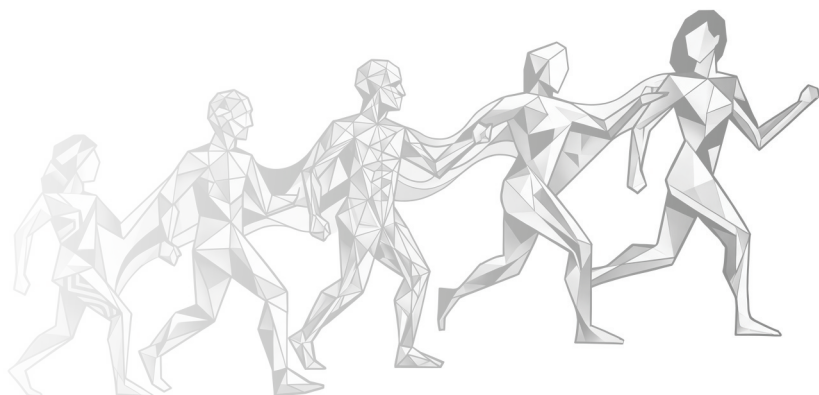


41. *vilenica*

mednarodni literarni festival
INTERNATIONAL LITERARY FESTIVAL

Fluidnost identitet *Fluidity of identities*

2026



41. Mednarodni literarni festival Vilenica /
41st Vilenica International Literary Festival

Vilenica 2026

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Nagrajenec Vilenice 2026
Vilenica Prize Winner 2026



Foto © Julia Weber

Serhij Žadan

Ukrajinski pisatelj, pesnik, esejist in prevajalec Serhij Žadan (Sergij Žadan; Сергій Вікторович Жадан) se je rodil 23. avgusta 1974 v Starobilsku, v Luganski oblasti. Po končani srednji šoli je študiral ukrajinsko in svetovno književnost na Harkovski nacionalni pedagoški univerzi G. S. Skovorode. Tam je leta 1996 diplomiral in leta 2000 doktoriral z disertacijo o predstavniku ukrajinske avantgarde, futurističnem pesniku Mihajlu Semenku. Nekaj let je predaval zgodovino ukrajinske književnosti, nato pa se v celoti posvetil literarnemu delu, prevajanju in organizaciji kulturnih projektov.

Na literarno prizorišče je Žadan vstopil sredi devetdesetih let kot pesnik in kmalu postal eden najizrazitejših glasov nove ukrajinske književnosti. Njegova poezija združuje liričnost, elemente sodobne urbane kulture, glasbene ritme in dediščino avantgarde, medtem ko njegova proza s posebno občutljivostjo beleži življenje v industrijskih mestih vzhodne Ukrajine, kjer se prepletajo spomini na sovjetsko preteklost, poznejše družbene spremembe in posledice vojn. Med temami njegovega pisanja so odraščanje v času razpadanja

Sovjetske zveze, izgubljene iluzije, prijateljstvo, ljubezen, družbena izključenost in iskanje identitete, njegovo pripoved pa zaznamujeta surova neposrednost in izrazita pesniška govorica.

Med najpomembnejša Žadanova prozna dela spadajo romani *Depeche Mode*, *Anarchy in the UKR*, *Vorošilovgrad*, *Mezopotamija* in *Internat*, ki so bili prevedeni v številne jezike ter prejeli več uglednih ukrajinskih in mednarodnih priznanj. Njegova dela odlikujejo izrazita humanistična drža, občutljivost za družbene spremembe in sposobnost prikazovanja širše zgodovinske izkušnje sodobne Ukrajine skozi usode posameznikov. Zlasti po javnem angažmaju in mednarodni odmevnosti danes velja za enega najvplivnejših ukrajinskih pisateljev svoje generacije.

Poleg literarnega ustvarjanja je Žadan dejaven tudi kot prevajalec iz nemščine, angleščine, beloruščine in ruščine. Sodeloval je pri številnih gledaliških, glasbenih in multimedijskih projektih, posebej odmevna pa je njegova vloga pri glasbeni skupini Žadan i Sobaki (Žadan in Psi), v kateri nastopa kot avtor besedil in pevec, pri tem pa združuje poezijo, rock in

družbeni angažma. Dolga leta je organiziral literarne festivale, dobrodelne prireditve in kulturne pobude ter pomembno prispeval k razvoju sodobne ukrajinske kulturne scene.

Od leta 2014 se je vse izraziteje posvečal tudi humanitarnemu delu. V Harkovu in drugih mestih vzhodne Ukrajine je pomagal pri organizaciji

prostovoljske pomoči, podpori civilnemu prebivalstvu in kulturnim dejavnostim v vojnih razmerah. Po letu 2022 je ostal v Harkovu, kjer je nadaljeval prostovoljsko delo, nastopal na dobrodelnih prireditvah in opozarjal na razmere v državi. Leta 2024 se je pridružil brigadi Hartija Ukrajinske narodne garde.

Izbrane nagrade in priznanja

- 2006 nagrada Huberta Burde za mlade pesnike (Nemčija), za pesniški opus
- 2009 literarna nagrada Josepha Conrada (Poljska), za celotni literarni opus in prispevek k sodobni ukrajinski književnosti
- 2014 literarna nagrada Jana Michalskega (Švica), za roman *Vorošilovgrad*
- 2015 srednjeevropska literarna nagrada angelus (Poljska), za roman *Mezopotamija*
- 2017 nagrada Forumu založnikov za najboljšo knjigo (Ukrajina), za roman *Internat*
- 2021 nagrada Dereka Walcotta (Sveta Lucija), za angleški prevod izbora poezije *A New Orthography*
- 2022 mirovna nagrada nemških založnikov in knjigotržcev (Nemčija), za celotno literarno in humanitarno delo
- 2022 nagrada Hannah Arendt za politično misel (Nemčija), za literarno delo ter javno intelektualno in humanitarno delovanje
- 2025 avstrijska državna nagrada za evropsko literaturo

Izbrana bibliografija

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- Лілі Марлен (Lili Marleen). Harkov: Folio, 2009.
- Вогнепальні й ножові (Strelno orožje in noži). Harkov: KSD, 2012.
- Динамо Харків (Dinamo Harkov). Kijev, 2014.
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- Псалом авіації (Psalm letalstva). Černovice: Meridian, 2021.
- Скрипниківка (Skripnikovka). Černovice: Meridian, 2023.

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- Депеш Мод (Depeche Mode). Harkov: Folio, 2004.
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- Месопотамія (Mezopotamija). Harkov: KSD, 2014.
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- Біґ Мак (Big Mac). Kijev: Kritika, 2003.
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- Біґ Мак² (Big Mac²). Kijev: Kritika, 2007.
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Internat [prev. Janja Vollmaier Lubej in Primož Lubej]. Ljubljana: Beletrina, 2024.

The Ukrainian writer, poet, essayist and translator Serhiy Zhadan (Сергій Вікторович Жадан) was born on 23 August 1974 in Starobilsk, in the Luhansk Oblast. After finishing high school, he studied Ukrainian and world literature at the G. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University. He graduated there in 1996 and obtained his PhD in 2000 with a thesis on a Ukrainian avant-garde figure, namely, the futurist poet Mykhail Semenko. He lectured on the history of Ukrainian literature for several years, before devoting his time entirely to literary work, translation and organising cultural projects.

Zhadan entered the literary scene in the mid-1990s as a poet and soon became one of the most distinctive voices in new Ukrainian literature. His poetry combines lyricism, elements of contemporary urban culture, musical rhythms and the legacy of the avant-garde, while his prose chronicles, with particular sensitivity, life in the industrial cities of eastern Ukraine, where memories of the Soviet past, subsequent social changes and the consequences of war intertwine. The themes of his writing include growing

up during the collapse of the Soviet Union, lost illusions, friendship, love, social exclusion and the search for identity, while his narrative is characterised by raw directness and a distinctly poetic voice.

Among Zhadan's most significant works of prose are the novels *Depeche Mode*, *Anarchy in the UKR*, *Voroshilovgrad*, *Mesopotamia* and *The Orphanage*, which have been translated into many languages and have received several prestigious Ukrainian and international awards. His works are characterised by a distinct humanistic outlook, a sensitivity to social change and an ability to portray the broader historical experience of contemporary Ukraine through the destinies of individuals. Particularly due to his public engagement and international recognition, he is today regarded as one of the most influential Ukrainian writers of his generation.

In addition to his literary work, Zhadan is also active as a translator from German, English, Belarusian and Russian. He has taken part in numerous theatre, music and multimedia projects; his role in the band Zhadan i Sobaki (Zhadan

and the Dogs) has been particularly notable, and he performs as a lyricist and vocalist, combining poetry, rock and social activism. For many years, he has organised literary festivals, charity events and cultural initiatives, making a significant contribution to the development of the contemporary Ukrainian cultural scene.

Since 2014, he has also been increasingly involved in humanitarian

work. In Kharkiv and other cities in eastern Ukraine, he helped to organise volunteer aid, support for the civilian population and cultural activities amidst the war. After 2022, he remained in Kharkiv, where he continued his voluntary work, performed at charity events and drew attention to the situation in the country. In 2024, he joined the Khartia Brigade of the Ukrainian National Guard.

Selected awards and accolades

- 2006 The Hubert Burda Prize for Young Poets (Germany), for a complete body of poetic work
- 2009 Joseph Conrad Award (Poland), for his entire literary body of work and his contribution to contemporary Ukrainian literature
- 2014 Jan Michalski Prize for literature (Switzerland), for the novel *Voroshilovgrad*
- 2015 Angelus Central European Literature Award (Poland), for the novel *Mesopotamia*
- 2017 Publishers' Forum Award for Best Book (Ukraine), for the novel *The Orphanage*
- 2021 The Derek Walcott Prize for Poetry (Saint Lucia), for the English translation of the selected poems *A New Orthography*
- 2022 The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade (Germany), for his entire body of literary and humanitarian work
- 2022 The Hannah Arendt Prize for Political Thought (Germany), for literary work and public intellectual and humanitarian activities
- 2025 Austrian State Prize for European Literature

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- Месопотамія (Mesopotamia). Kharkiv: KSD, 2014.
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- Гімн демократичної молоді (Anthem of Democratic Youth). Kharkiv: Folio, 2005.
- Капітал (Capital). Kharkiv: Folio, 2006.
- Біг Мак² (Big Mac²). Kyiv: Kritika, 2007.
- Трициліндровий двигун любові (The Three-Cylinder Engine of Love; together with Yuriy Andrukhovych and Lyubko Deresh). Kharkiv: Folio, 2007.
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Šepet nezaceljivega hrumenja zdajšnjosti in tišina osmišljanja minulega

Janja Vollmaier Lubej

Serhij Žadan je eden vidnejših sodobnih ukrajinskih pesnikov in prozaistov. Leta 2000 je doktoriral iz ukrajinske književnosti, v svoji disertaciji se je ukvarjal s poezijo ukrajinskega pesnika Mihaila Semenka. Njegovo prvo literarno delo je pesniška zbirka *General Juda* (1995), v njegovi poetiki pa lahko zasledimo ukrajinsko poetično tradicijo. V vojnem času sohranjen in sohranjenke s svojo poezijo nagovarja na literarnih nastopih, ki so odlično obiskani. Poezija in pripovedništvo sta zanj v resnici nerazdružljivi, saj se v njegovi literaturi prepletata.

Romane Serhija Žadana povezujejo postavitev pripovedi v urbano okolje, dogajalni čas po razpadu Sovjetske zveze, literarne osebe, ki so v glavnem brez perspektive, brez (konkretnega) dela, družijo pa jih brezdelje ali/ter brezup. So osamelci, odvečneži, izločeni iz širšega družbenega dogajanja. Stalnice Žadanovega romanopisja so poleg tega še monološka pripoved z lirizmi in esejizmi, absurdni, karseda avtentični dialogi, melanholični opisi krajev. Njegovo pripoved poglobljajo filozofske zastranitve, domišljijske podobe, izbrane metafore in samosvoj humor. Podana je ukrajinska stvarnost tukaj in zdaj, brezkompromisno in brez opravičevanja. Nekateri njegovi romani sežejo onkraj literature same in prodirajo tudi v druge vrste umetnosti.

Roman *Vorošilovgrad*, za katerega je avtor prejel več domačih in tujih nagrad, lahko beremo tudi v slovenščini. Je roman o preteklem času oziroma o času in mestu, ki ju ni več. O slednjem priča že naslov, pri katerem gre za nekdanje ime mesta Lugansk. Čas po razpadu Sovjetske zveze, družbene spremembe, občutja ljudi, kaotično vzdušje, brutalnost, vsedovoljenost, neizprosna vsakdana, a tudi vztrajanje in prijateljska zvestoba v brezizhodnosti – vse to so značilnosti Žadanove literature nasploh pa tudi njegovega prvega v slovenščino prevedenega romana *Vorošilovgrad*, ki je po obsegu epski in po zgradbi dvodelen. Gre za večžanrski roman s širokim spektrom motivne razplastenosti. Osrednji literarni lik je triintriidesetletni Herman Koroljov, diplomirani zgodovinar, po poklicu neodvisni strokovnjak, ki nekega četrtega zgodaj jutraj prejme Kočev klic, da je njegov brat Jura, lastnik bencinske črpalke, izginil nekam na Nizozemsko ali v Nemčijo. Uvodoma se torej soočimo z zapletom, s situacijo, ki

od glavnega literarnega lika zahteva spremembo utečenega življenja, navajenosti nanj, njegove samoumevnosti in vsakdanjosti. Prav to, da se zdajšnjost oziroma privajenost zaradi številnih okoliščin, na katere posameznik nima vpliva, v hipu spremeni, razblini, je stalnica Žadanovega romanopisja. Če obstaja hierarhija zla, Hermanov boj proti večjim, bogatejšim, močnejšim dojemamo kot eksistencialno nujno. Boj za pravico pa je moralno-etična stalnica ne le v Hermanovem vsakdanu, temveč tudi v vsakdanu drugih literarnih likov.

Roman z liričnimi opisi, humornostjo in zastranitvami podaja Hermanovo preživljanje dni, v katerem se oddaljuje od svojih težav. Na nekaterih mestih se roman iz poetičnosti, metaforičnosti in realističnih opisov prevesi v magični realizem in grotesknost. Poleg omenjenega ga bogatijo prepričljiva in avtentična dialoškost ter metaforični opisi narave. *Vorošilovgrad* je roman o človeških odnosih v brutalnih, nezavidljivih okoliščinah, v katere Žadan postavlja svoje literarne like. V zase značilnem slogu ustvarja vzdušje postsocialistične in kapitalistične praznine. Medtem ko se njegov literarni junak v *Vorošilovgradu* bori za nekaj oprijemljivega, se v kasnejšem romanu *Internat* poruši tudi to. Žadan nam namreč v svojem romanopisju sporoča, da je večnost stalnosti le privid oziroma iluzija.

Ena od pomembnih stalnic literarne pisave Serhija Žadana je glasba, in sicer kot ritmičnost pripovedi pa tudi kot pomemben motiv oziroma motivni drobec. Poleg glasbe je v njegovem romanopisju zaznati še teme večkulturnosti, transkulturnosti in večjezičnosti, slednje zlasti v smislu plastenja ukrajinskega jezika, ki predstavlja trd, ne pa tudi nerešljiv prevajalski oreh. Večkulturnost Žadan podaja iz perspektive spoštovanja drugega in neznanega, kar mu omogoča nove uvide v lastno pripoved ter bogatenje karakterizacije osrednjih literarnih likov.

Žadanov peti roman *Internat* (2017) tematizira vojno v Donbasu leta 2014. Ljudje, ki so zaradi vojne čez noč ostali brez doma oziroma brez strehe nad glavo, se lahko borijo zgolj za lastno preživetje, in ta boj pogoltne sleherno dostojanstvo.

Gre za kolektivni roman, ki predstavlja vojno izkušnjo žensk, otrok in moških, mestoma pa Pavlo Ivanovič oziroma Paša ter njegov nečak Saša nista v ospredju, kajti v pripovedi so vse literarne osebe, tudi tiste brez imen (ali pa zlasti tiste), upodobljene enakovredno. To je njihova zgodba, to je pripoved vseh njih, ki zaradi vojne postanejo begunci oziroma razseljenci. Lirizme in

metaforičnost tu in tam zamenjajo realistični opisi, deskripcije, nedorečenost, tudi pretrganost. Humanistično iskanje pravice v kaotični (vojni) stvarnosti druží številne literarne junake Žadanovega romanopisja, pri čemer sploh ni v ospredju njihovo lastno zadovoljstvo, temveč sočlovek, ki se je znašel v nemilosti bodisi pogoltnega kapitalizma bodisi totalne vojne (ali nemara celo obojega) in njenega vseprisotnega nasilja. Avtor nas sooči s sočutno osebo, a ker v svoji literaturi ne moralizira, ta oseba ni svetnik, temveč človek z napakami, človek, ki sprejema tudi napačne odločitve – ni torej podan enoplastno, zaveda pa se tudi lastne odgovornosti. Vprašanje take literature ni, ali bodo te osebe preživele ali ne, temveč zlasti ali bodo zmogle predelati travmatične izkušnje. Ker je Žadanova literatura prežeta z optimizmom, nad slednjimi zmaga obet novega, lepšega življenja.

Vojno kot temo lahko razumemo kot zelo univerzalno zgodbo. Kot osrednje sporočilo se v romanu pojavi ravno surovost bivanja posameznika in družbe, odvečnost. Družina, ki jo predstavlja Žadanov pripovedovalec, je disfunkcionalna, kar je v njegovem romanopisju pravzaprav pogosto, mnogokrat pa deluje tudi kot spomin, h kateremu se njegovi literarni liki pogosto vračajo. A kljub patološkim odnosom družina Žadanovega literarnega junaka doživi vsaj nekaj lepih trenutkov. *Internat* poleg tega opominja na tragičnost vojne in njenih žrtev. Mnogokrat so to otroci. Literarni prostor je prežet z grozo, strahom in negotovostjo, zlasti pa ga prežema neusmiljen občutek predsmrtne slutnje. Literarni junak se sprašuje o smiselnosti lastnega bivanja, medtem ko pred njegovimi očmi umirajo ljudje vseh starosti in poklicev. Zavzema jasno prepričanje, da je smrt, ki smo ji kot bralci romana *Internat* neverjetno blizu, nezamisljiva bolečina. Opominja, da je zgroženost ob tragičnih, vselej seveda tudi nesmiselnih dogodkih nuja in edino, kar v grozljivosti še ostaja. To literarne osebe tudi dela žive in z njimi Žadan vzpostavlja etično držo.

Prek notranjega monologa in retoričnih vprašanj avtor piše o smrti, nato pa jo stopnjuje v nadrealizem. Žadan smrt poosebi, za njegovega pripovedovalca je neznanka, ki preži nanj, je opazovalka, ki izbere vsakič drugo žrtev. Ob porušeni domovih, ki jih bo čas nemara lahko popravil, vzpostavil na novo, jih na videz polepšal, Žadanov pripovedovalec izpostavlja zaradi vojne ranjena, prizadeta otroka in odraslega.

Serhij Žadan bralce navdušuje s samosvojim slogom, skozi svoje literarno delo, zlasti romanopisje, pa opominja, da upanje vendarle obstaja. Človek, ka-

kršen je v ospredju v njegovem literarnem opusu, se bori in vztraja, čeprav je njegov boj že vnaprej obsojen na propad. Skratka, njegovi literarni liki se ne predajajo, četudi jih obkroža ukrajinska postsovjetska brutalnost ali vojna. So nenehni iskalci pravice in pravičnosti v svetu, naphanem z zlom. Kljub temu v brezizhodnosti zmorejo uzreti in videti lepoto, čeprav se ta zrcali v na videz drobnih, majhnih stvareh. Obenem je v tem boju zanje edino plemenito merilo človeštva odgovornost do sočloveka.

The whispering of the present's unhealable murmuring and the silence of making sense of the past

Janja Vollmaier Lubej

Serhiy Zhadan (1974) is among the most prominent contemporary Ukrainian writers of poetry and prose. Born in Starobilsk in the Luhansk region, in 2000 he earned his Ph.D. in Ukrainian literature, with a dissertation focussing on the poetry of the Ukrainian poet Mykhailo Semenko. His first book was the 1995 poetry collection *General Judas*, and his poetics are in line with the Ukrainian poetic tradition. During these times of war, he speaks to his fellow citizens through his poetry at literary events, which are very well attended. For him, poetry and prose are in fact inseparable, as they are intertwined in his literature.

Zhadan's novels are composed of narratives set in urban environments, placed in the time following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and peopled by literary characters who are for the most part without prospects or (concrete) work, united by idleness or despair. His characters are loners, outcasts, excluded from broader social goings-on. Staples of Zhadan's novels include monologue-style narration with lyrical and essayistic passages, absurd yet authentic dialogues, and melancholic descriptions of places. His storytelling is made richer by philosophical digressions, imaginative imagery, carefully chosen metaphors, and a unique sense of humour. One sees Ukrainian reality in the here and now, presented uncompromisingly and unapologetically. Some of his novels go beyond literature, moving into other art forms.

