vratih naj bi bila nekakšno sporočilo –
duhovnik je bil optimističen, vsi bodo našli zatočišče

pred Gospodovimi nadlogami. Jimmy je jokal vse tišje,
potem je umrl. Veliko izrazov sočutja sem prejela
v teh 6 tednih. 67 »prijateljev« je vščekalo pogrebne slovesnosti.
Vsi so rekli, da je čas,

da prebolim.
Življenja ne bom ločevala na dele.

Prevedla Veronika Dintinjana

Mlada

Vilenica 2016

***Young Vilenica
Award 2016***

*Nagrajenka 16. Mlade Vilenice v skupini vrtec je **Miša Gregorič** iz Vrtca Nova Gorica, enota Ciciban za pesem Mavrična pesem. Mentorici: Sara Maček in Nevenka Boškin.*

Mavrična pesem

Mavrica na nebu je,
mavrica na nebu je,
hura, hura!

Dežek nam pada,
sonček pa sije,
jaz pa samo gledam sonce,
ki bije.

Na nebu, na nebu
sonček bo osvetlil mavrico,
jaz pa jo gledam z mamico.

Mavrica krasnih barv je najlepša,
tu je svet najlepši.

*The winner of the 16th Young Vilenica Award in the kindergarten group is **Miša Gregorič** from the Nova Gorica Kindergarten, Unit Ciciban, for the poem 'A Rainbow Poem'. Mentors: Sara Maček and Nevenka Boškin.*

A Rainbow Poem

There's a rainbow in the sky,
there's a rainbow in the sky,
hurray, hurray!

The rain is pitty-patting
and the sunlight shines,
me, I'm simply looking at the sun,
which chimes.

In the sky, in the sky,
a rainbow lit up by the sun,
and I'm watching it with Mum.

A rainbow, coloured bright, looks best,
there the world is loveliest.

Nagrajenka 16. Mlade Vilenice v skupini prva triada osnovnih šol je
Nejka Vratnik iz OŠ Brezovica pri Ljubljani za pesem *Malim so*
všeč. Mentorica: Urška Bačar.

Malim so všeč

Malim so všeč nenavadne reči,
kot recimo hišniki,
kot recimo piloti,
kot recimo, kot recimo ...
Malim so všeč sladke reči,
kot recimo nutela,
kot recimo čokolada,
kot recimo frutabela,
kot recimo, kot recimo ...
Malim so smešne besede všeč,
kot recimo mulasepolula,
kot recimo hlačedopetače,
kot recimo, kot recimo ...

*The winner of the 16th Young Vilenica Award in the first elementary school triad group is **Nejka Vratnik** from Elementary School Brezovica pri Ljubljani, for the poem 'Little Kids Like'. Mentor: Urška Bačar.*

Little Kids Like

Little kids like quirky things,
say, like janitors,
say, like rocketeers,
say, like, say, like...
Little kids like sugar things,
say, things like Nutella,
say, like chocolate,
say, like Frutabela,
say, like, say, like...
Little kids like funny words,
say, like pickledpepper,
say, like hurlyburly,
say, like, say, like...

*Nagrajenka 16. Mlade Vilenice v skupini druga triada osnovnih šol je **Ekaterina Mihajloska** iz OŠ Mengeš za pesem Dva jezika, dva svetova. Mentorica: Draga Železnikar.*

Dva jezika, dva svetova

Moja mama slovensko
z mano govori.
Njej lahko povem,
če me kaj teži.

Moj oče makedonsko
z nami govori,
makedonsko me krega
s svojim močnim glasom.

Mamica je včasih
po službi zmatrana.
Če ji še jaz nagajam,
potem se skregava.

Z očetom se veliko
ne pogovarjava,
vase se zapiram
in malo strah me je.

Z mamico se hočem igrati,
ko dolgčas mi je.
A ko se ona hoče pogovarjat,
jaz vedno rečem: NE!

Očeta imam zelo rada,
kadar nisva skregana.
Zelo se bom trudila,
da bova prijatelja.

Pri nas govorimo dva jezika,
dva jazici zboruvame kaj nas,
pa vsi med seboj razumemo se,
megju sebe se razbirame.