The novel *Voroshilovgrad*, for which Zhadan has received several Ukrainian and international awards, has been translated into Slovenian. It is a novel about times past, about a place and time that are no longer. The very title hints at this, as it is the former name of the city of Luhansk. The following topics are characteristic of Zhadan's writing: the time after the collapse of the Soviet Union, social changes, people's emotions, a chaotic atmosphere, brutality, complacency, the relentlessness of everyday life, but also perseverance and loyal friendship in the face of hopelessness. *Voroshilovgrad*, including of his first novel translated into Slovenian, is epic in scope and made up of two parts. This multi-genre novel contains a wide spectrum of thematic diversity. The main character in both parts is thirty-three-year-old Herman Korolyov, who majored in history

and whose business card now reads “Independent expert.” Early one Thursday morning, he receives a call from Kocha, who tells him that his brother Yura, the owner of a gas station, has disappeared somewhere in Amsterdam or Berlin. Thus, right from the start, we are confronted with a plot, with a situation that requires the main character to change his life, his usual way of living, everything he takes for granted, his everyday routine. It is precisely this that is a constant of Zhadan’s novels: the fact that the present, or one’s sense of familiarity, can change or be shattered in an instant due to innumerable circumstances beyond an individual’s control. If there is a hierarchy of evil, we perceive Herman’s struggle against those who are greater, richer, and more powerful as an existential necessity. The struggle for justice, however, is a moral and ethical staple not only in Herman’s everyday life but also in the daily life of other characters.

Voroshilovgrad depicts, through lyrical descriptions, humour, and abstractions, the everyday life of Herman, and how he distances himself from his problems. In some places the novel moves in its poetry, its use of metaphors, and its realistic descriptions into the realm of magical realism and the grotesque. Moreover, it is splendidly replete with convincing and pitch-perfect dialogue and metaphor-rich descriptions of nature. *Voroshilovgrad* is a novel about human relationships in the brutal, unenviable circumstances into which Zhadan places his literary characters. In his characteristic style, he creates an atmosphere of post-socialist and capitalist emptiness. Whereas Herman in *Voroshilovgrad* fights for something tangible, even that is not absent from his later novel, *The Orphanage*. Through his novels, Zhadan reveals that the eternity of permanence is but an illusion.

Another constant of Serhiy Zhadan’s work is music, both as the driving rhythm of his narrative and as an important motif or thematic fragment. In addition to music, his novels are also marked by the themes of multiculturalism, transculturalism, and multilingualism, particularly in the sense of how the Ukrainian language is layered (which makes translating his works a hard nut to crack). Zhadan considers multiculturalism from the perspective of respect for the other and the unknown, and this grants him a different insight into his own storytelling while enriching characterization.

Zhadan’s fifth novel, *The Orphanage* (2017), uses the 2014 war in Donbas as a theme. People who were left homeless overnight now finding themselves without a roof over their head because of the war. Their only struggle is for their own survival, and this struggle devours any dignity.

The Orphanage shows the many wartime experiences of women, children, and men; in places, however, Pasha and his nephew Sasha are not in the foreground, because in the narrative, all literary characters, including those whose names we do not know (or perhaps especially those), are portrayed equally. This is their story, the story of all whom the war has turned into refugees or displaced persons. Lyricism and metaphor are sometimes supplanted by realistic descriptions, vague details, and even disjointedness. Though a humanistic quest for justice in a chaotic (wartime) reality unites many of the protagonists in Zhadan's novels, it is not their own satisfaction that is the focal point; rather, it is their fellow humans who has found themselves on the wrong side within ravenous capitalism or total war (or perhaps even both) and its omnipresent violence. The author brings us face-to-face with a compassionate character, but since Zhadan does not moralize in his literature, this character is not a saint but an individual with flaws, a person who also makes wrong decisions – and thus is not one-dimensional, even as he remains aware of his own responsibility. The question such writing asks is not whether these characters will survive or not but whether they will be able to come to terms with their traumatic experiences. Since Zhadan's literature is imbued with optimism, the promise of a new, better life prevails over these experiences.

The theme of war as a very universal story. It is precisely the cruelty of existence of both the individual and society, of being superfluous, that appears in his novel. Zhadan's narrator presents a dysfunctional family, as he so often does in his novels, and this often serves as a memory to which his characters frequently return. Yet despite these pathological relationships, the family of Zhadan's hero experiences at least a few beautiful moments. *The Orphanage*, in addition, serves as a reminder of the tragedy of war and its victims. Often, these victims are children. The literary space is imbued with horror, fear, and uncertainty, and above all, by a relentless sense of foreboding. The protagonist questions what his own existence means when people of all ages and professions are dying before his eyes. He is of the firm opinion that death, which we readers of *The Orphanage* come so close to, is an unimaginable pain. He reminds us that horror in the face of tragic and, of course, always senseless events is a necessity and the only thing that remains amid the dreadfulness. This is what brings the literary characters to life, and through them, Zhadan establishes an ethical stance.

By means of internal monologue and rhetorical questions, the author writes about death, before expanding this theme into that of surrealism. Zhadan personifies death; for his narrator, it is an unknown that is waiting for him, an observer who chooses a different victim each time. Amid the ruined homes, which in time one might repair, rebuild, make lovely again, Zhadan's narrator focuses on a child and an adult who have been wounded and harmed by the war.

Serhiy Zhadan enthrals readers through his distinctive style, through his literature, especially his novels, reminding us that there is hope. The kind of person who stands centre stage in his literature battles and endures, even when his battle is destined to fail. His characters do not give up, even when the post-Soviet brutality of war in Ukraine surrounds them. They tirelessly seek justice and righteousness in a world shot through with evil. In spite of all this hopelessness, however, they are able to see beauty and to perceive it, even if this beauty is reflected in seemingly trivial, minute things. At the same time, for them, the only noble measure of humanity in this struggle lies in bearing responsibility towards one's fellow human being.

Translated by Jason Blake

День перший

Січневий ранок довгий і нерухомий, як черга в лікарні. Ранковий холод на кухні, грифельні сутінки за вікном. Паша підходить до плити, відразу ж ловить солодкавий запах газу. У Паші він завжди асоціюється з бадьорим ранковим прокиданням. Щоранку збираючись на роботу, покидавши до портфеля учнівські зошити й підручники, вибиратись на кухню, дихати солодким газом, пити міцний чай, заїдаючи його чорним хлібом, переконувати себе в тому, що життя вдалося, переконавши, бігти на роботу. Цей запах супроводжує його все життя, у нього навіть апетиту немає, коли випадає прокидатись не вдома, бракує домашньої ранкової плити, що відгонить пропаленими конфорками. Паша визирає у вікно, розглядає чорний сніг і чорне небо, сідає за стіл, струшує головою, намагаючись прийти до тями. Шоста ранку, січень, понеділок, ще один день без роботи.

Бере з підвіконня зошити, гортає, тут-таки кладе назад, підводиться, проходить коридором, зазирає в кімнату. Старий спить у кріслі, з екрана до нього намагається докричатися хтось, залитий кров'ю, але марно: звук старий вимкнув ще з ночі, його тепер не дістанеш, хоч як кричи. Паша на якусь мить затримується, дивиться на кров. Той, що кричить, теж переводить погляд на Пашу та кричить уже до нього: не вимикай, послухай, це важливо, тебе це теж стосується. Але Паша швидко знаходить пульт, витискає, ніби пасту з тюбика, велику червону кнопку, кидає пульт на стіл і виходить надвір, обережно, щоб не розбудити старого, причиняючи за собою двері. Але двері все одно тривожно проскрипують у ранкових сутінках, старий у кімнаті відразу ж прокидається, знаходить пульт і мовчки вмикає телевізор, в якому відбувається щось жахливе, щось, що стосується всіх. А Паша вже добігає до станції.

Щось не так, думає він, щось тут не так. Жодної живої душі, жодного голосу. Навіть локомотивів не чути. Навіть торгівлі немає. Темно-синій сніг підтікає водою, погода мало не плюсова, але небо в хмарах, волога висне в повітрі, іноді переходячи в ледь відчутний дощ, далі на коліях стоїть туман, і в цьому тумані не чути ні голосів, ні кроків. Рано ще, думає Паша напружено, просто ще рано. На півдні, там, де починається місто, теж стоїть підозріла тиша, без вибухів, без розірваного повітря. З-за рогу

виїжджає автобус. Паша полегшено видихає: транспорт працює, все гаразд. Просто ще рано.

Вітається з водієм, той боязко втягує голову в комір шкірянки. Проходить порожнім салоном, сідає біля лівого вікна. Потім не витримує, пересідає до правого. Водій насторожено спостерігає за всім цим у дзеркало, наче боїться пропустити щось важливе. Коли Паша перехоплює його погляд, водій відвертається, запускає двигун, тягне важіль коробки передач. Ображено хрумтить залізо, автобус рушає, водій робить коло пошани в порожньому тумані, станція лишається позаду. У таких автобусах покійників возять, чомусь думає Паша. Спеціальні такі автобуси з чорною стрічкою вздовж борту. Цікаво, там місця для пасажирів є? Чи вдові на домовину треба сідати? І куди я таким катафалком доїду?

Автобус минає одну порожню вулицю, потім наступну. Далі має бути вуличний базар, де пенсіонерки щоденно продають щось мерзле. Автобус завертає, проте жодних пенсіонерок, жодних перехожих. Паша вже й розуміє, що справді щось не так, щось сталося, проте робить вигляд, ніби все гаразд. Не панікувати ж дійсно. Водій старанно відводить погляд, женучи катафалк крізь туман і воду. Треба було новини подивитись, чи що, нервує Паша. А головне – тиша, після всіх цих днів, коли небо на півдні, над містом, нагадувало розпечену на вогні арматуру. Тихо й порожньо, ніби всі сіли на нічний потяг і виїхали. Залишилися тільки Паша з водієм, але й вони проїжджають дві збудовані на пісках багатоповерхівки, минають автобазу й викочуються із селища. Довга тополина алея виводить на трасу, тополі визирають із туману, наче діти з-поза батьківського плеча. Десь там, угорі, вже рухається сонце, десь там воно вже напевне з'явилося, хоча його й не видно, але воно все одно відчувається. А більше не відчувається нічого. І Паша сторожко розглядає всю цю вологу довкола, намагаючись зрозуміти, що ж він про пустив, що хотів пояснити йому той залитий кров'ю тип із телевізора. Водій обережно оминає холодні ями, дотягує до траси, повертає праворуч. Автобус підкочується до зупинки, звично зупиняється, тут завжди хтось підсідає. Але, схоже, не сьогодні. Водій, скоріше за звичкою, якийсь час стоїть, не зачиняючи дверей, потім озирається на Пашу, ніби просячи в нього дозволу, двері зачиняються, автобус рушає далі, набирає швидкість і викочується просто на блокпост.

– Твою маму, лише й вимовляє водій.

Блокпост забитий військовими: стоять за бетонними блоками, під розтріпаними державними прапорами, мовчки дивляться в бік міста. Скільки разів він проїздив це місце за останні півроку, звідтоді як сюди після коротких жорстких боїв повернулася державна влада? Вибираючись до міста чи повертаючись додому, на станцію, слід було щоразу очікувати на перевірку документів, інакше кажучи – очікувати на неприємності. Хоча Пашу зазвичай пропускали мовчки, без жодних питань: місцевий, із пропискою все гаразд, держава до нього претензій не має. Паша зник до байдужих поглядів, до розмірених, механічних рухів силовиків, до чорних нігтів, до того, що слід віддати паспорт із пропискою й чекати, доки твоя країна вчергове переконається у твоїй законслухняності. Бійці мовчки віддавали документи, Паша запихав паспорт до кишені, намагаючись ні з ким не зустрічатися поглядом. Державні прапори розмивало дощами, фарби блякнули, розчиняючись у сірому осінньому повітрі, мов сніг у теплій воді.

Паша дивиться у вікно, бачить, як повз них проскакує джип, обтягнутий темним залізом. Із джипа вистрибують троє з автоматами. Не звертаючи уваги на рейсовий катафалк, біжать у натовп, що збивається попереду. Бійці стоять, перекикуються, виривають одне в одного біноклі, розглядають трасу перед собою, напружують червоні віддиму та безсоння очі, обрамлені глибокими зморшками. Але траса порожня, порожня настільки, що це лякає. Зазвичай нею постійно хтось рухається. Навіть попри те, що місто вже тривалий час знаходиться майже в цілковитому оточенні, і кільце довкола нього постійно стискається, до міста й назад усе одно хтось весь час проривався цією єдиною дорогою. Переважно військові, що підвозили в місто боеприпаси, або волонтери, які теж постійно вивозили звідси, з півночі, з мирної території до обложеного міста різний непотріб, на зразок теплого одягу чи протизастудних засобів. Кому потрібні протизастудні засоби в місті, яке обстрілювалось важкою артилерією і яке ось-ось мали здати? Але це нікого не зупиняло: цілі колони й далі проривалися з материка до оточених, іноді цілком очікувано потрапляючи під обстріли. Хоча зрозуміло було, що місто здадуть, що державні війська змушені будуть відійти, забравши з собою прапори Пашиної країни, і що лінія фронту так чи інакше відсунеться

на північ, до станції, а отже, і смерть стане ближчою на якийсь десяток кілометрів. Але кого це хвилювало? Цивільні теж зважувались і рвалися до міста розваленим асфальтом. Військові намагалися їх відговорити, проте військовим тут ніхто особливо не довіряв, кожен вважав себе найрозумнішим. Ось і пхався під міномети за якою-небудь довідкою з пенсійного фонду. Справді, вибираючи між смертю й бюрократією, краще іноді вибрати смерть. Військові злостились, іноді перекривали пункт, але щойно обстріли вщухали, перед блоком знову вибудовувалась черга. Доводилося пропускати.

А ось нині на трасі зовсім порожньо. Схоже, там, у місті, справді відбувається щось страшне, щось здатне зупинити навіть маршрутників і спекулянтів. І стоїть натовп неголених чоловіків, злих від безсоння та безвиході, посеред бетонних блоків та колючого дроту, й усі кричать один на одного, зганяють один на одному лють. І від натовпу в бік їхнього автобуса відокремлюється худий високий боєць, під завеликим шоломом безтямні очі, безтямні й широко розплющені, розплющені, скоріше за все, від страху, – викидає вперед руку, мовляв, стояти, не рухатись. Хоча вони й так не рухаються – стоять, завмерли, затамували подих. В автобусі раптом стає так багато місця, і повітря стає таким розрідженим, хапай його не хапай – не надихаєшся. Боєць підходить до дверей і лунко б'є долонею по металевій поверхні. Автобус відлунює, ніби затонула субмарина, водій дещо зарізко відчиняє двері.

– Куда, блядь? кричить йому боєць і, згорбившись, підіймається в салон. Змушений пригнутись, шолом наповзає йому на очі, й Паші здається, ніби він його впізнає, хоча звідки, звідки? думає Паша. А боєць дивиться недобре, підходить, поправляє шолом, витирає очі рукою й кричить Паші в лице: Документи! Блядь, документи!

Паша лізе кишеньками, і кишень раптом стає так багато, що він у них губиться й не може нічого знайти, і дістає різне сміття: то вологі серветки, якими зранку протирає в школі взуття, то роздруковані теми уроків, то повідомлення з пошти, що треба зайти забрати бандероль. Так-так, думає Паша, нажахано дивлячись бійцеві в лице, треба ж забрати бандероль, бандероль, бандероль. Забув, думає він, і шкіра його враз стає мокрою й холодною, ніби його самого протерли вологими серветками.

– Ну? кричить боєць, нависаючи.

І головне: Паша зовсім не може зрозуміти, якою мовою той говорить. Оскільки слова з нього вириваються так рвано й ламано, що в них ні інтонації, ні акценту, просто викрикує щось, ніби викашлює застуду. Мав би говорити державною, панікує Паша, державною, місяць тому тут стояла частина звідкись із Житомира, ще сміялися з того, як він ковзав із мови на мову. Вони, не вони? гарячково вагається Паша, дивлячись у розлючені очі, в яких відбивається весь його переляк.

– Забув, відповідає Паша.

– Шо? не вірить боєць.

Водій зривається на ноги, не знаючи, як бути, тікати чи стояти на місці. І Паша теж не знає, як бути, і думає: ну як же так, як же так?

Тут із вулиці хтось кричить, кричить так різко й протяжно, що боєць здригається, повертається та рветься на вулицю, відштовхуючи водія. Той падає на своє крісло, але швидко підривається на ноги й вистрибує слідом за бійцем. І Паша теж вистрибує, і всі вони підбігають до натовпу, який раптом замовкає та розступається. І ось тоді з півдня, з-за обрію, від міста, відрізаного облогою, ніби з невидимої повітряної ями, починають вивалювати чоловіки. По одному, по двоє, цілими групами, вони важко виринають з-поза лінії горизонту й рухаються сюди, у бік натовпу, що мовчки стоїть і чекає. Ще ледь помітні, там, на обрії, вони поступово збільшуються, ростуть, мов тіні по обіді. Вже ніхто не дивиться в бінокль, і не кричить ніхто, наче всі бояться наполохати цю процесію, що поволі наповнює собою трасу, розтягуючись уже на сотні метрів. Чоловіки йдуть розмірено, аж здається, що нікуди не поспішають, хоча відразу ж стає зрозуміло, що швидше йти вони просто не можуть: надто вимучені, надто важко даються їм ці останні кілька сотень метрів. Але йти треба, ось вони й йдуть, не зупиняються, наближаються вперто, рухаються на свій прапор, підіймаються до блокпоста з долини, ніби пасажирів, яких зняли з рейсового автобуса за безквитковий проїзд. Час ніби прискорюється, і все відбувається так швидко, що ніхто не встигає ні злякатись, ні потішитись. Перші вже підходять до вимощених фарбою бетонних блоків, а там на обрії з'являються щоразу нові й теж спускаються вниз, вибираються на північ, до своїх. І що ближче вони підходять, що чіткішими стають їхні обличчя, то тихіше стає довкола. Оскільки тепер видно очі тих, хто підходить, і в очах цих нічого доброго

не побачиш – лише вимученість і мороз. І дихання в них таке холодне, що від нього навіть пара не здіймається. Чорні від бруду обличчя, яскраві білки очей. Шоломи, чорні подерті шапочки. Довкола ший замотані сірі від цегляного пилу хустки. Зброя, паски, порожні кишені, мішки за плечима, чорні від мастила руки, вимащені битією цеглою і розмоклим чорноземом черевики. Перші, вже підходячи, вдивляються в обличчя, з докором і недовірою, так, ніби всі ті, хто тут стоїть і чекає на них, у чомусь винні, ніби все повинно бути навпаки: вони, ті, хто прийшов, мали б стояти тут, під низьким січневим небом, і дивитися на південь, за обрій, де немає нічого, крім бруду та смерті. І ось перший підходить до укріплень і раптом викидає вгору кулак, і починає кричати, мовби сварить богів за погану поведінку. Проклинає, погрожує, злоститься, сльози течуть обличчям, роблячи його чистішим. Натовп розступається ще ширше, і ті, що приходять, змішуються з тими, що стоять, ніби брудна річкова вода змішується з прозорою морською. Натовп уже не вміщається між холодними блоками, а той, що прийшов перший, далі стоїть посеред юрби й горлає щось про несправедливість і помсту, про те, що місто здали, залишили, разом із усіма, хто там живе, віддали в чужі руки, не втримали, відступили, виїздили з пастки. І добре тим, хто виїздив, а як бути тим, хто залишився там, на розстріляних вулицях? Як бути з ними? Хто їх звідти забере? Що ж ми, кричить він, не опускаючи кулаків, кинули, втекли, залишили місто? Як же так? Хто буде за це відповідати? Олежа, кричить, Олежа, напарник мій, я його навіть прикопати не встиг, не встиг відтягнути в сніг, лежить згорілий на заправці. Кому я його залишив? Хто його витягне? Хто? кричить він і погрожує кулаком дощовій хмарі. Аж доки хтось, хто прийшов пізніше, протискаючись повз нього, просто валить йому по голові, мовляв, заткни пельку, без тебе погано. І тоді враз починають говорити всі: хтось розпитує, хтось відповідає, когось тягнуть відігріватись, когось обмотують старою прогорілою ковдрою. А тоді раптом на пост виходить ще одна група, тягнучи на плечах ноші, і на тих ношах лежить хтось такий рваний і закривавлений, що Паша лише відводить очі, а якийсь офіцер починає кричати, аби підігнали швидко, хоча яка тут може бути швидка? Ноші перебирають ті, у кого більше сил, і тягнуть їх до автобуса, давай, кричать водієві, заводь, відвезеш його на станцію. Паша думає, що це взагалі найкращий варіант – повернутися

зараз додому, і теж робить крок до автобуса, але коло дверей уже стоїть військовий і, навіть не озираючись, відштовхує Пашу, той лише бачить, як ноші обережно передають усередину, Паша помічає злипле волосся та цукрову білість кості, так ніби розрізали диню, вивернувши її солодкі нутроці, помічає зсудомлену руку, що вчепилась у ноші, тримаючись за них так міцно, як тримаються лише за життя.

Автобус намагається розвернутись, але довкола колишеться натовп, усі кричать і заважають, заважають і кричать, і кричать передусім, аби не заважали. Зрештою хтось дає команду, натовп зрушується й відповзає вбік, автобус розвертається й зникає за рогом. Пашу відтиснули на узбіччя, він якось беспорядно намагається вибратися звідти, хтось кличе його з-поза спини, закурити дай, говорить до нього боєць без шолома зі срібним брудним волоссям. Немає, каже йому на це Паша. А що є? не відпускає його боєць, Паша автоматично лізе до кишені й дістає свій паспорт.