*The winner of the 16th Young Vilenica Award in the second elementary school triad group is **Ekaterina Mihajloska** from the Mengeš Elementary School, for the poem 'Two Languages, Two Worlds'. Mentor: Draga Železnikar.*

Two Languages, Two Worlds

My mother always talks
in Slovene to me.
It's to her I tell
when I'm ill at ease.

My father talks to us
in Macedonian,
scolds me in Macedonian
with his booming voice.

Sometimes Mum is tired
when she comes back home.
If I tease her then,
we can have a row.

We do not talk much,
Father and myself,
I withdraw inside,
feel a little tense.

I want to play with Mum
whenever I feel bored,
but always tell her NO!
when she wants to talk.

I'm very fond of Father
when we're not at odds.
I'll do my level best that
we can get along.

My family speaks two languages,
dva jazici zboruvame kaj nas,
but all grasp what the others say,
megju sebe se razbirame.

*Nagrajenec 16. Mlade Vilenice v skupini tretja triada osnovnih šol je **Aljaž Primožič** iz OŠ Prebold za pesem Ker človek ne sliši. Mentorica: Vesna Kumer.*

Ker človek ne sliši

Nekoč je bil fant.
Oči in nos po očetu,
po mami visoki diskant
ter kodrasti rjavci po dedku.

Normalen, bi rekli. Vsekakor.

Uho zavzema svoje mesto,
pa vendar ni slišal,
a poslušal je zvesto
vsako besedo praznine.

Čudno, bi rekli. Vsekakor.

Slišal ni »zdravo«, »hej«,
čeprav prisluhnil je vsem,
opazil ni »čao« in »glej«,
povsod brez odgovora.

Nonsens, bi rekli. Vsekakor.

Ni jokal v narečju.
Jokal je tiho in hlipajoče.
Vdal se ni pravorečju.
Jokal je sam.

Kar koli bi rekli, slišal vas ne bi ... Nikakor.

Vsekakor.

*The winner of the 16th Young Vilenica Award in the third elementary school triad group is **Aljaž Primožič** from the Prebold Elementary School, for the poem 'Because One Does Not Hear'. Mentor: Vesna Kumer.*

Because One Does Not Hear

Once there was a boy.
With father's nose and eyes,
with mother's high-pitched voice,
brown curls from grandpa's side.

Normal, see. Certainly.

His ear was in its place
but he heard not a thing
while listening faithfully
to words of emptiness.

Weird, you see. Certainly.

Though listening to all,
he never heard a 'hi',
or 'ciao', or 'look here',
and never gave reply.

Nonsense, see. Certainly.

He never cried in dialect.
He softly sobbed instead.
Did not conform to language norm.
He cried all by himself.

Say what you would, he couldn't hear you... Not a bit.

Certainly.

*Nagrajenka 16. Mlade Vilenice v skupini srednjih šol je **Lara Ružič Povirk** iz Gimnazije Ptuj za pesem Vznesena. Mentorica: Marija Holc.*

Vznesena

Vznesena lovim vmesnosti.

Edino, kar si želim, je, da bi plesala skozi noči, ker bi vedela za dneve in jutra.

Zapeljem na konec, posujem jutro z zvezdnim prahom in se vrtinčim.

V vetrovih jutranjih vzdihljajev.

Ustavim, zatrobim. Zakričim ali se zavijem v mračno tišino. Takrat ni več vmesnosti.

Zmernosti.

Ali sem zasanjala svoje življenje?

Nekam oddaljeno je in v njem je vedno prostor za *off*.

Trpka prevleka, zamegljeni obrisi poti in predmetov.

Vsa ta odtujenost mi nabija v tilnik in se širi v solznico, jo izsuši.

Nato odidem. Iskat sanje.

Na konec mostov.

K daljnim pomolom, ki jih zažiga zmedeno sonce.

Ne soočenje.

Neurje v laseh.

Izginjanje sebe.

Izbrala sem radost namesto prezira in norosti.

Skočila sem v morje.

In si enkrat za spremembo dovolila plavati v plitvinah.

Tam sem. Zmerna in vmesna.