Уривок з:

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Prvi dan

Januarsko jutro je dolgo in negibno kot vrsta v bolnišnici. Jutranji hlad v kuhinji, grafitni mrak za oknom. Paša stopi k štedilniku in takoj ulovi sladkoben vonj po plinu, ki ga od nekdaj povezuje s čilim jutranjim prebujanjem; vsakodnevnim jutranjim vstajanjem, ko v aktovko vtakne šolske zvezke in učbenike, se odpravi v kuhinjo, diha sladkoben plin, pije močan čaj in zagriže v črni kruh ter se med prigovarjanjem samemu sebi, naj odhiti v službo, prepričuje, da se mu je v življenju posrečilo. Ta vonj ga spremlja vse življenje, še apetita nima, kadar slučajno nanese, da se ne zbudi doma; manjka mu domači jutranji štedilnik, od katerega veje po zažganih gorilnikih. Paša pogleduje skozi okno, si ogleduje črni sneg in črno nebo, sede na mizo, potrese z glavo in se skuša ovesti. Šesta zjutraj, januar, ponedeljek, še en dan brezdelja.

Z okenske police vzame zvezke, jih prelista in spet odloži, vstane, premeri hodnik ter se zazre v sobo. Stari spi v naslanjaču, z zaslona se nekdo, oblit s krvjo, skuša dokričati do njega, a zaman; stari je zvok izklopil že ponoči, zdaj ga zlepa ne dosežeš, pa če še tako kričiš. Paša ob pogledu na kri za trenutek otrpne. Kričeci prav tako pogled preusmeri na Pašo in zdaj kriči vanj: ne izklaplaj, poslušaj, pomembno je, tudi tebe zadeva. Toda Paša hitro poišče daljinec z velikim črnim gumbom in ga stisne kot pasto iz tube, vrže na mizo, odide ven in previdno, da ne bi zbudil očeta, za sabo pripre vrata. Ampak vrata vseeno otožno zacvilijo v jutranji mrak, stari se v hipu prebudi, zagrabi daljinec in molče prižge televizor, v katerem se odvija nekaj groznega, nekaj, kar zadeva vse. A Paša že priteče do Postaje.

Nekaj je narobe, pomisli, nekaj je narobe. Žive duše ni, nobenega glasu ni. Celo lokomotiv ni slišati. Niti trgovanja ni. Temno siv sneg kopni, temperatura malodane nad ničlo, toda nebo prekrivajo oblaki, vlaga visi v zraku in vsake toliko prehaja v komaj občuten dež, nekoliko naprej megla ovija tire in v tej megli ni slišati ne glasov ne korakov. Zgodaj je še, pomisli Paša napeto, preprosto zgodaj je še. Na jugu, tam, kjer se začenja mesto, prav tako vlada tišina brez eksplozij, brez raztrganega zraka. Za vogalom čaka avtobus. Paša olajšano izdihne, prevoz obratuje, vse je v redu. Preprosto zgodaj je še.

Pozdravi voznika, ta boječe povleče glavo v ovrtnik usnjene jakne. Sprehodi se po prazni notranjosti, usede se k levemu oknu. Potem ne vzdrži, presede se k desnemu. Voznik vse to namrščeno opazuje v vzratnem ogledalu, kot bi se bal

zamuditi kaj pomembnega. Ko Paša ulovi njegov pogled, voznik pogleda stran, vžge motor in povleče prestavno ročico. Železo užaljeno zajechi, avtobus spelje, voznik skozi meglo zapelje v častni krog, Postaja ostane zadaj. V takih avtobusih prevažajo pokojnike, kdo ve zakaj, pomisli Paša. To so posebni avtobusi s črnim trakom vzdolž karoserije. Me prav zanima, ali so v njih sedeži za potnike. Ali morajo nemara vdove sedeti na krstah? In kam bom s takim mrliškim vozom sploh prišel?

Avtobus prevozi eno prazno ulico, potem naslednjo. Naprej mora biti ulična tržnica, kjer upokojenke vsak dan prodajajo zamrznjene reči. Avtobus zavije, a nobenih upokojenk ni na spregled, nobenih mimoidočih. Paša zdaj že ve, da je v resnici nekaj narobe, da se je nekaj zgodilo, vendar daje videz, da je vse v redu. Naj ga ne zagrabi panika. Voznik vztrajno odvraca pogled in žene mrliški voz skozi meglo in vodo. Moral bi gledati poročila ali kaj, je nervozen Paša. Poglavitna je tišina, po vseh teh dneh, ko je južno nebo nad mestom spominjalo na razbeljeno armaturo. Tiho je in prazno, kakor da bi vsi sedli na nočni vlak in odpotovali. Ostal je samo Paša z voznikom, toda tudi onadva za sabo puščata dva na pesku zgrajena bloka, peljeta mimo mehanične delavnice in zapustita naselje. Dolga topolova aleja vodi na glavno cesto, topoli kukajo iz megle kot otroci izza starševskih hrbtov. Tam nekje zgoraj se že vzpenja sonce, tam nekje se je najbrž že prikazalo, čeprav ga ni videti, pa vendar ga lahko občutiš. Česa drugega ni moč občutiti. Paša oprezno motri vso to okoliško vlago in se trudi razumeti, kaj je zamudil, kaj mu je želel pojasniti tisti s krvjo oblit tip s televizije. Voznik se oprezno izogiba hladnim cestnim jamam in pripelje do glavne ceste, kjer zavije desno. Avtobus zapelje do Postaje in se kot običajno ustavi, saj tukaj vedno kdo prisede. Toda ne danes. Voznik iz navade nekaj časa postoji, ne da bi zaprl vrata, nato se ozre k Paši, kot bi prosil za njegovo dovoljenje, vrata se zaprejo, avtobus krene dalje in pospeši, nakar se znajde tik pred nadzorno točko.

»Materno,« zamrmra voznik.

Nadzorna točka je natrpana z vojaki; stojijo za betonskimi kvadri pod razcefranimi državnimi zastavami in molče strmijo proti mestu. Kolikokrat je prevozil to mesto zadnjega pol leta, odkar se je sem po kratkih ostrih bojih vrnila državna oblast? Vsakič ko je potoval v mesto ali se vračal domov na Postajo, je lahko pričakoval kontrolo dokumentov, z drugimi besedami, nevšečnosti. Čeprav so Pašo ponavadi spuščali mimo molče, brez vsakršnih vprašanj; z domačinom z urejenimi dokumenti država pač ni imela kaj razreševati. Paša

se je privadil brezbriznih pogledov, enakomernih, mehaničnih gibov silakov, črnih nohtov, tega, da je treba izročiti osebni dokument in čakati, da se tvoja država vnovič prepriča o tvojem spoštovanju zakonov. Vojaki so molče vrnili dokumente, ki si jih je Paša vtaknil v žep in se trudil, da se ne bi s kom spogledal. Državne zastave je pral dež, barve so bledele in se raztapljale v sivem jesenskem zraku kakor sneg v topli vodi.

Paša gleda skozi okno, vidi, kako mimo poskakuje džip, prevlečen s temnim železjem. Iz džipa skoči trojica z avtomatskim orožjem. Stečejo v množico, ki se gneta spredaj, ne da bi njihovo pozornost pritegnil mrliški voz. Vojaki stojijo, kričijo drug čez drugega, drug drugemu iz rok trgajo daljnogleda, preučujejo cesto pred sabo, napenjajo v globoke gube uokvirjene oči, rdeče od dima in neprespanosti. Ampak cesta je prazna, tolikanj prazna, da je strašljivo. Ponavadi se po njej vedno kdo pelje. Četudi je mesto že dlje časa skoraj povsem obkoljeno in se obroč okoli njega nenehno stiska, se je nazaj po tej edini cesti vedno kdo prebijal. Pretežno vojaki, ki so vozili strelivo, ali prostovoljci, ki so prav tako od tod, s severa, z mirnega območja v oblegano mesto tovorili razno kramo, topla oblačila ali zdravila proti prehladu. Kdo potrebuje zdravila proti prehladu v mestu, ki ga obstreljujejo s težkim topništvom in ki se bo zdaj zdaj predalo? Vendar to nikogar ni ustavilo: cele kolone so se še naprej prebijale iz zaledja do obkoljenih in se včasih povsem predvidljivo znašle pod streli. Čeprav je bilo razumljivo, da bodo mesto predali, da se bo državna vojska prisiljena umakniti in s sabo odnesti zastave Paševe države ter da se bo fronta tako ali drugače pomaknila na sever, k Postaji, in se bo tako za kakih deset kilometrov približala tudi smrt. Ampak koga to vznemirja? Civilisti so se prav tako poganjali v mesto po razbitem asfaltu. Vojaki so jih skušali odvrniti, toda njim tu nihče ni kaj prida zaupal, vsak se je štel za najpametnejšega in se tako pehal za kakršnimkoli že potrtilom o statusu upokojenca, da je tvegati minometne izstrelke. Zares, včasih je med smrtjo in birokracijo bolje izbrati smrt. Vojaki so se jezili, včasih celo zaprli nadzorno točko, ampak takoj ko je obstreljevanje ponehalo, se je pred barikado znova začela viti vrsta. Ni bilo druge, kot da so jo spustili mimo.

Ampak zdaj je cesta povsem prazna. Verjetno se tam v mestu resnično dogaja nekaj strašnega, nekaj, kar ima moč ustaviti celo šoferje avtobusov in preprodajalce. Truma neobritih moških, nejevoljnih od nespečnosti in brezizhodnosti, stoji med betonskimi kvadri in bodečo žico in vsi drug na drugega stresajo svojo jezo. Iz množice se loči visok mršav vojak in krene proti njenemu avtobusu,

izpod prevelike čelade bolščijo besne oči, besne in široko razprte, razprte najbrž od strahu. Predse sproži roko, češ, stojta, ne premikajta se. Čeprav se ne premikata, zadržujoč dih sta obstala. Avtobus je nenadoma postal tako prostoren in zrak tako razredčen, da lahko hlataš, kolikor hočeš, pa ga ne zajameš. Vojak stopi pred vrata in z dlanjo zvonko potolče po kovini. Po avtobusu odmeva kot v potopljeni podmornici, voznik nekako preveč sunkovito odpre vrata.

»Kam za vraga gresta?« kriči vanj vojak, se zgrbi in vstopi. Medtem ko se je prisiljen skloniti, mu čelada spolzi na oči in Paši se zazdi, da ga pozna, čeprav, le od kod, pomisli. Ampak vojak gleda mrko, pristopi, si popravi čelado, z roko otre oči in kriči Paši v obraz: »Dokumenti! Pizda, dokumenti!«

Paša brska po žepih in žepov je naenkrat toliko, da se v njih izgublja in ne more ničesar najti, temveč iz njih vleče razne smeti: osvežilne robčke, s katerimi si jutraj v šoli lošči čevlje, natisnjene učne priprave, poštno obvestilo za prevzem pošiljke. Ja, ja, pomisli Paša, s pogledom, polnim groze, uprtim v vojaka, prevzeti moram pošiljko, pošiljko, pošiljko. Čisto sem pozabil, pomisli in iznenada mu kožo oblije hladen pot, kakor da bi ga kdo obrisal z vlažilnimi robčki.

»No?« kriči nadenj sklonjen vojak. Stvar je v tem, da Paša nikakor ne more ugotoviti, kateri jezik ta govori, saj besede iz njega butajo tako pretrgano in polomljeno, da ni zaslediti ne intonacije ne naglasa, preprosto nekaj kriči, kot bi izkašljeval prehlad. Moral bi govoriti državni jezik, grabi Pašo panika, pred enim mesecem je tu stala enota iz Žitomirja, še smejali so se mu, kako je prehajal med jezikoma. Ali so to isti fantje? mrzlično koleba Paša, pogledujoč v razjarjene oči, v katerih se zrcali ves njegov strah.

»Pozabil sem jih,« odvrne Paša.

»Kaj?« je nejeveren vojak.

Voznik plane na noge, ne vedoč, kaj naj, naj beži ali obstane. In tudi Paša ne ve, kaj naj, in razmišlja: kako se je lahko to zgodilo, kako se je lahko?

Tedaj tudi zunaj nekdo zakriči, zakriči tako rezko in zateglo, da se vojak zdrzne, obrne, odrine voznika in steče ven. Voznik pade na svoj sedež, a se hitro požene kvišku in skoči za vojakom. Tudi Paša skoči ven in vsi skupaj stečejo k množici, ki nenadoma umolkne in se razmakne. Zatem se začnejo z juga, izza obzorja, od obkoljenega mesta, kot iz zračnega žepa prikazovati moški. Zdaj posamezno, zdaj v dvojicah, v celih skupinah vznikajo izza obzorja in se pomikajo sem, proti množici, ki molče stoji in čaka. Prej na obzorju komaj opazni, se zdaj postopno večajo, rastejo kot popoldanske sence. Nihče več ne pogleduje na

ogledalo in nihče več ne kriči, kot bi se bali preplašiti to že stometrsko procesijo, ki počasi zapolnjuje cesto. Moški hodijo umirjeno, zdi se, kot da se jim nikamor ne mudi, čeprav takoj postane jasno, da se hitreje preprosto ne morejo premikati: preveč so izmučeni, zanje je teh zadnjih nekaj sto metrov preveč. Toda ker morajo hoditi, hodijo, ne da bi se ustavljali, trmasto se približujejo svoji zastavi, iz doline se vzpenjajo k nadzorni točki kot slepi potniki, ki so jih vrgli z avtobusa. Zdi se, da čas hitreje teče in se vse dogaja tako hitro, da se nihče ne utegne niti prestrašiti niti oddahniti. Prvi že prispejo do prepletkanih betonskih kvadrov, medtem ko se tam na obzorju pojavljajo vedno novi, ki se proti severu spuščajo k svojim. In čim bližje prihajajo, tem razločnejši so njihovi obrazi in tem tiše postaja. Kajti zdaj so oči prišlekov razpoznavne in v teh očeh se ne zrcali nič dobrega, le izmučenost in mrz. In njihova sapa je tako hladna, da se iz nje ne dviguje niti para. Od umazanih črni obrazi z bleščečimi beločnicami. Čelade, črne raztrgane kape. Okrog vratov ovite rute, sive od opečnatega prahu. Orožje, pasovi, prazni žepi, torbe na hrbtih, črne omaščene roke, s prahom zdrobljene opeke in čevlji, zamazani od černoizjoma. Prvi, ki dospejo, očitajoče in z nezaupanjem zrejo v obraze, kakor da vsi ti, ki tukaj stojijo in jih čakajo, nosijo krivdo, kakor da bi vse moralo biti ravno obratno: prišleki bi morali stati tukaj pod nizkim januarskim nebom in strmeti proti južnemu obzorju, kjer ni ničesar razen umazanih in smrti. Prvi že stopi do barikade in nenadoma sproži pest kvišku ter začne kričati, kot da bi hotel nahruliti bogove za njihovo slabo vedenje. Preklinja, grozi, besni, solze mu tečejo po licih in mu umivajo obraz. Množica se širše razmakne in prihajajoči se pomešajo med tiste, ki stojijo, kot bi se umazana rečna voda premešala z bistro morsko. Trumi začne zmanjkovati prostora med hladnimi kvadri, vendar prvi prispeli dalje stoji sredi gruč in vpije nekaj o nepoštenosti in maščevanju, o tem, da so mesto predali, zapustili skupaj z vsemi tam živječimi, ga izročili v tuje roke, niso vzdržali, umaknili so se, se izmuznili iz pasti. In ti, ki so se izmuznili, so lahko še srečni, le kaj pa bo s tistimi, ki so ostali tam, na prestreljenih ulicah. »Kaj bo z njimi? Kdo jih bo rešil? Kaj nam je bilo,« kriči, ne da bi spustil pesti, »da smo jih kar pustili, zbežali, zapustili mesto? Kako smo lahko to naredili? Kdo bo odgovarjal za to? Oleža, moj kolega, še zasuti ga nisem utegnil, ga z vleči v sneg, zdaj zgorel leži na črpalki. Komu sem ga pustil? Kdo bo poskrbel zanj? Kdo?« kriči in žuga s pestjo deževnemu oblaku. Vse dokler ga nekdo, ki prispe pozneje in se tišči mimo, ne kresne po glavi, češ, zapri gofijo, že brez tebe je dovolj slabo. Tedaj vsi začnejo govoriti

drug čez drugega: nekateri sprašujejo, drugi odgovarjajo, nekatere odvedejo, da bi se pogreli, druge zavijajo v stare osmojene odeje. Nakar k nadzorni točki iznenada prispe nova skupina, ki na ramenih tovari nosila, na katerih leži nekdo tako raztrgan in okrvavljen, da Paša zgolj odvrne pogled, medtem ko neki oficir začne kričati, naj že pokličejo reševalno vozilo, čeprav ga tukaj res ni pričakovati. Nosila si oprtajo tisti, ki so bolj pri močeh, in jih odnesejo k avtobusu, daj že, kričijo vozniku, vžgi motor, odpelji ga na postajo. Paša pomisli, da je to najboljša možnost; vrniti se domov, zato prav tako napravi korak proti avtobusu, vendar pri vratih že stoji vojak, ki Pašo odrine, ne da bi ga pogledal, tako da lahko Paša zgolj gleda, kako nosila previdno занesejo v notranjost, opazi zlepljene lase in sladkorno belino kosti, kot da bi kdo prerezal melono in iztrebil njeno sladko drobovje, opazi skrivljeno roko, ki se oklepa nosil tako močno, kot se lahko oklepa le življenja.

Avtobus se skuša obrniti, a se okoli njega gnete kričeča množica, je v napoto in kriči predvsem zato, da ne bi bila v napoto. Naposled se razleže povelje, truma se premakne in spolzi na stran, avtobus obrne in izgine za ovinkom. Pašo so potisnili na bankino, nebogljen se želi umakniti od tam, nekdo ga pokliče izza hrbta, daj cigareto, mu pravi vojak brez čelade in umazanih sivih las. »Nimam,« odvrne Paša. »Kaj pa imaš?« ga ne izpusti vojak. Paša avtomatično seže v žep in izvleče svoj osebni dokument.

Prevedla Janja Vollmaier Lubej in Primož Lubej

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Serhij Žadan, *Internat*. Ljubljana: Beletrina (2024), str. 12–21.

Day One

A January morning, long and motionless, like a line at the hospital. Morning briskness in the kitchen, slate twilight outside. Pasha walks over to the stove, and his nose instantly catches the sweetish smell of gas. For Pasha that smell is always associated with vigorous mornings—getting up for work, tossing textbooks and graded assignments into his briefcase, ducking into the kitchen, breathing in sweet gas, drinking strong tea, following it with black bread, assuring himself he's living the good life, and running off to work once he's fully convinced. That smell has been with him his whole life; any time he wakes up somewhere outside his own home without the morning stove, its aged burners crusted with ash, he has no appetite. Pasha peers out the window, considers the black snow and black sky, sits down at the table, and shakes his head, trying to gather his wits. Six a.m., January, Monday, one more day with no job to go to.

He grabs some assignments off the windowsill, leafs through them, puts them back immediately, gets up, goes over to the main room, peeks in. The old-timer's sleeping in his chair. A blood-drenched man is crying out to him from the screen, to no avail—the sound's been off since last night. Now you can't get to him, no matter how loud you yell. Pasha stops for a second, looks at the blood. The yelling man shifts his eyes toward Pasha and starts yelling at him—don't turn it off, listen, this is important, it involves you, too. But Pasha quickly finds the remote, squeezes the large red button like he's trying to get toothpaste out of the tube, tosses the remote on the table, slips outside, and shuts the door carefully, so as not to wake his dad. But the door still creaks menacingly in the morning twilight. The old-timer wakes up immediately, finds the remote, and turns the TV back on. It's showing something horrible, something that involves everyone. Pasha's already running up to the station.

"Something's off," he thinks. "Something's definitely off around here." Not a living soul, not a single voice. No locomotive noise. No peddlers. It's just above freezing, and water is leaking from the dark blue snowbanks—clouds in the sky, moisture hanging in the air, sometimes turning to barely perceptible drizzle, fog settling on the far-off tracks, no voices or footsteps coming out of that fog. "It's still early," Pasha thinks, anxious. "It's still early, that's all." In the south, over there, by the city limits, a suspicious silence has settled. No blasts, no shredded air. A bus comes around the corner. Pasha exhales in relief. The buses are running, everything's fine. Yeah, it's just early, that's all.

He nods to the driver, who tucks his head deeper into the collar of his leather coat, then walks through the empty bus and takes a seat on the left side. He sits for an instant, fidgets, then gets up and moves over to the right. The driver observes all this warily, as though he's afraid of missing something important. Pasha locks eyes with him in the rearview mirror, which pushes him to look away, fire up the engine, and ease out the clutch. Disgruntled metal crunches, and the bus gets moving. The driver takes a victory lap in the empty fog, leaving the station behind. "They drive dead people to their funerals in buses like this," Pasha thinks for some reason. "These same buses, just with a black ribbon running along the windows. I wonder if there's any room for passengers? Or does the widow have to sit on top of the coffin? Where's this hearse gonna take me, anyway?"

The bus passes one empty street, then another. The market should be up ahead; old ladies are always selling some kind of frostbitten food there. They turn a corner—no old ladies, no pedestrians. Pasha's starting to realize that something definitely is off, that something's gone down, but he pretends everything is just fine. Come on, don't freak out. The driver takes great pains to avoid making eye contact, goading the hearse through the fog and water. "Guess I should have checked the news," Pasha thinks, his anxiety mounting. The thing is, there's this silence—after all those days when the sky in the south, over the city, looked like scorched rebar. It's quiet and empty, as if everyone just hopped on the night train and skipped town. Now Pasha and the driver are the only ones left. They pass two high-rises built on sand, then an auto repair shop, then they drive on out of the workers' settlement. A long row of poplars leads out to the highway—the poplars peek out of the fog like children from behind their parents. The sun is moving somewhere up high, it's already appeared somewhere up there, even though you can't quite see it yet. You can feel it, though. You can't feel anything else. Pasha's watchful eyes consider the dampness all around him, trying to figure out what he's missed and what that blood-drenched character was trying to communicate to him. The driver carefully dodges some cold pot-holes, reaches the highway, and turns right. The bus steals up to the stop, like usual. Generally, at least one person gets on here, but not today. The driver stays put, probably out of habit, without closing the doors, and then looks back at Pasha, as if asking for his permission to continue. The doors close. They get going, pick up speed—then there's a checkpoint right in front of them.

“Motherfucker,” the driver mutters.

The place is packed with soldiers. They’re standing behind some cinder blocks, underneath some frayed national flags, wordlessly looking toward the city. Just how many times has he driven through this area over the past six months, since the government returned after brief, intense fighting? When he was heading into the city or coming back home to the Station, he had to wait for them to check his papers—wait for trouble, that is. But they always let Pasha through, without saying a word—he was a local, with the papers to prove it. The government didn’t have a bone to pick with him. Pasha had gotten used to the soldiers’ apathetic eyes, smooth, mechanical movements, and black fingernails, and to the fact that you had to hand over your papers and wait for your own country to verify your standing as a law-abiding citizen. The soldiers would give Pasha his papers back, and he’d stuff them in his pocket, trying not to make eye contact with anyone. Rain had washed the color out of the national flags. It dissolved in the gray autumn air like snow in warm water.

Pasha looks out the window and sees a jeep wrapped in dark metal armor streaking past them. Three men with assault rifles hop out of the jeep and run toward the pack of people clumped together up ahead, paying no mind to the express hearse. The soldiers are standing there, yelling back and forth, grabbing binoculars out of each other’s hands, scanning the highway, straining their eyes, red from smoke and sleepless nights, framed by deep wrinkles. But the highway is empty, so empty it’s unsettling. There’s generally always somebody driving through, even though the city’s been completely surrounded for a long period of time and the ring is tightening, someone or other is always making a run for the city or coming back along the only road. Mostly soldiers transporting ammunition or volunteers taking all sorts of useless crap like winter clothes or cold medicine from here, the north, where there isn’t any fighting, to the besieged city. Who needs cold medicine in a city getting pounded by heavy artillery, a city that’s going to fall any day now? But that wasn’t stopping anyone; every once in a while, a whole convoy would leave the mainland and make a run for the besieged area. Sometimes they’d come under fire, which was to be expected. It was obvious that the city would fall, the government troops would be forced to retreat and take the flags of Pasha’s country with them, and the front line would shift to the north, toward the station, and death would come a few miles closer. But did anyone actually care? Even civilians mustered up the

courage to make a run for the city over the crumbling asphalt of the highway. The soldiers tried to talk them out of it, but nobody around here really trusted the soldiers. You just couldn't tell people anything, they all thought they knew best. You'd see some old-timer hiking all the way into town in the middle of a mortar attack to file some paperwork for his pension. Well, if it comes down to death or bureaucracy, sometimes death is the right call. Sometimes the soldiers would get irritated enough to block off the crossings, but long lines would form at the checkpoints as soon as the shelling abated. Then they'd have to let people through.

Now the highway is completely empty. Seems like something's happening over there, in the city, something scary enough it's even deterring the taxi drivers and speculators. A pack of unshaven men, pissed off from sleepless nights and fighting without gaining or losing ground, are standing by cinder blocks and barbed wire, and they're all yelling to vent their hatred. One tall soldier emerges from the group and heads toward their bus, frenzied eyes beneath his oversized helmet, frenzied and open, wide open with fear, probably. He thrusts his hand forward. Stop, don't move. They aren't moving, though—they're standing still, holding their breath. Suddenly, there's so much space inside the bus, and the air is so thin. Gulp down as much as you can, it still won't be enough. The soldier walks over to the doors and smacks the metal with his hand. The bus echoes like a sunken submarine. The driver opens the door a bit too abruptly.

"Where the fuck are you goin'?" the soldier shouts as he ducks into the bus. He's forced to hunch over a bit, so his helmet slips down over his eyes, and Pasha senses something familiar about him. Where does he remember him from? "Where have I seen him before?" Pasha asks himself. The soldier gives him a dirty look, comes over, adjusts his helmet, rubs his eyes, and yells right in Pasha's face.

"Papers! Papers, for fuck's sake!"

Pasha rummages through his pockets and suddenly, there are pockets everywhere. He gets lost in them, can't find anything except junk—the wet wipes he uses to clean the mud off his shoes when he gets to school, printed lesson plans, and a slip informing him that his package is ready for pickup at the post office. "Yep, yep," Pasha thinks, looking into the soldier's eyes in terror. "Gotta pick up that package, package, package. I completely forgot." His skin is instantly cold and clammy, as if it's him, all of him, getting scrubbed with a wet wipe.

“Well?” the soldier yells, hovering over him.

The thing is, Pasha can't seem to figure out what language he's speaking. The words are bursting out of him, choppy and broken—no intonation, no detectable accent—he's just hollering, like he's trying to cough up some mucus. “He must be speaking the official language.” Some unit from Zhytomyr was stationed here a month back. They were Ukrainian speakers, so they laughed at him for sliding back and forth between languages. “Are they those same guys? They've gotta be,” goes Pasha's frenzied line of reasoning as he looks into the soldier's enraged eyes that reflect his fear back at him.

“Forgot 'em...,” Pasha says.

“What?” The soldier doesn't believe him.

The driver leaps out of his seat, still unsure what to do with himself. Run for it or stay put? Pasha doesn't know what to do with himself either. He's thinking, “How could this be? Just how could this be?”

Somebody's shouting outside, a sharp, prolonged shout that makes the soldier shudder. He turns around and bolts off the bus, shoving the driver, who falls down into his seat and then springs to his feet again and darts after the soldier. Pasha darts off the bus too, and all of them run over to the pack, which suddenly falls silent and makes way for them. Then men—one at a time, two abreast, large groups—start emerging into view from the south, the direction of the besieged city, like they're pushing out of an invisible patch of turbulence. They're coming this way, plodding away from the horizon and moving toward the pack that stands and waits wordlessly. Barely visible at first over there on the horizon, they grow gradually, like shadows in the afternoon. Nobody's looking through binoculars anymore, and nobody's yelling—it's like they're afraid of disturbing this procession as it slowly strings out to fill up three hundred yards of highway. The men are moving at a measured pace; at first, they seem to be in no rush, but it soon becomes apparent that they simply cannot go any faster: they're exhausted and this last stretch is taking too much out of them. But they have to keep going, so they do, forging on doggedly, moving toward their flag, out of the valley, toward the checkpoint, like people walking along the highway because they got kicked off the bus for trying to get a free ride. It's as if time has sped up, and everything's happening so quickly that nobody even has a chance to feel scared or happy. The first group is approaching the paint-stained cinder blocks, while more of them continue appearing on the horizon, descending

the slope and then moving upward again, heading north to join their buddies. The closer they come, the more distinct their features become, and the quieter it gets, because you can see their eyes now, and there's nothing good in those eyes—just exhaustion and frost. Their breath is so cold that you can't even see it rising from their mouths. Faces black with dirt, the bright whites of their eyes. Helmets, torn black winter hats. Handkerchiefs, gray from brick dust, wrapped around their necks. Weapons, belts, empty pockets, bags hoisted over their shoulders, hands black with motor oil, shoes smeared with pulverized brick and soggy black earth. As they approach, the men in the first group glare at the ones standing and waiting for them, their eyes reproachful, mistrustful, like they're the ones at fault. It's as though everything should have played out differently—the men who've just arrived should've been standing under the low-hanging January sky, looking toward the south, at the horizon, where there's nothing but dirt and death. The first guy to arrive walks over to the pack, thrusts his fist into the air, and starts yelling, like he's berating the gods for their bad behavior, the fury of his curses and threats mounting. Tears trickle down his face, washing his skin. The pack makes room for the newcomers, who blend into it, like dirty river water blending into the clear ocean. The pack can no longer fit between the cold cinder blocks; the first guy keeps standing in the middle of the crew, clamoring about injustice and revenge, about surrendering the city, about abandoning it and everyone who lives there, just handing it to them, backing down, buckling under the pressure, retreating, and escaping from the trap. The ones who got out are doing fine. But what about the guys stuck back there on those blasted streets? What should we do about them? What about them? Who's going to get them out of there?

"So we just hung them out to dry? We just ran and gave up the city? How can you do a thing like that? Who's going to answer for it?" he yells, without lowering his fist. "Olezha, my pal Olezha... I didn't even have time to throw some dirt on his body or drag him into the snow. He's still lying there, all burnt up, by the gas station. I just left him. Who's gonna drag him out of there? Who's gonna take care of him?" he yells, threatening a raincloud with his fist. He keeps carrying on until a newcomer squeezes past and knocks him upside the head. Shut your goddamn trap. We're already hurting here without your bullshit. Then everyone starts talking at the same time—asking questions, answering, being led over to the bus to warm up, getting wrapped in old burnt blankets.

Suddenly, yet another group pops out by the checkpoint, carrying a stretcher on their shoulders, and on the stretcher is a guy who's so ripped up and bloody that Pasha just averts his eyes. Some officer type starts yelling that they need an ambulance. An ambulance—around here? The fresher soldiers from the checkpoint intercept the stretcher and take it over to the bus. “Take him to the Station. Come on, get a move on,” they yell at the driver. Pasha thinks that may be his best bet—heading back home—so he steps toward the bus, but there's already a soldier standing by the doors. Without a glance, he shoves Pasha, who sees the stretcher being carefully carried into the bus; Pasha glimpses sticky hair, a sugary white bone, like someone sliced open a melon and dumped out its sweet insides—he glimpses a contorted hand latching on to the stretcher, clinging to it like only someone clinging to life can.

The driver tries to turn around, but the pack is swaying back and forth; everyone's yelling and getting in the way, getting in the way and yelling, and mostly yelling at others for getting in the way. Eventually, somebody issues a command; the pack shifts and creeps off to the side. The bus turns around and disappears. Pasha's jostled to the side of the road; he's trying, fecklessly, to break out of the pack when somebody standing behind him says, “Gimme a light.” It's a soldier with no helmet and dirty silvery hair. “Don't have one,” Pasha replies. “What do ya got?” The soldier's not letting him go. Pasha automatically reaches into his pocket and produces his papers.

Translated by Reilly Costigan-Humes and Isaac Stackhouse Wheeler

Excerpt from:

Serhiy Zhadan. *The Orphanage. A Novel*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press (2021), pp. 9–18.

Slovenski avtor v središču 2026
Slovenian Author in Focus 2026



Foto © DK

Tone Škrjanec

Pesnik in prevajalec Tone Škrjanec se je rodil 15. decembra 1953 v Ljubljani. Po končani Šubičevi gimnaziji je diplomiral iz sociologije na takratni Fakulteti za sociologijo, politične vede in novinarstvo v Ljubljani. Po krajšem službovanju v prosveti je bil skoraj deset let zaposlen kot novinar tovarniškega glasila v Titovih zavodih Litostroji. Krajši čas je opravljal tudi druga priložnostna dela. Od leta 1991 do 2013 je deloval v Kulturno-umetniškem društvu France Prešeren v Ljubljani kot koordinator programa in organizator pesniških prireditev; med drugim je med letoma 1994 in 2013 organiziral prvi mednarodni ljubljanski pesniški festival Trnovski terceti, sprva skupaj z Iztokom Osojnikom, pozneje z Gregorjem Podlogarjem.

Svojo prvo knjigo pesmi *Blues zamaha* je objavil razmeroma pozno, leta 1997, po njej pa še deset pesniških zbirk, zadnjo (*Indigo*) leta 2023. V tem času sta izšli tudi dve knjigi njegovih izbranih pesmi – *V zraku so šumi* (2012) in *Petdeset izbranih pesmi* (2018) –, ob njegovi sedemdeseti obletnici pa z naslovom *Jutro ni bilo v načrtu* še obsežna knjiga njegovih

zbranih pesmi. Za vrhunski desetletni pesniški opus v 21. stoletju je leta 2017 na Mednarodnem Lirikonfestu v Velenju prejel literarno nagrado velenjica – čaša nesmrtnosti, za zbirko *Dihaj* pa leta 2018 osrednji slovenski pesniški nagradi, Veronikino in Jenkovo.

Škrjančeve pesmi so bile uvrščene v številne domače in tuje antologije ter prevedene v več svetovnih jezikov. Njegova pesniška zbirka *Koža* je v knjižni obliki izšla v angleškem, nemškem in hrvaškem prevodu, poleg nje pa je v tujini izšlo še osem prevedenih knjig njegove poezije (med drugim na Poljskem in Hrvaškem, v Bolgariji, ZDA, Franciji, Kostariki).

Tone Škrjanec je tudi prevajalec, tako poezije kot proze; največ prevaja iz angleščine, hrvaščine, srbsčine, bosansčine in francoščine. Doslej je v njegovem prevodu izšlo 25 knjig tujih avtorjev (pri štirih knjigah je bil soprevajalec), s svojimi prevodi pa tudi redno sodeluje s slovenskimi literarnimi revijami in Radiem Slovenija.

Posebno omembo zasluži njegovo sodelovanje z različnimi glasbeniki (Jani Mujič, Jaka Berger, Gal

Škrjanec Skaberne), pri čemer gre za prepletanje in fuzijo njegove poezije s takšno in drugačno sodobno glasbo in ritmi. Leta 2006 sta z glasbenikom Janijem Mujičem izdala studijski album poezije z glasbo *Lovljenje ritma*, ki je bil po izboru glasbenih kritikov Radia Študent razglašen za najboljšo

ploščo leta; s podobno fuzijo poezije in glasbe je Tone Škrjanec sodeloval še na treh tovrstnih kompilacijskih ploščah (*Košček hrupa in ščepec soli, Poetrix, Pri besedi z glasom in zvokom*).

Živi in dela v Ljubljani in njeni bližnji okolici.

Izbrane nagrade in priznanja

- 2017 nagrada velenjica – čaša nesmrtnosti, za vrhunski desetletni pesniški opus
- 2018 Veronikina nagrada, za pesniško zbirko *Dihaj*
- 2018 Jenkova nagrada, za pesniško zbirko *Dihaj*

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- Всеки има своя блян. Sofija: Izdatelstvo Karina-Mariana Todorova, 2008 (izbrane pesmi; prev. Elena Tomova).

- I'll calm the horses*. New York: Ugly Duckling Presse, 2010 (prev. Ana Pepelnik).
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- Skin*. Portland: Tavern Books, 2014 (prev. Ana Pepelnik, Matthew Rohrer).
- L'esprit de la tortue est petit et très vieux*. Tineux: Centre de Créations pour l'Enfance / Maison de la poésie, 2014 (prev. Mateja Bizjak Petit, Pierre Soletti, Arnaud Ségard).
- Contribución a la teoría del desarrollo*. San José (Kostarika): Fundación Casa de Poesía, 2019 (prev. Barbara Pregelj, Francisco Tomsich, Pablo Fajdiga, Barbara Juršič).
- Haut*. Ljubljana: Društvo slovenskih pisateljev [Litteræ Slovenicæ], 2021 (prev. Ann Catrin Bolton).
- Πολύ παλιό είναι το πνεύμα της χελώνας και μικρό!. Atene: Diania, 2025 (prev. Angeliki Dimuli).

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- Paul Bowles, *Čitanka*. Maribor: Litera, 2005 (z Andrejem Blatnikom; prozna antologija).
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- Jack Spicer, *To so mi naredile besede*. Ljubljana: LUD Šerpa, 2018 (poezija).
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- Pri besedi z glasom in zvokom*. Ljubljana: LUD Literatura, 2011 (več avtorjev).
- Poetrix*. Ljubljana: Radio Študent, Literarno društvo IA, 2021 (več avtorjev; zvočna knjiga z dodanim USB-ključem).

The poet and translator Tone Škrjanec was born on 15 December 1953 in Ljubljana. After completing his high school education at Šubic Gymnasium, he graduated in sociology from what was then the Faculty of Sociology, Political Science and Journalism in Ljubljana. Following a brief stint in the educational sector, he spent almost ten years working as a journalist for the in-house journal of Tito's Litostroj factories. He also undertook various other odd jobs for short periods. From 1991 to 2013, he worked at the France Prešeren Cultural and Artistic Society in Ljubljana as a programme coordinator and organiser of poetry events; among other things, between 1994 and 2013 he organised the first international Ljubljana poetry festival, Trnovski terceti, initially together with Iztok Osojnik, and later with Gregor Podlogar.

He published his first collection of poems, *Blues zamaha* (The Blues of Swing), relatively late, in 1997, and this was followed by ten further collections, the last of which (*Indigo*) was published in 2023. During this time, two books of his selected poems

were also published—*V zraku so šumi* (2012; There are Noises in the Air) and *Petdeset izbranih pesmi* (2018: Fifty Selected Poems)—and, to mark his seventieth birthday, a comprehensive volume of his collected poems entitled *Jutro ni bilo v načrtu* (Morning Was Not Part of the Plan) was also published. For his outstanding decade-long poetic oeuvre in the 21st century, he received the Velenjica literary award—The Cup of Immortality—at the International Lirikifest in Velenje in 2017, and for the collection *Dihaj* (Breathe) he was awarded the two leading Slovenian poetry prizes: the Veronika Award and the Jenko Award.

Škrjanec's poems have been included in many national and international anthologies and translated into several languages. His poetry collection *Koža* (*Skin*) has been published in book form in English, German and Croatian translations; in addition, eight further translated collections of his poetry have been published abroad (including in Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Poland, Costa Rica and the USA).

Tone Škrjanec is also a translator

of both poetry and prose. He translates mainly from English, Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian and French. To date, 25 books by foreign authors have been published in his translations (he was a co-translator on four of them), and he also regularly contributes his translations to Slovenian literary magazines and Radio Slovenia.

His collaboration with various musicians (Jani Mujič, Jaka Berger, Gal Škrjanec Skaberne) deserves special mention, as it involves the interweaving and fusion of his poetry with various forms of contemporary

music and rhythms. In 2006, he and the musician Jani Mujič released a studio album of poetry set to music, *Lovljenje ritma* (Catching the Rhythm), which was named the best album of the year by music critics at Radio Študent. Tone Škrjanec has also contributed to three other compilation albums featuring a similar fusion of poetry and music: *Košček hrupa in ščepec soli* (A Piece of Noise and a Pinch of Salt), *Poetrix, Pri besedi z glasom in zvokom* (By the Word, with Voice and Sound).

He lives and works in Ljubljana and the surrounding area.

Selected awards and accolades

- 2017 The Velenjica Prize—The Cup of Immortality, for an outstanding ten-year Slovenian poetry oeuvre in the 21st century
- 2018 The Veronika Award, for the poetry collection *Dihaj* (Breathe)
- 2018 The Jenko Award, for the poetry collection *Dihaj* (Breathe)

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Goran I. Janković, *Dok oblaci promiču / As clouds pass by / Al passare delle nuvole /*

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Discography (poetry with music, compilations)

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Lovljenje ritma (Catching the Rhythm). Ljubljana: KUD France Prešeren, 2006

(a solo album together with Jani Mujič)

Pri besedi z glasom in zvokom (By the Word, with Voice and Sound). Ljubljana:

LUD Literatura, 2011 (several authors).

Poetrix. Ljubljana: Radio Študent, Literarno društvo IA, 2021 (several authors;

audiobook with a USB stick included).

Svet se dogaja v občutkih kot osebah – o poeziji Toneta Škrjanca

Gregor Podlogar

Nekatere pesmi me včasih močno ganejo. In še zdaj, potem ko že skoraj trideset let redno berem poezijo Toneta Škrjanca, me kakšna njegova pesem tako gane, da za hip zaprem oči, ko jo preberem, narahlo zadržim dihanje in me preplavijo toplina, veselje ter tisti občutek, da je spregovoril svet in da se je zgodilo življenje. To se zgodi povsem spontano. V njegovih pesmih, ki so sicer osebne, a hkrati nagovarjajo vse, je konstelacija besed in občutkov namreč taka, da tok pesmi deluje povsem naravno, preprosto, odkrito, resnično oziroma kot da je v pesmih vse sestavljeno tako, da od nekdaj spada skupaj. Pesmi delujejo neposredno, brez kakršnihkoli filtrov odvečnega jezikovnega eksperimentiranja ali filozofskega nakladanja, ampak v avtorjevem lastnem jeziku in prefinjeni, tudi ludistični uporabi prispodob.

V zadnjih desetletjih, ko je bilo v slovenščini napisane kar nekaj dobre poezije, Škrjančev opus zato izstopa po prepoznavnem pesniškem glasu, ki ga oblikuje tako vzhodnjaška modrost kot ameriška kontrakultura, poezija in glasba, po enovitosti, saj gre za pesnika, ki vseskozi piše eno samo knjigo pesmi, in po neverjetni čutnosti, ki jo simbolizira koža – ni naključje, da je tako naslov tudi ene od njegovih pesniških zbirk – in ki je vedno na strani življenja, vsakdanjega življenja v vsej njegovi preprostosti, vedno vsrkani v pesmi.