*The winner of the 16th Young Vilenica Award in the high school group is **Lara Ružič Povirk** from the Ptuj Gymnasium, for the poem 'Swept Away'. Mentor: Marija Holc.*

Swept Away

Swept away, I hunt for in-betweens.
 All I long for is to dance through nights because I'd know about
 the days and dawns.
 I drive down to the end, to strew the dawn with stardust and to whirl.
 In winds of morning sighs.
 I stop, I honk. I scream or wrap myself in gloomy silence. No in-
 between there now.
 No moderation.
 Have I dreamt my life away?
 It seems quite distant, always with some space to chill.
 A bitter varnish, misty outlines of both roads and things.
 All this alienation beats down on my neck and, spreading to my
 tear gland, dries it out.
 Then I leave. To seek for dreams.
 To ends of bridges.
 To distant piers set blazing by a dizzy sun.
 Not confrontation.
 Storm in the hair.
 Vanishing of self.
 Instead of madness and disdain, I chose joy.
 I leapt into the sea.
 And for a change allowed myself to swim in shallow waters.
 There I am. Moderate and in between.

Posebne nagrade

*Posebno nagrado prejme **Alja Tursunović** (2009) iz OŠ Dušana Bordona Semedela – Koper za pesem Zate. Mentorica: Sabina Višček.*

Zate

Marjetice so zate,
objem je zate,
še bonbonček ti dam,
srček ti narišem,
kolaček ti spečem
in v gore te popeljem.
Rada te imam.

Special Prizes

*A special prize is awarded to **Alja Tursunović** (2009) from the Dušan Bordon Elementary School, Semedela – Koper, for the poem 'For You'.
Mentor: Sabina Višček.*

For You

These daisies are for you
and this hug's for you,
I give you a praline
and draw for you a heart,
I bake for you a cake
and take you to the Alps.
You're my love.

*Posebno nagrado prejme **Eric Renzi** (2005) iz COŠ Pinko Tomažič, Trebče, Trst, Italija za pesem Muoja domača abeceda. Mentorica: Barbara Boneta.*

Muoja domača abeceda

Aroplan leti,
boršica leži,
cavata smrdi,
čelular zvoni,
djelemo vsi brez skrbi.
Embet se piše,
facolet pa briše.
Guazd gori,
bruašč beži,
Indjanc zakreči,
japko diši,
luanc kuha reči.
Marenda je pronta,
nuona je kontjenta,
ombrela je odprta.
Penel barva,
rigel poravna.
Sunce nas greje,
štucikadent se smeje.
Televižjon je užgan,
uaso je zaspan.
Vagun je zvit,
zgunc pa razbit.
Žbjela je odletela,

abeceda je *cjela*.

A special prize is awarded to **Eric Renzi** (2005) from the *Pinko Tomažič Full-Day Elementary School, Trebiciano, Trieste, Italy*, for the poem 'My Home ABC'. Mentor: Barbara Boneta.

My Home ABC

Aroplan – an airplane – flies,
Boršica – a small bag – lies,
Cavata – a slipper – stinks,
Čelular – a cell phone – rings,
Djelemo – we work – on wings.
Embet, once, is time to write,
Facolet, a hanky, wipes.
Guazd – the wood – is burning down,
Hrušč – a bug – is scuttling round,
the *Indjanci* – Injuns – shriek,
Japko – apple – smells all sweet,
Luanc – a pot – cooks many things.
Ready is *Marenda*, lunch,
Nuona – Gran – is pleased as Punch,
and *Ombrela* opens wide.
Penel – that's a paintbrush – paints,
Rigel – ruler – helps draw straight.
Sunce – the sun – is heating,
Štucikadent – a toothpick – is beaming.
Televižjon is turned on,
Uaso – ass – is nodding off.
Vagun – the car – has crashed,
Zgunc – the bell – is smashed.
Žbjela – bee – is flown,

the ABC is whole.

*Posebno nagrado prejme **Lota Martinjak** (2003) iz OŠ Brezovica pri Ljubljani za pesem Naš jezik. Mentorica: Zdenka Ivančič.*

Naš jezik

Slovenščina
je lep jezik;
ima ednino,
s katero se sami
v knjige zatopimo.

Slovenščina
je lep jezik;
ima dvojino,
s katero ustvarja
prijetno bližino.

Slovenščina
je lep jezik;
ima množino,
s katero prijateljem
srečo razdelimo.

Vsak po svoje,
vsak drugače
pesni njeno simfonijo ...
Ker kot prstni je odtis,
ki za sabo ga pustimo.

*A special prize is awarded to **Lota Martinjak** (2003) from Elementary School Brezovica pri Ljubljani, for the poem 'Our Language'. Mentor: Zdenka Ivančič.*

Our Language

Slovene
is a fine language:
in the singular form
each is easily
by a book absorbed.

Slovene
is a fine language:
in the dual form
it makes people grow
closer than before.

Slovene
is a fine language:
in the plural form
it can help us spread
happiness to all.

Each in his own way,
each one differently
we compose its notes...
For it's like a fingerprint,
staying as we go.

*Posebno nagrado prejme **Tomi Petek** (1997) iz Gimnazije Ptuj za pesem Novi dan naj te besede varje. Mentorica: Marija Holc.*

Novi dan naj te besede varje

Čez polja sem prineslo je besede,
da so zdih'vale trate in gozdovi,
a dnevi, ko rodé se njih sinovi,
v noči se spremené in v viharje;
le novi dan naj te besede varje.

Mirnó nato so sedle na pragove
hiš, kjer človeška roka spanec snuje,
saj on jih je iskal, ki tam domuje,
da misli bi prebral s poletne zarje;
in novi dan naj te besede varje.

Le kam odnašalo je te besede,
da njihov glas čez hribe se izgúbi,
na severu človeka tujec snubi;
le naj poprosi časa gospodarje,
da novi dan naj te besede varje.

Te nam besede tiho pesem tkejo,
iz nje pa trdne zidajo zidove,
v katerih močne nam gradé domove,
da prevetrimo mrzle vse viharje;
naš novi dan naj te besede varje!

*Posebna nagrada mentorici **Mirjani Lazarević**, OŠ Sveti Sava, Bijeljina, Republika Srbska, BiH za skupinsko sodelovanje na Mladi Vilenici. Vsi mladi avtorji: **Teodor Vidaković, Nadežda Perković, Minja Drakul, Katarina Cacanović, Jovan Kokanović in Milka Bujanović** so za natečaj prispevali zelo kakovostne pesmi.*

*A special prize is awarded to **Tomi Petek** (1997) from the Ptuj Gymnasium, for the poem 'May the New Day Watch over These Words'. Mentor: Marija Holc.*

May the New Day Watch over These Words

The words were carried here across the fields
and made the grassy plains and forests sigh,
but days when their sons are brought to life
transform themselves into a stormy murk:
may but the new day watch over these words.

Then quietly they settled on the steps
of houses where the human hand spins sleep,
sought after by one dwelling there, who seeks
to read the thoughts, in summer's red dusk stirred:
and may the new day watch over these words.

But all these words – by what paths were they blown
that their voice across the mountains fades
and man is called by northern lures away?
O let him beg the lords of time and world
to have the new day watch over these words.

For us these words are weaving low-voiced lays
and raising from the lays enduring walls,
wherein to build for us strong buttressed halls
to weather all the chilling stormy whirls:
may our new day watch over these words!

Translated by Nada Grošelj

*A special prize is awarded to mentor **Mirjana Lazarević**, the Sveti Sava Elementary School, Bijeljina, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina, for group participation in Young Vilenica. All the young authors – **Teodor Vidaković**, **Nadežda Perković**, **Minja Drakul**, **Katarina Cacanović**, **Jovan Kokanović**, and **Milka Bujanović** – have contributed poems of remarkable quality.*

**Dosedanji
udeleženci in
nagrajenci
Vilenice**

Previous

*Participants and
Vilenica Prize
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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Claudio Magris: Ewaldova bakla / Ewald's Torch*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Czesław Miłosz: Četrta učna ura / The Fourth Teaching Lesson*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *György Konrád: S sredine / From the Centre*

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Tomas Venclova

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veno Taufer*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Veno Taufer: Izziv ali zgaga? / Challenge or Hassle?*

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Zbigniew Herbert

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Niko Jež*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Vlado Gotovac: Skica o Atlasu / Sketch of the Atlas*