Tone Škrjanec je bil dolgo časa prikrit, neekspoziran pesnik in tudi prevajalec. Poezijo namreč piše že od študentskih let, a je prvo pesniško zbirko *Blues zamaha* (1997) objavil razmeroma pozno, pri 44 letih, po njej pa še številne druge: *Sonce na kolenu* (1999), *Pagode na veter* (2001), *Noži* (2002), *Baker* (2004), *Koža* (2006), *Duh želve je majhen in zelo star* (2009), *Sladke pogačice* (2015), *Di-haj* (2017), *Nekaj o nas kot živalih* (2020), *Indigo* (2023), tri izbore *Med drevesi / Among Trees* (2010, ta je dvojezična), *V zraku so šumi* (2012), *Petdeset izbranih pesmi* (2018) ter *Jutro ni bilo v načrtu. Zbrane pesmi, 1997–2023*. Nekaj let po izidu prvenca je združeval poezijo in glasbo, krona tega je bila zgoščenka oziroma samostojen album *Lovljenje ritma* (2006), ustvarjen skupaj z glasbenikom Janijem Mujičem. Poleg pisanja poezije je Škrjanec vseskozi prevajal, predvsem ameriško literaturo in avtorje, kot so Frank O'Hara, Paul Bowles, William S.

Burroughs, Charles Bukowski, Gary Snyder, Jack Spicer, Kenneth Rexroth idr. Precej pozno je bil za svoje pesniško delo nagrajen: prejel je nagrado za vrhunski desetletni slovenski pesniški opus velenjica – čaša nesmrtnosti, Jenkovo in Veronikino nagrado. Njegove pesmi so prevedene v številne jezike, v knjižni obliki pa so prevodi njegove poezije izšli v angleščini, nemščini, francoščini, grščini, španščini, hrvaščini in poljščini. Danes je Škrjanec eden od osrednjih pesniških glasov sodobne slovenske poezije.

Ključ do poezije Toneta Škrjanca je v njegovi poeziji sami. V nekaterih pesmih reflektira svoje ustvarjanje, najizrazitej v pesmi »Esej o poeziji«, v kateri je tudi eden od njegovih najbolj znanih verzov »poezija je limanje«, ki nakazuje, da avtor posega po kolažnem principu pisanja, s katerim v poezijo lepi občutke in doživetja. In ti občutki se v pesmih sestavijo, kot zapiše v pesmi »Addicted to Love«, »ne v podobah / meni se svet dogaja / v občutkih kot osebah«, pri čemer v ospredje stopa čudnost vsakdana. Zadeve v njegovi poeziji namreč niso povsem jasne, kdaj pa kdaj so skrivnostne (»Poznamo veliko vrst tišine. Večinoma so samo približki.«), mestoma tudi nadrealistične (»Podmornica v zoknih. Oblak je ura hiše.«) in rahlo odbite (»Topla masa telesa, ki se napeinja, beli čevlji, prozorni okvirji očal, prsi, spletene v nagrizeno kačo.«). Zato pesmi vedno znova presenečajo s svojo izraznostjo in prav s tem navdušujejo, predvsem ko je na delu njegova pronicljiva intuicija. Takrat se v pesmih vse vzpostavi: zasijejo malenkosti in poezija postane umetnost bivanja v svetu. Počasnost, ki jo velikokrat diktira pitje čaja, pomembna dejavnost poezije Toneta Škrjanca, postane sama senzibilnost, ta pa dopusti, da v njegovi poeziji spregovori tisto, kar je Okakura Kakuzo zapisal v *Knjigi o čaju*: »Celotni ideal kulta čaja je posledica tega zenovskega pojmovanja veličine, ki jo je najti v najmanjših življenjskih dogodkih.« Tu se dotaknemo bistva njegove poezije – samosvoje ubeseditve (naj)manjših življenjskih dogodkov. Iz teh navezav na daoizem in zen izhaja tudi njegovo nepolaščanje sveta. Zato je njegova poezija, kot je nekje ugotovil Peter Semolič, »nenasilna do materiala, ki si ga sposoja« in »zase ne zahteva nobenega statusa dokončne pesniške ali katerekoli druge resnice«. Svet je svet. In zato so lahko stvari kot osebe, živali in rastline kot osebe, dogodki kot osebe, skratka, jaz – lirski subjekt, če hočete – je tako oseba v odnosu z osebami. »Vsakdanji jezik je v redu,« je nekje zapisal Ludwig Wittgenstein. Škrjanec je to dojel že na začetku svoje pesniške poti. Zato v njegovi poeziji ni nepotrebnih izletov v pokrajine metafor in zato se v njegovi poeziji lahko vse dogaja nepos-

redno. Tu, pred nami. Vsakdanji, pogovorni jezik je v njegovih pesmih docela sprejet in daje njegovi poeziji živost, z njim polno vstopa v vsakdanjost, hkrati pa neti zanos, ki mu omogoča prosto gibanje po pesniški materiji. In tu je potem še humor, ki ga je v njegovi poeziji dovolj, da piči na pravem mestu, da je zelo posrečen in da vedno deluje – ali v posameznih verzih, kot sta na primer »Zunaj soseda obeša perilo. Lepo za umret.« ali kot celotna pesem, na primer v kratki pesmi brez naslova: »Noč. Tišina. Nekje naenkrat poč kot svina.«

Toda ko govorimo o poeziji Toneta Škrjanca, se moramo vedno vračati k občutkom, ki pri njem izvirajo iz upravljanja s starim občutenjem sveta kot sveta, kakršnega so ga poznali ljudje v preteklosti in kakršnega bodo poznali ljudje prihodnosti, ne glede na tehnološki razvoj. Zato je njegova poezija poezija kože, ker neposredno čuti svet in nas vanj vlaga kot indigo, ker reže kot noži, ker pove nekaj o nas kot živalih, ker z njo pagode mrmrajo o minljivosti skupaj z duhovi želv in sladkimi pogačicami, ker z njo baker zasveti in ker z njo dihamo in je sonce prav takrat na kolenu in nam njen zamah bluesa pove o svetu več kakor političen govor – tu je ta občutena neizrečena samoumevnost. In poezija Tone-
ta Škrjanca nam jo vedno znova odkriva.

The World Happens Through Feelings as Persons – On the Poetry of Tone Škrjanec

Gregor Podlogar

Some poems move me deeply. Even now, after nearly thirty years of regularly reading Tone Škrjanec's poetry, one of his poems can still affect me so profoundly that, upon finishing it, I close my eyes for a moment, gently hold my breath, and find myself flooded with warmth, joy, and that peculiar feeling that the world itself has spoken and that life has happened. It occurs entirely spontaneously. In his poems—which are personal yet at the same time address everyone—the constellation of words and emotions is such that the movement of the poem feels utterly natural, simple, open, and true, as though everything within it had always belonged together. His poems speak directly, without the filters of unnecessary linguistic experimentation or philosophical verbosity, but rather in the poet's own language and through a refined, often playful use of imagery.

In recent decades, during which a great deal of excellent poetry has been written in Slovenian, Škrjanec's oeuvre stands out for its distinctive poetic voice, shaped equally by Eastern wisdom and American counterculture, by poetry and music; for its remarkable unity, since he has essentially been writing a single book of poems throughout his career; and for its extraordinary sensuality, symbolized by the skin—it is no coincidence that one of his poetry collections bears that title—which always remains on the side of life, of everyday life in all its simplicity, and is constantly absorbed into his poems.

For a long time, Tone Škrjanec remained an understated, unassuming poet and translator. He had been writing poetry since his student years, yet published his first collection, *Blues zamaha* (The Blues of a Swing), only relatively late, in 1997, at the age of forty-four. It was followed by numerous collections: *Sonce na kolenu* (1999; *The Sun on the Knee*, 2005), *Pagode na veter* (2021; *Pagodas in the Wind*), *Noži* (2002; *Knives*), *Baker* (2004; *Copper*), *Koža* (2006; *Skin*, 2014), *Duh želve je majhen in zelo star* (2009; *The Spirit of the Turtle Is Small and Very Old*), *Sladke pogačice* (2015; *Sweet Cakes*), *Dihaj* (2017; *Breathe*), *Nekaj o nas kot živalih* (2020; *Something About Us as Animals*), *Indigo* (2023), three selected editions—*Med drevesi* / *Among Trees* (2010, bilingual), *V zraku*

so šumi (2012; There Are Murmurs in the Air), *Petdeset izbranih pesmi* (2018; Fifty Selected Poems)—and the collected volume *Jutro ni bilo v načrtu. Zbrane pesmi, 1997–2023* (2024; Morning Was Not Part of the Plan: Collected Poems, 1997–2023). A few years after his debut, he began combining poetry and music, culminating in the album *Lovljenje ritma* (2006; Catching the Rhythm), created together with the musician Jani Mujić. Alongside writing poetry, Škrjanec has consistently translated literature, primarily American authors such as Frank O'Hara, Paul Bowles, William S. Burroughs, Charles Bukowski, Gary Snyder, Jack Spicer, Kenneth Rexroth, and others. Recognition for his own poetry came relatively late: he received the Velenjica – Cup of Immortality Award for an outstanding decade-long poetic oeuvre, the Jenko Prize, and the Veronika Prize. His poems have been translated into several languages, and book-length editions of his work have appeared in Croatian, English, French, German, Greek, Polish, and Spanish. Today, Škrjanec is regarded as one of the central poetic voices of contemporary Slovenian poetry.

The key to Tone Škrjanec's poetry lies within the poetry itself. In a number of poems he reflects on his own creative process, most explicitly in "Essay on Poetry," which contains one of his best-known lines: "poetry is gluing." The line suggests his reliance on a collage-like principle of composition, through which he pastes feelings and experiences into his poems. These feelings come together, as he writes in "Addicted to Love," "not in images / for me the world happens / through feelings as persons," bringing the strangeness of everyday life to the forefront. Things in his poetry are never entirely transparent; they are at times mysterious ("We know many kinds of silence. Most of them are only approximations."), occasionally surreal ("A submarine in socks. A cloud is the house's clock."), and gently offbeat ("The warm mass of a straining body, white shoes, transparent eyeglass frames, breasts braided into an eroded snake."). His poems therefore continue to surprise with the force of their expression, captivating above all through the acuity of his intuition. At such moments everything falls into place: small details begin to shine, and poetry becomes the art of inhabiting the world.

The slowness so often dictated by the drinking of tea—an important activity in Škrjanec's poetic universe—becomes a form of sensibility in itself, allowing his poems to give voice to what Okakura Kakuzō wrote in *The Book of Tea*: "The whole ideal of Teaism is a result of the Zen conception of greatness in the

smallest incidents of life.” Here we arrive at the essence of Škrjanec’s poetry: its singular articulation of life’s smallest—and greatest—moments. His affinity with Daoism and Zen also explains his refusal to appropriate the world. As Peter Semolič once observed, his poetry is “nonviolent toward the material it borrows” and “claims no status for itself as the final poetic or any other kind of truth.” The world is simply the world. And therefore, things can be persons, animals and plants can be persons, events can be persons; in short, the “I”—the lyrical subject, if you will—is one person among other persons. “Ordinary language is all right,” Ludwig Wittgenstein once wrote. Škrjanec understood this from the very beginning of his poetic path. That is why there are no unnecessary excursions into landscapes of elaborate metaphor, and why everything in his poetry can happen directly—here, before us. Everyday conversational language is fully embraced in his poems, lending them vitality, allowing them to enter everyday life completely, while at the same time igniting an enthusiasm that moves freely through poetic matter. And then there is the humour—always present in just the right measure, always striking precisely where it should, whether in individual lines such as “Outside, the neighbour is hanging laundry. Beautiful enough to die for.” Or in an entire poem, as in the untitled miniature: “Night. Silence. Somewhere, suddenly, bang as hell.”

Yet whenever we speak of Tone Škrjanec’s poetry, we inevitably return to feeling. In his work, feeling arises from an ancient way of sensing the world as world—a way familiar to people in the past and one that will remain familiar to people in the future, regardless of technological progress. That is why his is a poetry of skin: because it feels the world directly and places us within it like indigo; because it cuts like knives; because it tells us something about ourselves as animals; because through it pagodas murmur of transience together with turtle spirits and sweet cakes; because through it copper begins to shine; because through it we breathe, and at that very moment the sun rests upon the knee; because the swing of its blues tells us more about the world than any political speech. Here lies that deeply felt, unspoken self-evidence. And the poetry of Tone Škrjanec reveals it to us again and again.

Translated by Matej Krajnc

Esej o poeziji

kadarkoli bo dobro.

samo ne prehitro. storjeno mora biti
čim bolj počasi, z občutkom in prefinjeno.
naj bodo upoštevani in zajeti
vsi detajli, vse s filigransko
natančnostjo izdelane arabeske.
upoštevaj naj se stopnja vlažnosti,
napetost in slokost kože. torni faktor.
različne osebnostne lastnosti in preference,
mladostne ljubezni, šifrirana sporočila
skrita v ljubezenskih pismih, tajne pisave.
zares opolzke misli. občutljivost
ušesnih mešičkov in prstnih blazinic.
ugodje, ki se nam zdi tako samoumevno
ob božanju. ritem trepalnic. vse naključno, slučajno
in nepredvidljivo, od višje sile odvisno
in skrito v jeziku trav. zvoki jasmína
v svetlozelenih porcelanastih šalčkah iz Kitajske,
svež šemalotopel kruh z marmelado.
dobro jutro sobotno jutro na golem hrbtu.
to ni pravi zmaj.
poezija je limanje.

Prispevek k teoriji razvoja

najprej so bili zgrajeni grmi in na samem začetku so bili prekriti s flanelo. pa ne zato, da bi imel grm občutek prijetne domačnosti in zasebnosti, da bi mehko blago ščitilo ali grelo nežne liste, ampak zato, da bi deževne kaplje padale na mehko. nihanje teles v tistem času še ni bilo definirano. še telesa so bila komaj v fazi slutnje in svila je prišla veliko, veliko kasneje. z marelicami in golo kožo.

vsakdo ima svoje sanje,
mene pa v tem trenutku,
ko sedim v blagodejni senci
bambusovega nadstreška slaščičarne,
predvsem zanima kremšnita,
ki vsa sveža in tresoča
ravno prihaja na bleščečem, kovinskem krožniku.
in kozarec hladne oranžade.
ali pa morda v drugačnem zaporedju.
če bi rekel, da o tem sanjam,
to ne bi bilo prav.
in predvsem ne povsem resnično.

La mano cornuda

na splošno se izogibam
dolгим odgovorom in belim avtomobilom.
večnost me ne zanima preveč. čeprav
me kdaj ponoči, ko je mrak popoln
in kljub mehki odeji napadajo misli.
če že govorimo, mi tudi obče ni mar.
rad posedam, srkam čaj
in se počasi razgledujem naokoli.
komajda kdaj plešem. če plešem sem živa rana.
raztresen in neprimeren za resne razgovore.
zamišljam si, da sva s svetom na kolenih ob reki,
v roke zajemava vodo in jo mečeva v zrak,
da razpršene kaplje bleščijo v soncu kot iskre.

O minljivosti

bolečino, trpljenje, smrt čutim.
soba polna mehkih, toplih teles.
gola se hihitajo, brkljajo s prsti po kaviarju
in opazujejo zasnežene gorske vrhove,
ki se v počasnem mimohodu bleščijo v soncu.
sedim ob oknu in čakam sneg. ne dočakam.
dočakam večer, ki pride že zgodaj popoldne.
jezero mirno in negibno kot puding,
na njem nekaj črnih račk z belimi kljuni.
vse je nekako srebrno, lahke, hladne teže
in hitro. nekaj minut je čez polnoč.
vsak, ki gre mimo, se me dotakne.

Kupi mehko majico

Ne išči jelenov ob avtocesti.
Hitimo, ne pozabi na lepoto.
Glej kaplje dežja, ki se svaljkajo
po vetrobranskem steklu.
Poslušaj tišino, če jo najdeš
kje skrito med oblaki. Položi
roko narahlo na žamet. Ne
pozabi na lepoto, ko hitiš.
Hitrost je napaka, ki se dogaja.
Počasi se sprehodi po koži
in na njej s prstom nariši neskončnost.
Poljubi popek. Naredi še kaj
telesnega. Dotakni se glasbe.
Reci, naredi muziko, da se je
dotaknem s celim telesom.
Zavrni postopke uničevanja.
Kupi mehko majico. Naj bo to
tvoja nova domovina.

Nekaj o nas kot živalih

vem

da je še daleč

ampak pojdimo

počasi

rad bi videl

drevesa

med potjo

noč.

tudi če zaprem oči

vidim zvezde.

I can see the darkness

zdaj pač malo sanjarim
o ozkih presušenih ulicah mesta
o valovitih nepokošenih travnikih
o tisočih odtenkih zelene
o stvareh, ki se mi dogajajo preveč poredko
in se jih ravno zato in nasploh že
vnaprej veselim
o večerni hoji ob
zeleni reki proti domu in ona
meni in celemu svetu nekaj mrmra
počasi in leno mrmra pa je ne
razumem in tudi vseeno mi je
občutki so dobri taki enostavni
umirjeni
nek audi pricvili v ovinek
neko dekle se ozira naokoli
in si skupaj z mano misli
si domišljam
nikamor ne hiti
samo mrak
samo tema je pred nami

Vsi smo na istem vlaku

si znate sploh predstavljati
 da je življenje lahko čarobno.
 ne skrbite, ne boste razumeli, to so resne kozmične sfere.
 vse te želje, darila in zamišljeno praskanje po glavi.
 vsi si želimo samo dobre masaže,
 še kakšnega orgazma in dobrega spanja.
 tako zelo malo in tako enostavno.
 še nikoli v življenju se nisem počutil tako ljubljenega.
 govorim o kratkem trenutku. vem,
 slovo nima nobene zveze s slabostjo
 ki jo včasih občutim
 in slabost ni nujno slabost
 ampak naravna reakcija na zunanje impulze
 in pomanjkanje prostora svobode.
 prekrasen vran čepi na okenski polici
 velika črna puhasta nejasnost.
 le kako se ne bi zaljubil v to njegovo barvo
 za katero ne najdem imena.
 po osvežujočem teku skozi gozd si zaželiš
 da pozdravim tvoji ponosni prijateljici.
 katera mi je ljubša? težko rečem, ne vidim ju ostro,
 vsekakor pa obe.
 posloviva se od preteklosti.
 če se pojavi še enkrat,
 bom takoj padel še globlje.
 moj večer se začinja. vztrajam, da ostaneš
 in si skupaj ogledava zaključek tega lepega dneva,
 ki naše sovražnike spravlja v jok.
 pustiva nepomembnosti. kaj naj rečeva o današnjem izplenu?
 ne, midva nisva lovca in z nama je vse v redu. iskalca sva
 in vsako najino iskanje ima nepričakovan konec.
 to mi je všeč, to mi daje upanje.

Dolg in hladen pogled Syda Barretta

mačka, ki spi na razglednici.
razposajena družčina vrabcev
na mojem rdečem grmu
(ki v resnici ni moj)
pod oknom moje spalnice
(ki ni čisto moja)
hrupno slavi prihod novega dneva.
okoli devetih zjutraj ali malo prej.
ne vem točno, ali še napol spim,
nisem še v tem svetu,
ki je vsak dan manj moj
in vztrajno drsi tja nekam.
rad bi hodil po snegu,
ki pada.

Tišina

poznamo veliko vrst tišine.
večinoma so samo približki.
rastline, recimo,
kadar jim je težko,
jočejo povsem neslišno.

Okorno, a prisrčno

ne (sprašuj),
ne bom hodil v vojno,
v to ne verjamem, ne jebem,
ne vidim perspektive,
raje bi šel na sprehod,
tam bo zmaga zagotovljena,
mogoče srečava mačka,
si privoščiva dan,
kot da sva brez ficka v žepu
in nama je čisto vseeno.
zgoraj nebo, spodaj pesek in
vmes še nekaj skrajno lepih dejstev,
s katerimi se ukvarja umetnost,
kot tudi s tem, da so mi vseč te tvoje dlake
in te puhaste krivine
in tvoje vse
in zares se počutim
dobrodošlega v tej džungli,
udobno divjega, čeprav sem na hitro
še vedno isti, kot sem bil
in sem tam, kjer sem,
in se počutim seksi,
počutim se seksi v eteričnem smislu,
ne čutim sprememb,
samo to je, da se vračam,
kot da nisem nikoli odšel.
všeč mi je, kako noro
se ta obleka počuti na tebi.
takšne so te noči, ko si vzamem čas,
ko odplavam,
to so filmske noči,
na drugem valu sem,
lušno je, čeprav psihično naporno,

in vseeno mi je, kaj govorijo drugi,
saj ne govorimo istega jezika.
iz osebnih razlogov vem, da smo izredno lepi
in da so to zunaj večerni odtenki roza barve.

Duh želve je majhen in zelo star

ko pride čas za pogovor
in zabavo, grem domov.
tam imam okno s čisto prozorno šipo.
zunaj so črna tema in šumi.
razmišljam, da bi pokadil
košček hašiša, bral knjigo.