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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, Drahoš Machala, Vytautas Martinkus, Ivan Minatti, Libuše Moníková, Boris A. Novak, Lajos Parti Nagy, Aarne Puu, Gerhard Roth, Štefan Strážay, Jana Štroblová, 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, József 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 Sgorlon, 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
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AWARDED THE 1994 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Josip Osti

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Denis Poníž*

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 Agosín, Edoardo Albinati, Árni 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*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH
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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 Bogumila 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 Acin, Kurt Aebli, Marjorie Agosín, Eugenijus Ališanka, Marcin Baran, Árni Bergmann, Krzysztof Bielecki, Dariusz Bittner, Loredana Bogliun, Berta Bojetu-Boeta, Tereza Boučková, Lucas Cejpek, Róza Domašcyna, Erik Groch, Gunnar D. Hansson, Nora Ikstena, Richard Jackson, Marzanna Bogumila 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, Ciril 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 Čegan, Kača Čelan, Zita Čepaitė, Stefano Dell'antonio, Ljiljana Dirjan, Dušan Dušek, Milan Đorđević, Menna Elfyn, János Háty, Ann Jäderlund, Antanas A. Jonynas, Julian Kornhauser, András Ferenc Kovács, Vladimir Kovačič, Friederike Kretzen, Enzo Martines, Lydia Mischkulnig, Brane Mozetič, Boris A. Novak, Iztok Osojnik, Žarko Petan, James Ragan, Ales Razanov, Hansjörg Schertenleib, Triini Soomets, Karel Šiktanc, Aleš Šteger, Thorgerir Thorgeirson, Maja Vidmar, Mártniš Zelmanis

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 Macsovský, 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 Zawadcki

DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Daimon zapeljevanja / Daimon of Temptation:*
Rainer Maria Rilke: Orfej • Evridika • Hermes / Orpheus • Eurydike • Hermes

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Péter Nádas

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Orsolya 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 Tekachi, 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
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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 Abrutytė, Angelo Cherchi, Lelo Cjanton, Richard Flanagan, Marius Ivaškevičius, Richard Jackson, Jana Juránová, 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 Senger, 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 združeni (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*

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Slavko Mihalč

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veno Taufer*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2000 / 2000 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD — *Vörös István*

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 Sendeci, Ronny Someck, Marjan Stojan, Brina Švigelj Mérat, Yörgos 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
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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 Natsuishi, Claudio Pozzani, Matthew Rohrer, Erik Stinus, Franco Supino, Vivienne Vermes, Thor Vilhjálmsón, 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 Ødegård, 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, Vladimír 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, Štefan 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 McGarrah, 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
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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, Albierd Bacharevič, Szilárd Borbély, Yiorgos Chouliaras, Daiva Čepauskaitė, Ervin Fritz, Tatjana Gromača, Brian Henry, Oto Horvat, Nora Iuga, Iva Jevtić, Ekaterina Yossifova, Zdenko Kodrič, Márius Kopcsay, Miran Košuta, Mojca Kumerdej, Terezia 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?"

MODERATORICA / 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
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Goran Stefanovski

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Lidija Dimkowska*

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 Štiks, 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"

MODERATORICA / 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 Stomóin, 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
Srđić, Peter Rezman, Víctor Rodríguez Núñez, Maria Šlehtič, 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, Stefan 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, Tamas 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

MODERATORICA / 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*

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 Lemaic, 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: Nazlı Eray, Nedim Gürsel, Mehmet Yaşın*

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 Masłowska, Indrek Mesikepp, Miroslav Mićanović, Paul Muldoon, Ioana Nicolaie, Tom Petsinis, Sebastijan Pregelj, Pino Roveredo, Monique Schwitter, Bekim Sejranović, Dmitrij Strocev, Kārlis Vērdiņš, Gian Mario Villalta, Jiaxin Wang, Aldo Žerjal

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:

»Avtorji nomadi« / "Nomadic Writers"

MODERATORICA / 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, Silviya Čoleva, Radka Denemarková, Rodica Draghinescu, Miriam Drev, Katharina Hacker, Olli Heikkonen, Brian Henry, Ignacy Karłowicz, Vladimir Kopicl, Tone Kuntner, Gerry Loose, Tanja Maljarčuk, Alan McMonagle, Tomislav Osmanli, Vanja Pegan, Ana Pepelnik, Katja Perat, Milan Rakovac, Zhao Si, Martin Solotruk, Brita Steinwendtner