Essay on poetry

whenever is good.
 only not too quickly, it has to be done
 as slowly as possible, with feeling and refinement.
 let all details be
 taken into account, all arabesques
 made with filigree accuracy.
 the moisture degree considered,
 tension and slenderness of skin. friction factor.
 various character features and preferences,
 youthful loves, coded messages
 hidden in love letters, secret writings.
 truly obscene thoughts. sensitivity
 of earlobes and fingertips.
 comfort seemingly so self-evident
 in caressing. rhythm of eyelashes. all coincident, random
 and unpredictable, depending on the higher force
 and hidden in the language of grass. sounds of jasmine
 in lightgreenporcelainteapots from China,
 fresh stillabitwarm bread with marmalade.
 good morning Saturday morning on naked back.
 this is not a real dragon.
 poetry is gluing.

Translated by Janko Lozar

Contribution to the evolution theory

first the bushes were built and at the very beginning
they were covered with flannel. but not so that bush would have
a feeling of pleasant homeliness and privacy,
or so that the soft fabric would protect tender leaves or keep them warm
but so that the raindrops would have a soft landing.
oscillation of bodies wasn't defined yet at that time.
even the bodies were still in the premonition phase and silk came
much, much later. together with apricots and naked skin.

everyone has their own dreams
but at this moment
as i sit in the beneficial shade
of the bamboo canopy in front of the candy store
i'm much more interested in a cream cake
approaching on a shiny metal plate
all fresh and wobbling.
and a glass of cool orange soda.
or perhaps the other way around.
if I said i was dreaming about this
it wouldn't be right.
and, most of all, not completely true.

Translated by Ana Pepelnik and Matthew Rohrer

La mano cornuda

I generally avoid
long answers and white cars.
I'm not too keen on eternity. though
sometimes during the night, when it's perfectly dark
and despite the soft blanket, I am struck by thoughts.
when already speaking, I don't like universals either.
I like sitting about, sipping tea
and taking my time looking around.
I hardly ever dance. when I dance I'm an open sore.
distressed and unsuitable for serious conversations.
I imagine myself and the world kneeling by the river,
taking water in our hands and throwing it up in the air
so that the dispersed drops glisten in the sun like sparks.

Translated by Janko Lozar

On transience

pain, suffering, death i feel.
a room full of soft warm bodies.
naked, giggling, picking with fingers at caviar
and watching the snowy mountain peaks
which glisten in the sun in slow procession.
i sit by the window and wait for snow. it doesn't come.
evening comes, arriving early afternoon.
the lake is peaceful and still as pudding.
on it a few black ducks with white bills are swimming.
everything is a sort of silver, with a light, cool weight,
and fast. it's a few minutes before midnight.
each one that goes past touches me.

Translated by Rawley Grau

Buy a soft shirt

Don't look for deer by the highway.
We're in a hurry, don't forget about beauty.
Look at the raindrops rolling
down the windshield.
Listen to the silence if you find it
hidden somewhere among the clouds. Lay
your hand softly on the velvet. Don't
forget about beauty when you're in a hurry.
Speed is a mistake that happens.
Walk slowly over skin
and draw infinity with your finger.
Kiss the bellybutton. Do something
else that's physical. Touch music.
Say, make music so I can
touch it with my entire body.
Reject actions of destruction.
Buy a soft shirt. Let it be
your new homeland.

Translated by Ana Pepelnik and Matthew Rohrer

Something about us as animals

i know
it's still a long way
but let's go
slowly
i'd like to see
the trees
along the way

Translated by Andrej Pleterski

night.
even when I close my eyes
I see stars.

Translated by Joshua Beckman

I can see the darkness

I'm just daydreaming a little
of dried up city streets
of undulated uncut pastures
of thousands of shades of green
of things that happen to me much too rarely
but I look forward to them
just because of that and in general
of an evening walk
by the green river towards home and her
humming something to me and to the whole world
slowly and lazily humming and I don't get
her and I don't care anyway
feelings are good are simple
serene
an audi screeches into the curve
some girl looking around
we're thinking the same thing
I imagine
don't rush to anywhere
just nightfall
just darkness is ahead of us

We're all on the same train

can you even imagine
that life can be magical.
don't worry that you couldn't understand, these are serious cosmic spheres.
all those wishes, presents and scratching the head thoughtfully.
we all just want a good massage,
an orgasm and some good sleep.
so very little and so simple.
I've never felt so loved in my life.
I'm talking about a short moment. I know,
saying farewell doesn't have anything to do with the nausea
I have sometimes
and nausea is not necessarily nausea
but a natural response to external impulses
and a lack of room for freedom.
a beautiful crow crouching in a window
big black fluffy obscurity.
how could I not fall in love with his color
for which I can't find a name for.
after a refreshing run through the woods you want me
to say hi to your proud friends.
who do you like more? I can hardly say, I can't see them clearly,
but definitely both.
let's say goodbye to the past.
if it shows up again
I'll fall even deeper.
my evening is starting. I insist that you stay
and that we are together as we watch the closing of this beautiful day
that makes our foes cry.
let's leave trivialities behind. what can we say about today catch?
no, we're no hunters and we're ok. we are searchers
and all our searchings have unexpected endings.
I like that, it gives me hope.

Syd Barrett's long and cold stare

a cat sleeping in a postcard.
a cheerful flock of sparrows
on my red bush
(which actually isn't mine)
below my bedroom's window
(which actually isn't entirely mine)
noisily celebrating the coming of a new day.
around nine in the morning or a bit sooner.
I don't know if I'm still half asleep
I'm not yet in this world
that is less mine every day
and keeps sliding somewhere there.
I want to walk in the snow
falling.

Silence

we know many kinds of silence.
mostly they're just approximations.
plants, for example,
they cry totally silently
when things are hard for them.

awkward yet sweet

don't (ask)

I won't go to war,

I don't believe in that, I don't give a fuck,

I don't see any sense in it,

I'd rather go for a walk,

a victory will be granted there,

maybe we see a cat,

and could afford the day,

as though we are totally broke,

and we don't actually care.

the sky above, below some sand, and

in between some extremely nice facts

that art is dealing with,

as well as with the fact that I like your hair

and the fluffy curves

and your everything

and I really do feel

welcome in this jungle

of cosy wild, though I'm quickly

still the way that I used to be

and I'm still where I am,

and I feel sexy,

I feel sexy in an essential sense,

I don't feel changes,

it's just that I keep coming back

as if I never left.

I like how crazy

this dress feels on you.

These nights are like that, when I take my time,

when I swim away,

these are movie nights,

I'm on a different wave,

it's nice although mentally exhausting,

and I don't care what others say,
we don't speak the same language.
I know due to personal reasons that we are extremely beautiful
and that there are evening shades of pink outside.

the tortoise's spirit is small and very old

I go home when it's time
for talking and partying.
I have a window there with a totally transparent pane.
there is black darkness and noises outside.
I'm thinking of smoking
a piece of hash, reading a book.

Translated by Ana Pepelnik

Gostje Vilenice 2026
Vilenica Guests 2026

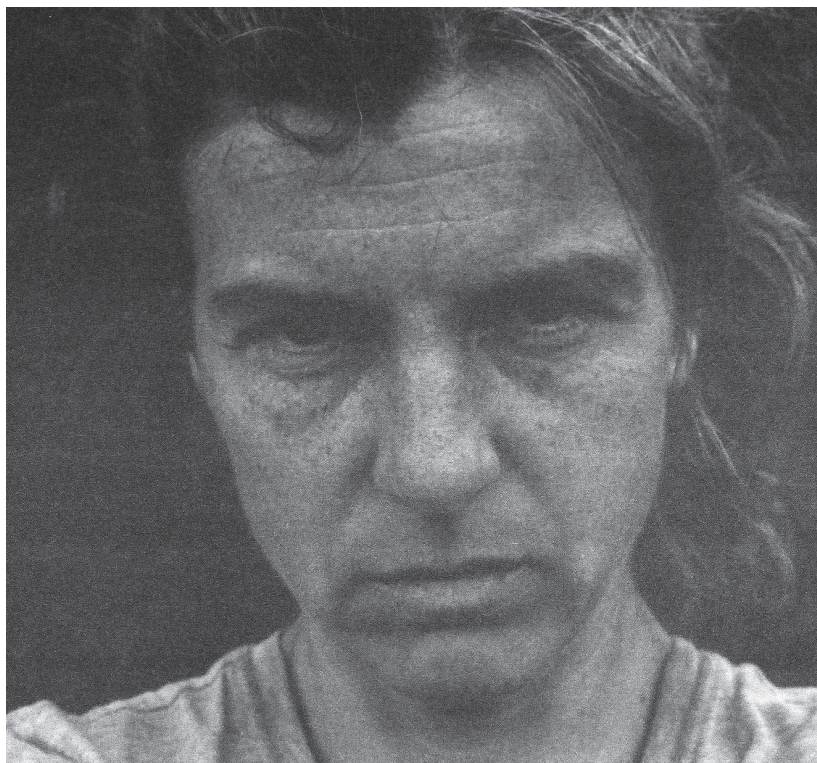


Foto © Imi Ganay

Ann Cotten

Ann Cotten (Ames/Iowa, 1982) je avstrijska pesnica, pisateljica in prevajalka. Živi in ustvarja v Berlinu, piše pa v nemščini in angleščini. Doslej je objavila več kot 15 knjig v nemščini, med njimi so pesniške zbirke *Fremdwörterbuchsonette* (2007; Soneti iz slovarja tujk), *Florida-Räume* (2010; Floridski prostori), *Verbannt! Versepos* (2016; Izgnani! Ep v verzih), *Jikiketsugaki. Tsurezuregusa* (2016) in *Poller. Idyllen* (2026). Med njenimi prevodi so knjige Joeja Wenderotha, Isabel Waidner, Rosmarie Waldrop, Legacy Russell in Adama Greena ter poezija Mimi Hachikai, Juliana Brolaskija, Margaret Atwood in

drugih. Med letoma 2007 in 2014 je sodelovala z Moniko Rinck in Sabine Scho pri projektu Rotten Kinck Schow. Od leta 2023 je sourednica avstrijske revije za teorijo, literaturo in umetnost *Triädere*. Na Svobodni univerzi v Berlinu pripravlja doktorat na temo estetike dovzetnosti za zlorabe, pri čemer raziskuje materialistično poetiko kot podlago za razmišljanje o medjezikovni, medčasovni in medkulturni poetiki. Sodeluje tudi v umetniško-raziskovalnem Bralnem klubu Oswalda Wienerja, ki preučuje teorije pomena in zaznavanja ter njihove politične in literarne implikacije.

Ann Cotten (Ames, Iowa, 1982) is an Austrian poet, writer, and translator. She lives and works in Berlin and writes in German and English. To date, she has published more than 15 books in German, including the poetry collections *Fremdwörterbuchsonette* (2007; Sonnets from a Dictionary of Foreign Words), *Florida-Räume* (2010; Florida Spaces), *Verbannt! Versepos* (2016; Exiled! An Epic in Verse), *Jikiketsugaki. Tsurezuregusa* (2016), and *Poller. Idyllen* (2026). Her translations include works by Joe Wenderoth, Isabel Waidner, Rosmarie Waldrop, Legacy Russell, and Adam Green, as well as poetry by Mimi Hachikai, Julian Brolaski, Margaret

Atwood, and others. Between 2007 and 2014, she collaborated with Monika Rinck and Sabine Scho on the Rotten Kinck Schow project. Since 2023, she has been co-editor of the Austrian journal of theory, literature, and art *Triädere*. At the Free University of Berlin, she is working on her Ph.D. on the aesthetics of vulnerability to abuse, exploring materialist poetics as a foundation for thinking about interlingual, intertemporal, and intercultural poetics. She also participates in the Oswald Wiener Reading Club, an art-research initiative that examines theories of meaning and perception and their political and literary implications.

Regret / I fear to thoroughly consider

While you work yourself slowly toward your bed
and gather all your guts to make the jump
from wheelchair to bedside, and scootch your self-sideways
until your hand reaches the thing to pull you up—

(I've noticed you're at pains to lift your arm
above your shoulder, even to lift a thing
as light as the postcards of damaged flesh
of flowers you have been collecting)

—the train I'm in sways through the misty alps
of Semmering, where you will roam no more.
We pass Gloggnitz and Wiener Neustadt, where you've surely hiked

and countless names you may never consider
as candidates for missing or regretting,
whilst I'm still open, ready for delights unknown.

In this, remembering the things you've shown me
sinks through the gel of time as a rewarding treat
nourishing me, like anything that anyone can eat

It's not as if I'm guilty to prefer
small new delights, even the fifteen minutes in the park
talking with gerd through his hungover mind

to keeping strictly to visits that I promised you.
But as I now sit in the train away from you, I see,
though you live only in the moment nowadays,
—your mind an intrepid butterfly, remembering a person's life who could
have been you—
it's not impossible you might have been waiting for me;

you might have told your help to let you sit,
as someone's coming still who will help you to bed.

She didn't come, talked in the park with someone else, instead.
So you must move yourself now. Bit by bit.

FT

A lack of pricing power

China exports plunge

|| Sarah Gordon:

the aggressive selling of payment protection insurance in the UK

the owners of Carillon paid themselves large dividends well aware that small suppliers would go bankrupt if the contractor failed.

Overpriced and overleveraged like the takeover of UK's airports by Spain's Ferrovial in 2006,

derailed by personal acrimony, like the \$22 bn Facebook-WhatsApp deal that closed in 2014

or dangerously ludistic like the €71 bn acquisition of ABN Ammo by RBG and two other European funds/sals in 2007

Calculating a deal premium has always been a dark art...
...most companies are run pretty badly

単位	たんい	unit
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取得	しゅとく	acquisition
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満期	まんき	full maturity expiration
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Trees

*Trees, I don't mean to
step on your roots, it's just
they give me some hold.*

I'm ionic, a tourist, wherever I go,
they call it Neugier,
greed for the new, but it's not like that.
my grandma said guests are like fish, they smell
after three days,
an Iowan stance—you don't seem
to know what to do with 'em—

I never got to know her well.

She said, wear your clothes loose, it's sexier
and she was buying us clothes at a trash chain
child labour on the other end of the line
I was embarrassed
got an oversize sky-blue T-shirt
I didn't understand but wore
wore
wore

Nor do I know now
what I wear.
You put on stuff.

You—Hegel says
Hegel says, you is sometimes you and sometimes it's me—
Someone hands you something,
says put it on,
you put it on,
and live in their eyes.
Somebody turns on the music, you dance

like a boat
 like a boat builder building a boat (cause you know what to do)?
 No, like a navigator,
 supplied with a boat, and with stars. Sure I'll nail,
 I'll rub and polish with the rest,
 but show me where, show me what
 point me in the right direction. I want to pull
 if I don't pull, I'll fall,
 I'll wither in the ground.

Is it you pull, or I pull? I forgot.
 Where is the music? Coming from? I forgot.
 But when my check hits the concrete,
 something remembers. It's not like it doesn't matter.

Go into the ocean and coming out,
 those are the moments, the Ion yawns, and the cosmos blinks,
 and it jolts.
 Enter the work, I say, and stay there
 平気, waist-deep in the mud channels
 between the kalo, or in my laptop, up over my forehead in docs.
 Up and over, is the title of one of them,
 a paper on a way of singing of a group of people.

Enter the work, I say, and stay there
 —in your laptop, yes—cursor blinking
 hold up the torch among the files, like a sullen
 cellar full of bottles, labeled in the heat of moments
 Meant to get lost, meant to be spit out again,
 shipwrecked, as it were, on a plane,
 of calm, on the sandy Löss that used to be a sea

where the white wine is now in your heart and it is

bottled, green, narrow, spinning

on the sandy Löss that used to be your future,
is now your past, spinning
on your heart like a manta ray, a soft mantle,
a frown that are ears.

Wherever I go, I am Eeyore, am a tourist, am a stone on a leash,
it looks like it anyway, from the depths of my heart
I peer as from a well, from my mud-coloured eyes,
all I do is see.

I'd like to be a sponge, full of nothing, soft to lie on,
but I'm all elbows. I would clean windows,
as soft leather, or a line of rubber, gliding, close and
gone; but I break them.
As a demon, I stop reading, I go away and go away from there,
I mess up cooking by looking at it.
So I started to learn to look out of the corners of my eyes,
head bowed, always in the shade. And as I wound about,
I know where things are,
they take the place of my mind,
curve by curve,

and speed up in the shallows.

*Trees, I don't mean to
tread on your roots, it's just they
're there,
like
I am
Drawing what I need to know*

Obžalovanje / Raje ne vrtam pregloboko

Medtem ko se počasi prebijaš proti postelji
in v drobu zbiraš moč za skok
iz invalidskega vozička ob posteljo in se presedaš vstran,
dokler tvoja roka ne doseže tiste zadeve, za katero se potegneš gor

(opazila sem, da roko le s težavo dvigneš
nad višino ramena, četudi le toliko, da dvigneš kako
čisto lahko stvar, kot so razglednice ranjenega mesa
cvetlic, ki jih zbiraš),

se vlak, s katerem se peljem, ziblje skozi meglene
semmerinške Alpe, kjer ne boš nikoli več pohajala.
Peljemo se skozi Gloggnitz in Dunajsko Novo mesto, kjer si gotovo hodila,

in še nešteta imena, ki jih morda nikdar ne boš prištela
med kandidate za pogrešanje ali obžalovanje,
medtem ko sem jaz še vedno odprta, pripravljena na nepoznane užitke.

Spominjanje reči, ki si mi jih pokazala, vtem
tone skozi želatino časa kakor zadovoljujoč priboljšek,
ki me hrani kot vsaka stvar, namenjena zaužitju.

Saj ni, da je to krivda, da so mi
drobni novi užitki, celo kratkih petnajst minut v parku,
ko se pogovarjam z Gedom skozi njegov mačkast um,

ljubši od strogega sledenja urniku obiskov, ki sem ti ga obljubila.
A zdaj, ko sedim na vlaku stran od tebe, vidim,
da čeprav dandanes bivaš zgolj v trenutku
– tvoj um neustrašen metulj, spominjajoč se življenja nekoga, ki bi utegnil
biti ti –,
ni nemogoče, da si me morda čakala;

morda si pomočnici rekla, naj te pusti sedeti,
ker pride še nekdo, ki ti bo pomagal v posteljo.

Ampak ona ni prišla, namesto tega se je v parku pogovarjala z nekom drugim.
In tako se moraš zdaj premakniti sama. Malo po malem.

FT

Nezmožnost zviševanja cen

Kitajski izvoz strmoglavil

|| Sarah Gordon:

agresivna prodaja življenjskih zavarovanj kreditorejmalcev v ZK

Carillonovi lastniki so si izplačali visoke dividende, čeprav so dobro vedeli, da bodo šli manjši dobavitelji v primeru pogodbenikovega propada v stečaj.

Precenjen in podprt s prevelikim vzvodom kot prevzem britanskih letališč s strani španskega Ferroviala leta 2006,

iztirjen zaradi osebnega sovraštva kot 22 milijard dolarjev vreden dogovor med Facebookom in WhatsAppom, sklenjen leta 2014,

ali nevarno ludističen kot 71 milijard evrov vreden prevzem ABN Ammo s strani RBG in še dveh evropskih skladov/bnk leta 2007

Izračunavanje prevzemne premije je od nekdaj črna magija ...
... večina podjetij ima precej slabo vodstvo.

単位	たんい	enota
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取得	しゅとく	prevzem
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満期	まんき	rok dospelosti
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Drevesa

*Drevesa, nočem vam
stopati po koreninah, le to je,
da so mi v nekolikošno oporo.*

Jonska sem, turistka, kamorkoli grem,
temu pravijo *Neugier*,
pohlep po novem, ampak ni čisto to.
moja babica je rekla, da so gôstje kot ribe, po treh dneh
že smrdijo,
iowska drža – zdi se,
da ne veš, kaj bi z njimi –
 nisem je utegnila dobro spoznati.

Rekla je: nôsi ohlapna oblačila, so bolj seksi,
in oblačila nam je kupovala v prodajalnah cenene korporacije
na drugi strani verige otroško delo
bilo mi je nerodno
dobila sem preveliko sinje modro kratko majico
ki je nisem razumela a sem jo nosila
nosila
nosila

In tudi danes ne vem,
kaj nosim.
Nekaj daš pač nase.

Ti – pravi Hegel
Hegel pravi, ti je včasih ti, včasih je pa jaz –
Nekdo ti nekaj da,
reče, daj to nase,
ti daš to nase,
in živiš v njegovih očeh.

Nekdo prižge glasbo, ti pa plešeš
 kot ladja,
 kot ladjedelec, ki dela ladjo (ker veš, kaj storiti)?
 Ne, temveč kot krmar,
 ki so mu dali ladjo pa tudi zvezde. Jasno, bom žebljico,
 bom drgnila in lakirala skupaj z drugimi,
 ampak pokaži mi, kje, pokaži mi, kaj,
 obrni me v pravo smer. Rada bi vlekla,
 če ne bom vlekla, bom padla,
 usahnila bom na gredi, na kateri sem zrasla.

Boš vlekla ti ali vlečem jaz?	Pozabila sem.
Od kod se sliši? Glasba?	Pozabila sem.

Ampak ko z obrazcem pristanem na betonu,
 se nekaj spomni. Saj vendar ni, da bi bilo vseeno.

Greš v morje, in ko prideš ven,
 so to ti trenutki, lev zazeha, kozmos pomežikne
 in trzne.
 Vstopi v delo, rečem, in ostani tam,
 平気, do pasu v blatnih jarkih
 vmes med kalo ali v mojem prenosniku, čez glavo v dokumentih.
 Nad in čez, to je naslov enega od njih,
 članka o načinu, kako lahko poje skupina ljudi.

Vstopi v delo, rečem, in ostani tam
 – v svojem prenosniku, da – ob utripanju kurzorja
 podrži baklo proti datotekam, kakor v čemerno
 klet, polno steklenic, označenih v zanosu trenutkov,
 ki jim je namenjeno, da se izgubijo, da se spet izpljunejo,
 nasedle, tako rekoč, na planoti
 spokoja, na peščeni puhlici, ki je bila nekoč morje,

kjer je zdaj v tvojem srcu belo vino in je
 ustekleničeno, zeleno, ozko, vrteče se

na peščeni puhlici, ki je bila nekoč tvoja prihodnost,
je zdaj tvoja preteklost, vrteča se
na tvojem srcu kakor manta, mehko ogrinjalo,
mrščenje, ki so ušesa.

Kamorkoli grem, sem Sivček, sem turistka, sem kamen na povodcu,
tako je vsaj videti, iz globin svojega srca
kukam kakor iz vodnjaka, iz oči v barvi blata
ne delam drugega, kot da gledam.

Rada bi bila spužva, polna ničesar, mehko ležišče,
a so me sami komolci. Čistila bi okna,
kot mehko usnje ali gumijasta črta, ki drsi, zaključí in
izgine; a jih razbijam.
Kot demon neham brati, stran grem in še stran od tam,
kuhario pokvarim že zgolj s tem, da jo pogledam.
Zato sem se začela učiti gledati iz kotičkov oči,
s sklonjeno glavo, vselej v senci. In ko se zviram naokrog,
vem, kje so stvari,
krivuljo za krivuljo
zamenjajo moj um

in pospešijo v plitvini.

*Drevesa, nočem vam
tacati po koreninah, le to je, da
so pač tu,
kot
jaz
črtam, kar moram vedeti*

Prevedel Jernej Županič



Foto © Francesca Mantovani

Velibor Čolić

Velibor Čolić (Odžak, 1964) je bosansko-francoski pisatelj. Njegovo življenje in ustvarjanje sta močno zaznamovali izkušnji vojne in bega: po letu 1992 je živel v Franciji, od leta 2021 pa v Bruslju; piše v francoščini. Po nekaterih njegovih delih so nastale dramske priredbe, ki so bile uprizorjene na gledaliških odrih v Franciji, Švici in Belgiji. Čolićeva dela se pogosto gibljejo na meji med spomini in fikcijo, tematizirajo nesmiselnost vojn, bolečino izgube doma, absurdnost birokracije ter proces asimilacije in iskanja identitete v novi družbi. V slovenščini lahko beremo njegove knjige *Sarajevski omnibus*, 2019

(*Sarajevo omnibus*, 2012), *Priročnik za izgnance*, 2020 (*Manuel d'exil*, 2016), *Knjiga odhodov*, 2023 (*Le livre des départs*, 2020) ter *Vojna in dež*, 2025 (*Guerre et pluie*, 2024); vse je prevedla Ana Barič Moder. Njegova dela so bila poleg v slovenščino doslej prevedena še v angleščino, nemščino, španščino, italijanščino, bolgarščino, madžarščino, turščino, albanščino, češčino, portugalsščino, bosanščino, srbsščino in hrvaščino. Leta 2014 je prejel nagrado za uveljavljanje francoskega jezika in književnosti, leta 2024 (za roman *Vojna in dež*) pa nagradi Victorja Rossela in Josepha Kessela.

Velibor Čolić (Odžak, 1964) is a Bosnian French writer. His life and work have been deeply shaped by his experiences of war and displacement. From 1992, he lived in France, and since 2021 he has lived in Brussels. He writes in French. A few of his works have been adapted for the stage and performed in theatres in France, Switzerland, and Belgium. Čolić's works often move between memory and fiction, exploring the senselessness of wars, the pain of losing one's home, the absurdity of bureaucracy, as well as the process of assimilation and the search for identity in a new society. In Slovenian, we can read his books *Sarajevo omnibus*, *Manuel d'exil*

(2016; *A Manual for Exile*), *Le livre des départs* (2020; *The Book of Departures*), and *Guerre et pluie* (2024; *War and Rain*); all were translated by Ana Barič Moder. In addition to Slovenian, his works have so far been translated into English, German, Spanish, Italian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Turkish, Albanian, Czech, Portuguese, Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian. In 2014, he received an award for promoting the French language and literature, and in 2024 (for the novel *Guerre et pluie*), he received the Victor Rossel Prize and the Joseph Kessel Prize.

Manuel d'exil

(extrait du roman)

1

J'ai vingt-huit ans et j'arrive à Rennes avec pour tout bagage trois mots de français – Jean, Paul et Sartre. J'ai aussi mon carnet de soldat, cinquante deutsche marks, un stylo à bille et un grand sac de sport vert olive élimé d'une marque yougoslave. Son contenu est maigre : un manuscrit, quelques chaussettes, un savon difforme (on dirait une grenouille morte), une photo d'Emily Dickinson, une chemise et demie (pour moi une chemise à manches courtes n'est qu'une demi-chemise), un rosaire, deux cartes postales de Zagreb (non utilisées) et une brosse à dents. C'est la fin de l'été 1992 mais je suis habillé comme pour une expédition polaire : deux vestes d'une autre époque, une longue écharpe, aux pieds j'ai mes bottes en daim, avachies, mordues mille fois par la pluie et le vent. Je suis un cavalier léger, un voyageur au visage scellé par un froid métaphysique, cet ultime degré de la solitude, de la fatigue et de la tristesse. Sans émotions, sans peur ni honte.

Devant la gare de Rennes, je pose mon sac et j'observe longuement ma nouvelle terre.

Je murmure une plainte, stupide et enfantine, tout en sachant que les mots ne peuvent rien effacer, que ma langue ne signifie plus rien, que je suis loin, et que ce *loin* est devenu ma patrie et mon destin... J'ai la sensation d'être plongé dans un univers aquatique où chaque geste, chaque mouvement et chaque mot est étouffé dans un silence inquiétant. Comme un rêve dont on ne se réveille pas, un étrange ballet de deux mondes qui ne se touchent pas. Je reprends mon bagage et je descends dans la rue. Je marche lentement tel un promeneur du dimanche. Finalement rien ne me presse. Dans des circonstances moins tragiques j'aurais pu me sentir libre comme un vagabond. Sauf qu'ici je cherche tout simplement un parc et un banc public pour me reposer et enfin envisager ma première nuit à Rennes. Sous mes pieds le petit sentier du parc est blanc, j'ai l'impression de marcher sur des plumes. En ce magnifique après-midi d'été, le chemin est brodé de ces jolies fleurs blanches que l'on appelle, en raison de leur beauté, dentelles de la reine Anne. Une fois assis je sens qu'une pluie lourde comme l'acier se prépare dans le ciel. Il y a peu de nuages, le firmament est to-

ujours bleu et ordinaire, le vent, timide, mais je sens que le bon Dieu concocte dans sa marmite une douche froide pour me souhaiter la bienvenue dans cette ville. Le parc des Tanneurs est calme. À mes pieds les longues ombres des arbres dessinent une étonnante arabesque, pareille à un tableau à peine animé qui se déplace, paresseusement, devant mes yeux. Pendant un bref instant j'essaie de leur donner une forme logique. Je cherche le Tout-Puissant là où il doit être – dans la nature, comme si le Vieux Barbu était lui aussi émerveillé par ce court instant de calme majestueux. Je pense évidemment à la mort. Mais peu, aussi peu que possible. Pour en avoir moins peur, depuis des semaines déjà j'apprends à vivre avec une idée très simple, très peu philosophique : brusquement tout s'arrête et c'est le noir absolu. La mémoire est abolie. J'imagine ce néant comme un endroit apaisé situé quelque part entre le ciel et les feuilles de platanes qui tremblent à peine sous la petite brise. Je fume et dans le moment qui suit les premières gouttes de pluie tout devient clair. Je ne sens plus le banc public, encore moins la colère ou la tristesse. Les gouttes tombent en faisant autant de bruit qu'une armée qui défile. On dirait qu'elles traînent péniblement derrière elles les âmes des défunts. Elles dessinent des roses mouillées sur l'asphalte et forment de petites flaques qui ressemblent à autant de miroirs. Puis la pluie, facétieuse, se met à dribbler avec les boîtes de conserve vides, les sacs en plastique. Il y a en elle quelque chose de lascif, comme dans les yeux des femmes ivres torturées par l'insomnie. Je ne sens plus la peur, mais je ne suis pas plein de courage non plus. Abrité sous un arbre j'écoute la pluie. Désabusé.

Je suis soldat. Je sais distinguer l'odeur du cadavre humain de toutes les autres, je sais que la pire blessure est la blessure dans le ventre et que tous les morts ont le visage, calme et cireux, de celui qui s'en va. Dans les tranchées je ne porte pas de casque. Je tremble tout le temps, je vomis en cachette, j'écris des épitaphes pour mon pays et je porte un drapeau bosniaque sur la manche de ma chemise. Mes camarades disent : « C'est un bon Croate, regarde : il est pour la Bosnie... » Je suis soldat. Le soir je suis ivre et je chante avec mes compagnons nos belles ballades tristes et je rêve de devenir autre chose, peu importe quoi – une fourmi, un arbre, un oiseau, un serpent. Je rêve que je ne suis plus un homme. En vain. Je suis un soldat. J'ai ma Kalachnikov, mon corps inutile, un livre d'Emily Dickinson et une prière de saint Augustin, soigneusement recopiée, en lettres majuscules, dans mon journal de guerre.

J'ai peur. Je fais mes huit heures dans la tranchée avec une accablante flamme froide dans le ventre. Je tire sur un ennemi invisible, après je vomis en cachette et je m'imagine ailleurs, n'importe où. Plus ma situation est désespérée plus mes rêves sont doux. Je rêve de la soie qui épouse et redessine les corps des femmes, je rêve du ciel et de la mer, des matins salés à Dubrovnik et de la neige, des plumes de mon enfance qui décoorent généreusement nos collines, chaque année, sans exception, entre deux Noël, catholique et orthodoxe. Je rêve de trains et de la pluie, des baisers et des plus belles filles de notre lycée.

Je me vois simple comme une pierre ou un arbre dans ce monde et ce temps sans fin. Je m'improviserai le roi des fourmis et des mouches, je suis le commandant des nuages : chaque fois, avant d'aller dans la tranchée, je les convoque à la parade et je leur ordonne de quitter immédiatement notre ciel pour trouver un bleu ailleurs, plus calme et sage. Je suis une cible parfaite. Ma tête, mes jambes ou mon torse sont régulièrement visibles pour les snipers serbes. Je ne sais pourquoi personne ne tire sur moi. Probablement, c'est trop facile. Je ne suis pas un trophée estimable, ma vie finalement vaut moins cher qu'une balle de fusil achetée au marché noir.

Je sais que je ne représente plus rien pour personne. Je ne suis même plus un être humain. Je suis juste une ombre parmi les ombres.

*

Après une longue traversée de l'Europe endormie, j'arrive en France. Je traverse la Croatie, la Slovénie, l'Autriche et l'Allemagne réunifiée. Je traverse le scandaleux silence et l'indifférence du monde, la nuit étoilée et la rosée matinale, les petites routes campagnardes et les longues transversales des autoroutes amollies par la chaleur. Je soulève et transperce les cendres du défunt Rideau de fer, toujours bien visible dans les codes vestimentaires et dans l'architecture. Je pleure derrière une station-service en Autriche, je sanglote devant un mur en briques, sous un néon, sur un air de musique qui me murmure *moonlight shadow*, *moonlight shadow*, bêtement, opiniâtrement comme pour me rappeler, encore une fois, que je suis à la fin de ma première vie. Le commencement de ma deuxième existence, en tant qu'exilé, annonce une longue saison d'émotions clandestines. Une époque dure, froide et adulte.

À l'Ouest rien de nouveau, me dis-je, une frontière puis une autre. Les flics et la douane, la douane et les flics.

Je suis assis sur ce banc public à Rennes. Il pleut de l'eau tiède et bénite sur la ville. Je réalise peu à peu que je suis le réfugié. L'homme sans papiers et sans visage, sans présent et sans avenir. L'homme au pas lourd et au corps brisé, la fleur du mal, aussi éthéré et dispersé que du pollen. Je n'ai plus de nom, je ne suis plus ni grand, ni petit, je ne suis plus fils ou frère. Je suis un chien mouillé d'oubli, dans une longue nuit sans aube, une petite cicatrice sur le visage du monde.

Je suis le réfugié.

Maintenant et demain.

Ici ou ailleurs.

Sous la pluie ou au soleil, été comme hiver.

Devant les hommes et les femmes.

Devant les sages et les fous, auprès des arbres et des herbes.

En ville comme à la campagne.

Je suis le réfugié.

Sur la terre comme au ciel.

Extrait de:

Velibor Čolić, *Manuel d'exil. Comment réussir son exil en trente-cinq leçons*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard (2016), pp. 11-17.

Priročnik za izgnance

(odlomek iz romana)

1

Osemindvajset let mi je in v Rennes prispem opremljen samo s tremi francoskimi besedami – Jean, Paul in Sartre. Imam tudi vojaško knjižico, petdeset *deutsche mark*, kuli in veliko oguljeno olivno zeleno potovalko jugoslovanske znamke. Njena vsebina je skromna: en rokopis, nekaj nogavic, brezoblični kos mila (podoben crknjeni žabi), fotografija Emily Dickinson, ena srajca in pol (zame je srajca s kratkimi rokavi zgolj polovica srajce), rožni venec, dve (nepopisani) razglednici Zagreba in zobna krtačka. Konec poletja 1992 je, toda oblečen sem kot za odpravo na severni pol: nosim dve jakni iz nekega drugega časa in dolg šal, na nogah pa imam pošvedrane škornje iz semiša, neštetokrat prebičane od dežja in vetra. Gol v sedlu sem, popotnik z obrazom, ki ga je izklesal metafizični hlad, ta zadnji stadij osamljenosti, izčrpanosti in gorja. Brez čustev, brez strahu in brez sramu.

Pred železniško postajo v Rennesu odložim potovalko in dolgo motrim svojo novo domovino.

Zamrmram si bedasto in otročjo pritožbo, čeprav vem, da besede ne morejo ničesar izbrisati, da moj jezik nima več nobenega pomena, da sem daleč, da je ta *daleč* postal moja domovina in usoda ... Zdi se mi, da sem se pogreznil v nekakšno podvodno veselje, kjer vsako kretnjo, gib in besedo pogoltne zastrašujoča tišina. Kot sanje, iz katerih se ne zbudiš; kot čuden ples dveh ločenih svetov. Poberem potovalko in stopim na ulico. Hodim počasi kot kakšen nedeljski sprehajalec. Navsezadnje se mi nikamor ne mudi. V manj tragičnih okoliščinah bi se nemara počutil svoboden kot potepuh. Zdaj pa zgolj iščem park in klopco, na kateri bi se spočil in končno premislil, kje bom preživel svojo prvo noč v Rennesu. Stezica v parku pod mojimi nogami je bela, zdi se mi, kot da hodim po puhu. Tega krasnega poletnega popoldneva je potka obrobljena s čudovitimi belimi cvetkami, ki jim zaradi njihove lepote pravijo čipke kraljice Ane. Ko se usedem, zaslutim, da se na nebu pripravlja svinčen dež. Oblakov je malo, nebo je še zmeraj modro in brez posebnosti, veter plah, a kljub temu čutim, da dobri Bog v svojem kotlu cmari hladen tuš, da bi mi zaželel dobrodošlico. V *Parcu des Tanneurs* vlada mir. Dolge sence dreves mi pri nogah rišejo osupljivo arabesko,

podobno pravkar oživljeni liki, ki mi lenobno poplesuje pred očmi. Iz njih se za nekaj trenutkov trudim razbrati smiselno podobo. Vsemogočnega iščem tam, kjer zagotovo tiči – v naravi, kot da je še stari bradač očaran nad tem bežnim trenutkom veličastnega spokoja. Seveda razmišljam o smrti. A malo, karseda malo. Da se je ne bi tako bal, se že tedne navajam na sila preprosto, sila nefilozofsko misel: naenkrat je vsega konec in nastopi popolna tema. Spomin je izbrisan. Ta nič si predstavljam kot tihoten kraj nekje med nebom in listi platan, ki rahlo trepetajo v vetriču. Kadim, in ko priletijo prve kaplje, se vse razjasni. Ne čutim več klopce, še manj jezo ali žalost. Kaplje topotajo kot vojaški mimohod. Zdi se, kot da za sabo trudoma vlečejo duše pokojnikov. Po asfaltu rišejo mokre vrtnice in se nabirajo v zrcalom podobne luže. Nato se začne dež razposajeno poigravati s praznimi pločevinkami, plastičnimi vrečkami. Na njem je nekaj čutnega, kot v očeh pijanih žensk, ki jih muči nespečnost. Ni me več strah, a me tudi ne razganja od poguma. Pod krošnjo drevesa prisluškujem dežju. Brez utvar.

Vojak sem. Na daleč razločim vonj človeškega trupla, vem, da je rana v trebuhu najhujša od vseh in da imajo vsi mrličji спокоjen, voščen obraz odhajajočih. V strelskih jarkih ne nosim čelade. Ves čas se tresem, skrivaj bruham, pišem epitafe domovini, na rokavu srajce nosim bosansko zastavo. Tovariši pravijo: »Glej, to je dober Hrvat, za Bosno je ...« Vojak sem. Ob večerih sem pijan, s soborci prepevam lepe žalostne balade ter sanjarim, da postajam nekaj drugega, karkoli drugega – mravlja, drevo, ptica, kača. Sanjarim, da nisem več človek. Zaman. Vojak sem. Imam svojo kalašnikovko, svoje ničvredno telo, knjigo Emily Dickinson in vojni dnevnik z molitvijo svetega Avgušтина, skrbno prepisano z velikimi črkami.

Strah me je. Svojih osem ur v jarku oddelam z mučnim hladnim žarom v želodcu. Streljam na nevidnega sovražnika, potem skrivaj bruham in si predstavljam, da sem nekje drugje, kjerkoli drugje. Bolj ko je moj položaj brezupen, slajše so moje sanjarije. Sanjarim o svili, ki objema telesa in jim daje nove obrise, sanjarim o nebu in morju, o slanih dubrovniških jutrih in o snegu, puhu mojega otroštva, ki vsako leto med obema božičema, katoliškim in pravoslavnim, bogato okraši naše hribe. Sanjam o vlakih in o dežju, o poljubih in o najlepših puncah z gimnazije.

Predstavljam si, da sem v tem svetu in času brez konca preprost kot drevo ali kamen. Zamišljam si, da sem kralj mravelj in muh, poveljnik oblakov; vsakič, preden grem v jarek, jih skličem v postroj in jim zabičam, naj pri priči zapustijo

naše nebo in poiščejo drugo, mirnejšo, razumnejšo modrino. Popolna tarča sem. Moja glava, noge in trup so pogosto na ogled srbskim ostrostrelcem. Ne vem, zakaj nihče ne strelja name. Najbrž je prelahko. Nisem kaj prida trofeja, moje življenje je navsezadnje vredno manj kot kroglja s črnega trga.

Vem, da nikomur nič več ne pomenim. Niti človek nisem. Sem le senca med sencami.

*

Po dolgem popotovanju skozi spečo Evropo prispem v Francijo. Prečkam Hrvaško, Slovenijo, Avstrijo in ponovno združeno Nemčijo. Prečkam sramotni molk in ravnodušnost sveta, zvezdne noči in jutranjo roso, vaške poti in dolge transverzale od vročine zmehčanih avtocest. Pokukam onkraj pokojne železne zavese, še vedno jasno vidne v modi in arhitekturi. Za neko bencinsko črpalko v Avstriji se razjočem, hlipam pred opečnatim zidom, pod neonsko lučjo, ob napevu, ki mi bedasto, vztrajno šepeta moonlight shadow, moonlight shadow, kot bi me hotel še enkrat opomniti, da sem pri koncu svojega prvega življenja. Z začetkom drugega dejanja, v katerem bom izgnanec, se napoveduje dolgo obdobje zatajevanih čustev. Težek, hladen in odrasel čas.

Na Zahodu nič novega, si rečem, ena meja za drugo. Policaji in carina, carina in policaji.

*

Sedim na tisti klopci v Rennesu. Na mesto se zliva mlačna blagoslovljena voda. Polagoma se zavem, da sem begunec. Človek brez dokumentov in brez obraza, brez sedanjosti in brez prihodnosti. Človek s težkim korakom in strtim telesom, roža zla, nezemeljska in razpršena kot cvetni prah. Nimam več imena, nisem več ne velik ne majhen, nič več sin ali brat. Sem od pozabe premočen pes v dolgi noči brez jutra, brazgotinica na obrazu sveta.

Begunec sem.

Danes in jutri.

Tukaj ali drugje.

V dežju in soncu, tako poleti kot pozimi. Pred moškimi in ženskami.

Pred modreci in norci, med drevjem in v travi. Kakor v mestu, tako na vasi.

Begunec sem.

Kakor v nebesih, tako na zemlji.