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA:

»Nadih meja« / "Inspiration of Borders"

MODERATORICA / MODERATOR: *Vesna Humar*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2013 / CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2013: *Artem Čapaj / Artem Chapay*, 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 Pârvolescu, 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"

MODERATORICA / 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 Jenstrle-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 Božić, Sylwia Chutnik, Goran
Ferčec, Órfhlaith Foyle, Antanas Gailius, Polona Glavan, Aleksandar Hemon,
Karlo Hmeljak, Andrej Hočevár, 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

Člani žirije 2016 / *Jury Members 2016*

Lidija Dimkowska, predsednica žirije, pesnica, prevajalka, esejistka / president of the jury, poet, translator, essayist

Andrej Blatnik, podpredsednik žirije, pisatelj, prevajalec, urednik / vice president of the jury, prose writer, translator, editor

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

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

Špela Sevešek Šramel, prevajalka, asistentka za slovaško književnost na Univerzi v Ljubljani / translator, assistant professor of Slovak literature at the University of Ljubljana

Veronika Simoniti, prevajalka, pisateljica / translator, prose writer

Namita Subiotto, docentka na katedri za makedonski jezik in književnost na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani / assistant professor at the Department of Macedonian language and literature at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana

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 2016 / Consultants 2016

Lindita Arapi, pisateljica, prevajalka, Albanija, Nemčija / writer, translator, Albania, Germany

Agneszka Będkowska-Kopczyk, prevajalka, docentka na Tehnično-humanistični akademiji v Bielsko-Biały, Poljska / translator, senior lecturer at the Academy of Technology and Humanities in Bielsko-Biala, Poland

Ljudmil Dimitrov, prevajalec, urednik, Bolgarija / translator, editor, Bulgaria

Csordás Gábor, esejist, urednik založbe Jelenkor, Madžarska / essayist, editor at Jelenkor Publishing House, Hungary

Orsolya Gallos, prevajalka, Madžarska / translator, Hungary

Dana Hučková, kritičarka, literarna raziskovalka na Inštitutu za slovaško književnost v Bratislavi, Slovaška / literary critic, literary scholar at the Institute of Slovak Literature in Bratislava, Slovakia

Alenka Jensterle-Doležal, docentka za slovensko književnost na Filozofski fakulteti v Pragi, Češka / senior lecturer in Slovene literature at the Faculty of Arts in Prague, Czech Republic

Erica Johnson Debeljak, pisateljica, prevajalka, publicistka, Slovenija / writer, translator, columnist, Slovenia

Inesa Kurjan, prozaistka, esejistka, direktorica Centra jezikovnih in kulturnih znanosti Studia-Movia v Minsku, Belorusija / fiction writer and essayist, director of the "Studia-Movia" Centre for Literary and Cultural Studies in Minsk, Belarus

Arian Leka, pisatelj, pesnik, prevajalec, urednik, organizator Mednarodnega festivala lirike Poeteka, Albanija / writer, poet, translator, editor, organizer of the International Lyric Poetry Festival Poeteka, Albania

Valžina Mort, pesnica, prevajalka, Belorusija / poet, translator, Belarus

Aleš Mustar, pesnik, prevajalec, Slovenija / poet, translator, Slovenia

Kornelijus Platelis, pesnik, prevajalec, Litva / poet, translator, Lithuania

Julija Potrč, prevajalka, Slovenija / translator, Slovenia

Marjeta Prelesnik Drozg, bibliotekarka, prevajalka, Slovenija / librarian, translator, Slovenia

Peter Rácz, filozof, pesnik, prevajalec, Madžarska / philosopher, poet, translator, Hungary

Ilma Rakusa, pisateljica, predavateljica na Univerzi v Zürichu, Švica / writer, lecturer at the University of Zürich, Switzerland

Judit Reiman, prevajalka, predavateljica na Univerzi v Budimpešti, Madžarska / translator, lecturer at the University of Budapest, Hungary

Jüri Talvet, predavatelj na Univerzi v Tartuju, Estonija / lecturer at the University of Tartu, Estonia

vilenica



Društvo slovenskih pisateljev
Slovene Writers' Association