Prevedla Ana Barič Moder

Vir:

Velibor Čolić, *Priročnik za izgnance. Uspešno izgnanstvo v petintridesetih korakih.*

Novo mesto: Goga (2020), str. 9–13.

A Manual for Exiles

(excerpt from the novel)

1

I am twenty-eight years old and have arrived in Rennes equipped with just three words of French: Jean, Paul and Sartre. I also have my soldier's service book, fifty German marks, a pen and a great big, tattered olive green suitcase made in Yugoslavia. It contains little: a manuscript, a few socks, a lump of soap (evoking a dead frog), a photograph of Emily Dickinson, a shirt and a half (to my mind, a shirt with short arms is only half a shirt), a rosary, two (blank) postcards of Zagreb and a toothbrush. It's late summer 1992 yet I am dressed as if I'm striking out for the North Pole: I am wearing two jackets from another time and a long scarf, ragged suede boots, battered by rain and wind. Naked in the saddle, I am a traveller whose face has been carved out by a metaphysical cold, by that last stage of loneliness, exhaustion and woe. Without feelings, without fear and without shame.

By the train station in Rennes I set down my suitcase and long contemplate my new homeland.

I mumble a stupid and childish accusation, though I know that words cannot erase a thing, that my language is now meaningless, that I am far away, that this *being far away* has become my homeland and fate... It seems as if I have sunk into some underwater universe, where every gesture, movement and word is devoured by a horrifying silence. Like dreams from which you can't awaken; like a curious dance between two divided worlds. I pick up my suitcase and head out into the street. I walk slowly, like I'm on a Sunday stroll. There's nothing to rush for. In less tragic circumstances I might feel free as a hobo. But now I'm just in search of a park and a bench on which I can rest and reflect on where I can spend my first night in Rennes. The park's path under my feet is white and it seems like I'm walking on featherdown. This fine summer afternoon sees the path edged with beautiful white flowers, Queen Anne's lace. As I sit there, I sense that the skies are readying for a proper rain. There aren't many clouds, the sky is still blue, unremarkable, the wind tame, but I still sense that the good God is stirring his cauldron, preparing a cold shower to bid me welcome. Parc de Tanneurs is quiet. The trees' lengthy shadows form stunning arabesques at my

feet, like newly awakened pictures dancing before my eyes. I try to make some sense out of them. I am seeking the almighty where He's bound to be found—in nature, as if even that old bearded one were conjured up in this fleeting moment of sublime stillness. Death, of course, is what I'm thinking about. But just a little, as little as can be. To get over my fear, for weeks I have been accustoming myself to a simple, most unphilosophical thought: soon, all of this will be over and there will be total darkness. Memory has been erased. I imagine this void as a silent place somewhere among the heavens and the plane leaves rustling in the wind. I smoke and when the first drops fall everything becomes clear. I no longer feel the bench, much less anger or sadness.

The drops clomp like soldiers on the march. It seems as if they are belabouredly dragging the souls of the dead behind them. The drops draw wet roses on the asphalt and they collect in the mirror of repeating puddles. Then the rain begins to play with the empty cans and plastic bags. There's something palpable in them, like in the eyes of a drunken woman afflicted by insomnia. I am no longer afraid, but neither am I bursting with courage. Under the trees, I listen to the rain. No illusions.

A soldier is what I am. I can smell a human corpse a mile away, I know that a stomach wound is the worst of wounds, and that all the dead have the waxy, peaceful guise of the passing. In the trenches I do not wear a helmet. I tremble constantly, swallow my vomit, write epitaphs to the homeland, a Bosnian flag on my sleeve. My fellow soldiers say, "Isn't he a good Croat? This guy who's all for Bosnia..." A soldier is what I am. Drunk at night, I sing lovely, sad ballads with my fellow fighters and dream of becoming something else, anything else – an ant, a tree, a bird, a snake. I dream of no longer being human. In vain. A soldier is what I am. I have my Kalashnikov, my worthless body, a book of Emily Dickinson, and a war diary with the prayer of St. Augustine scrupulously copied in capital letters.

I am afraid. I get through the eight hours in the trenches with a torturous, cold ball in my stomach. I shoot at an invisible enemy, and then I swallow my vomit, and imagine I am somewhere else, anywhere else. The more hopeless my position, the sweeter my dreams. I dream of silk covering bodies and I give them new silhouettes, I dream of the sky and the sea, of salty Dubrovnik mornings and of snow, the featherdown of my childhood that each year between both Christmases, the Catholic and the Orthodox, dusts our hills.

I dream of trains, of kisses and of the prettiest girls from high school.

I imagine that in this world and the bottomless time I am as simple as a tree or a stone. I envision that I am the lord of the ants and the flies, the commander of the clouds; every time I go into the trench, I call them into line and tell them they should immediately leave our sky and seek out another, a calmer, a more lucid, blue. What I target I am. My head, feat and body are often in the Serbian snipers' line of sight. Why do they not shoot at me? I am no trophy, my life after all is worth less than a black-market bullet.

I know that I am nothing to anybody. Not even a man. I am but a shadow among shadows.

*

After a long journey across sleeping Europe I make it to France. I have crossed Croatia, Slovenia, Austria and newly united Germany. I have crossed the shameful silence and indifference of the world, the starry nights and the dewy mornings, the villages and the long paths by the heat-softened highways. I look behind the restful Iron Curtain, whose fashions and architecture are still on display. At a gas station in Austria I break down in tears, snivelling by a brick wall, under a neon light, to a lame and inane melody that is whispering *moonlight shadow, moonlight shadow*, as if I need reminding that I have reached the end of my first life. As the second act, the act of exile begins, foretelling a long stretch of suppressed emotions. A weighty, cold and grown-up time.

All quiet on the western front, I say to myself, one border after another. Police and customs, customs and police.

*

I sit on that bench in Rennes. Tepid, blessed water pours down. Gradually I grasp that I am a refugee. A person without papers and without a face, without a present and without a future. A person whose steps are heavy and whose body is broken, a flower of evil, unearthly, and dispersed like pollen. I no longer have a name, I am neither great nor big nor small, neither son nor brother. I am a dog soaked in oblivion in a long night without a morning, a scar on the face of the world.

I am a refugee.
Today and tomorrow.
Here or elsewhere.
In rain and sun, in summer as in winter. Before men and women.
Before the wise and the crazy, among the trees and in the grass. In the town
as in the village.
I am a refugee.
In heaven as it is on earth.

Translated by Jason Blake



Foto © Jennifer Freund

Stefan Feinig

Stefan Feinig (Celovec, 1987) je koroško-slovenski pesnik, pisatelj in esejist. Študiral je publicistiko in komunikologijo pa tudi filozofijo, anglistiko in psihologijo. Za njegovo literarno delo so značilni literarno eksperimentiranje, družbena kritika in dvojezičnost, saj piše tako v nemščini kot v slovenščini. Osrednje teme njegove pisave so vsakdanje družbene razmere, večjezičnost in krhkost človekovega bivanja v sodobnem svetu. Doslej je objavil zbirko kratke proze *Banalitäten des Wahnsinns* (2015; Banalnosti blaznosti), kriminalni roman *Das wilde Schaf* (2016; Divja ovca),

dvojezični pesniški projekt *rob krožnika in obzorje / Horizont und Tellerrand* (2018), dvojezično epsko pesnitev 374 (2021), roman *Vampirji svetlobe* (2022), ep *Made in China* (2024), esej *Der apokalyptische Bullshit in postfaktischen Zeiten. Ein Versuch über die Ära Trump* (2025; Apokaliptično sranje v postfaktičnem času. Poskus o Trumpovi dobi) in zbirko kratkih zgodb *Pod težo miline* (2026). Stefan Feinig je član umetniškega kolektiva Kopp23, ki v iskanju novih izraznih oblik združuje literaturo, glasbo, tisk na tekstil, ples in kabaret.

Stefan Feinig (Klagenfurt, 1987) is a Carinthian Slovenian poet, writer, and essayist. He studied journalism and communication studies, as well as philosophy, English, and psychology. His literary work is characterized by literary experimentation, social criticism, and bilingualism, as he writes both in German and Slovenian. The central themes of his writing are everyday social conditions, multilingualism, and the fragility of human existence in the contemporary world. To date, he has published a collection of short prose titled *Banalitäten des Wahnsinns* (2015; Banalities of Madness), the crime novel *Das wilde Schaf* (2016; The Wild Sheep), the bilingual poetry project *rob krožnika*

in obzorje / Horizont und Tellerrand (2018; The Horizon and the Rim of the Plate), the bilingual epic poem 374 (2021), the novel *Vampirji noči* (2022; Vampires of Night), the epic *Made in China* (2024), and the essay *Der apokalyptische Bullshit in postfaktischen Zeiten. Ein Versuch über die Ära Trump* (2025; Apocalyptic Bullshit in Post-Factual Times: An Essay on the Trump Era) as well as a short story collection, *Pod težo miline* (2026; Under the Weight of Gentleness). Stefan Feinig is a member of the Kopp23 art collective, which combines literature, music, textile printing, dance, and cabaret in its search for new forms of expression.

Sektorska luč v d-molu

Pobira kamenčke. Tiho in zamišljeno zbira prav tiste kamenčke, ki metafizično štrlijo iz pokrajine v njeno vidno polje. Na prvi pogled se zdi, da v njenem zbiranju ni nobenega sistema, pa vendar moja hčerka iz neskončne množice raztresenih kamnov izbira le točno določene kamenčke. Katera merila izbire pri tem upošteva, mi bo verjetno za vedno ostalo skrito.

V tišini, ki jo objema, skuša metati ploske kamenčke tako, da bi odskakovali po vodi. Toda ne uspe ji. Tišina je vseobsegajoča in zvok kamenčkov, ko padejo v vodo, ne da bi zares poskakovali, je prav tako del te elementarne tišine.

Prisluškujem globoko v človeško in pokrajinsko tišino. Zdi se mi, da zveni kot molovski ton. Molovske lestvice imajo značilno temnejši, melanholičen ali žalosten zven v primerjavi z durovskimi.

Življenje je brezvetrno. In morje tudi. Majhni rakci znova in znova prišivajo senco k tlom, medtem ko moj velikanski odsev v soncu plava kot fatamorgana skozi prostor te obmorske tišine. Nenadoma zapiha lahen vetrič.

Predstavljam si, kako se veter na vodi počasi začne izražati. V poševni pisavi vztrajno vadi nove črke. Veter se mi zdi v tem trenutku kot jezik, enako dragocen kot človekova zapisana beseda.

Narava se vpisuje v svet. In nenehno piše neko zgodbo življenja, ki se nikoli ne bo končala.

Ob pisanju je rjavo listje okoli nas prav tako dragoceno kot mrtvomorski zvitki. In kamenčki, vejice in listi, ki jih hčerka zлага v svoj nahrbtnik, nosijo modrost, ki ni nič manj pomembna od tiste, ki je vela iz Aleksandrijske knjižnice.

Nenadoma me oplazi gotovost, da nas bo narava – ne glede na to, kar ljudje ustvarjamo ali počnemo – vedno preživela. Da nas je že preživela in nas še bo, medtem ko sama sega neskončno v preteklost in prihodnost hkrati.

»Mali rakci so veliko starejši od nas ljudi,« ji rečem. »Lahko jih pobiješ, kolikor hočeš, pa nas bodo vseeno preživeli ... Rakci samo čakajo, da ljudje izginejo, veš? Da otroci odrastejo, postanejo starejši in še starejši – a njihovo otroštvo se nikoli ne bo končalo, ne glede na to, koliko let bodo nosili na hrbtu.« Tako ji razlagam naprej, a pravzaprav ne vem, kaj točno želim s tem povedati.

Hči se nasmehne in mi poda kamen. Z razdalje sto petdeset milijonov kilometrov ga greje sonce. Brez namena, bi morda domnevali mnogi, a ni rečeno, da tega ne počne iz dobre.

»*Sten*,« reče hči po švedsko.

»In kako se temu reče po slovensko?« jo vprašam.

Za trenutek razmisli, nato odkima.

»*Jag vet inte*,« mi pojasni v švedščini, da slovenske besede za to ne pozna, čeprav sem ji že večkrat razložil in je v drugih situacijah besedo kamen tudi že večkrat uporabila.

»Kamen,« rečem. »Temu se reče kamen.«

»*Sten*, kamen, *Stein*,« reče in položi kamen v roki na drug kamen na tleh, da bi zgradila stolp. A jaz si predstavljam, da bo iz vseh svojih zbranih predmetov prej ali slej zgradila hišo.

»*Voda heißt Wasser*,« mi nenadoma razloži. »*Vatten*.«

Jeziki, ki jih govori, iz nje kar vrejo v svet. Vsi hkrati. A ne z enako silovitostjo. Njena večjezičnost je bolj podobna sektorski luči, ki ne sveti enakomerno po celotnem obzorju, temveč v različnih smereh oddaja svetlobo v različnih barvah in z različno intenzivnostjo.

Predstavljam si, da je večjezičnost popolnoma nov način orientacije v svetu. Nato spet pomislim na hišo, ki jo gradi. Hiša, ki se začne s stolpom. A postala naj bi hiša. To vem, ker je to zdaj njena tema. Ker se je pravkar naučila narisati hišo.

»*Hus*, hiša, *Haus*,« reče in za trenutek imam čuden občutek, kot da bi mi znala brati misli.

V zahodni kulturi je jezik že od časa Odiseja vedno bil poskus najti dom – domovino, ki v trenutku, ko jo poimenuješ, morda sploh ne obstaja več.

Je domovina nekaj, kar obstaja, šele ko o njej znova in znova pripovedujemo, kot pripovedujemo zgodbo?

Medija, ki nosita Odiseja po njegovi dolgi poti, sta morje in jezik. Oboje se zdi neskončno.

Bog morja je Odiseja preklel, zato njegova vrnitev domov traja deset let. Ko se bogovi končno odločijo, da se sme vrniti, mora vse preizkušnje ponovno podživeti, ko sinu pripoveduje o svojem blodenju po svetu. Odisej pripoveduje in pripoveduje, da bi lahko imel prihodnost, da bi se lahko vrnil v domovino, v kraj, kjer pa ne bo več doma, ne glede na to, kolikokrat bo svojo zgodbo pripovedoval.

Ali ni bilo Odisejevo blodenje pravzaprav le čuden beg, ki si ga je sam naložil, da nikoli ne bi prispel v domovino? Ali pa je dom nekaj povsem drugega?

Nekaj, kar si moraš najprej pripovedovati – kadarkoli, kjerkoli, v kateremkoli jeziku?

Morje je odprta površina, ki vabi, da po njej dolgo tava domišljija, brez prisile, čisto po svoji volji. Tako v vodi kakor tudi v besedah se zlahka izgubiš, potoneš in popolnoma izgineš, do neprepoznavnosti.

Pa ni v tem tudi neka lepota?

Ali še bolje: če lepota sploh je kaj, če sploh kaj pomeni – a ni prav to lepota?

Se izgubiti. Zabloditi.

Kjerkoli.

Se znova odkriti.

Se potem spet najti. Se spet najti.

Kjerkoli.

Kadarkoli.

V kateremkoli jeziku.

Imeti štiri leta in povsod zbirati znake. Brati svet, resnično brati življenje: v produ, vodi, kamnih, trstičju, pljuskanju valov in žuborečem kipenju plime in oseke – in si iz tega življenja zgraditi svet v obliki zgodbe.

Imeti štiri leta in ujeti življenje v vsakem pogledu, si vtisniti v spomin nekaj svetega, s stvarnostjo, ki je skoraj božanska in stalna – sredi čutne minljivosti pogleda, ki pa v svojem spominjanju piše zgodbo, ki traja večno.

Pomislim na prvotno morje, iz katerega so se rodile prve bakterije. Bilo je okoli sedemintrideset stopinj Celzija.

Spomnim se, kako me je moja hči na poti sem držala za roko. Najine roke so bile prav tako tople – okoli sedemintrideset stopinj Celzija.

Predstavljam si, kako je bilo nekoč, pred tisoči let, ko še ni bilo ljudi, ki bi ta kraj lahko imenovali lepega ali grdega, ga opisovali – saj še ni bilo pojmov, za karkoli že.

Nato si predstavljam, kako bo nekoč v prihodnosti. V svoji domišljiji narišem prihodnost, v kateri mene ne bo več.

Kaj bo ostalo?

V pretresljivih sanjah, ki so me pred leti doletele v tujini, v Jokohami, se sto let po tem, ko sem skrivnostno izginil iz časa, vrnem v hišo svojih staršev in upam, da bom tam srečal potomce svojega brata, ki bi me morda še poznali. Morda se je vendarle ohranila moja zgodba – zgodba davnega prednika, ki je nekoč preprosto izginil iz prostora in časa.

V tej viziji sem prepričan, da je moj brat še govoril o meni, potem ko sem nenadoma izginil, saj sva si bila zelo blizu. Ganjenost nad to zgodbo, ki so jo njegovi otroci najbrž imeli za norost, jih je privedla do tega, da so jo pripovedovali naprej – tudi svojim otrokom. In tako naprej.

Na koncu sanjske sekvence stojim pred hišo staršev, ki je – v skladu z neko absurdno logiko sanj – še vedno videti natanko tako kot nekoč, torej danes.

Pozvonim in čakam. Medtem si zamišljam, kako bi bilo, če bi pristopil neznanec in povedal, da je brat mojega prapradedca.

Sporočilo in pomen teh pretresljivih sanj mi nista povsem jasna. Nista mi bila že takrat – in sta mi danes še manj. Morda pa instinktivno vem, kje so moje korenine. Ali gre le za strastno spraševanje, kaj bo ostalo od mene.

Kaj bo ostalo?

Zgodba?

Legenda?

Besede?

Pripovedi?

Pot do majhne sreče je skrita v penjenju, v valovih morja, v nemih kamnih, ki obrobljajo obalo. Pretekli dnevi še nikoli niso bili tako gosto nakopičeni, kot so okoli samotne hiše, ki jo je pravkar zgradila moja hči.

Kaj bo od tega ostalo?

S palico napišem nekaj v pesek. Besedo, ki se je še spominjam iz otroštva.

Moja hči me vprašujoč pogleda, nato se zasmeji in z vejico sledi črkam. Beseda iz mojega otroštva naj postane tudi njena.

Beseda otroštva.

Ker se tega spominjam, vem, da sem bil nekoč otrok. Pa vendar se mi ta otrok danes ne zdi več popolnoma jaz. Nisem več prepričan, ali so podobe, ki mi krožijo po glavi, res moji otroški spomini – ali pa mi jih je kdo pripovedoval, jaz pa sem jih prevzel v spomin. Sem vse to res doživel? Ali sem si le izmislil? Morda sem nekje prebral in pozabil, kje.

Poskušam najti čas, ki mi je ušel, ki je ostal ujet v otroku, ki sem nekoč bil.

Morda domovina ni kraj, ampak čas.

In življenje?

Jezik.

Več jezikov.

Beseda.

Pisanje.

Pisanje je ena sama valovita črta, val, ki prihaja od daleč, ki se je začel dolgo pred menoj in bo tekel še dolgo po meni. Prav zato, ker je element jezika tekočina. Počasna, globoka, latentna, nosilna, silovita, začetna, potopna, shranjujoča, življenje dajajoča, neizčrpna, zrcalna, pošasti zgoščajoča in raztaplajoča se.

Voda je kot jezik, nenehno v pretoku.

Naivno je verjeti, da zgodbe, ki si jih vedno znova pripovedujemo, ne vplivajo na nas, da nas ne oblikujejo, tako kot voda oblikuje pokrajino. In enako naivno je misliti, da te zgodbe nimajo lastne volje.

Včasih se v meni pojavijo stvari, o katerih sem se naučil, da jih imenujemo otroški spomini, ker se zdijo izjemno intimni. Sledi poskus razpletanja niti, ki so me stkale. Nepredelane zgodbe, ki so jih moji starši odložili vame.

Spominjam se mnogih stvari, pomešanih, z različno intenzivnostjo.

Sektorska luč.

Nato pogledam proti morju in pomislim, kako bo vse to, vse moje misli, vse moje življenje, izginito.

Kam?

Plima me zalije. Oseka me odnese.

Kam?

Ali plima prinaša nove stvari?

Kaj?

V katerem jeziku?

S hčerjo tiho hodiva drug ob drugem, ne govoriva. Vsak zase prepoznavava mrtve živali, ki jih je morje zbralo ob obali.

Tišina.

Tišina je vseobsegajoča, tudi šum morja je neka vrsta tišine.

Med nama plavajo ostanki, naplavine najininih sledi, ki ležijo v poltemi. Sledi, po katerih sva hodila, po katerih bova še hodila, in tudi vse tiste sledi, ki si jih nikoli nisva upala narediti.

Spominjam se.

Kadarkoli mislimo, da ustvarjamo spomine, se v resnici ukvarjamo z oblikami postajanja.

Postajanje.

Spominjam se pesmi iz otroštva – in nenadoma sem spet popolnoma otrok.

Sector Light in D Minor

She gathers pebbles. Quietly, reflectively, she selects precisely those little stones that rise, almost metaphysically, from the landscape into her field of vision. At first glance, there seems to be no system in her collecting, and yet my daughter, from the endless multitude of scattered stones, chooses only certain pebbles. What criteria guide her selection will likely remain hidden from me forever.

In the silence that enfolds her, she tries to skip flat stones across the water. But she remains unsuccessful. Silence is all around us, and even the sound of pebbles dropping into the sea without truly skipping is part of that elemental ease.

I listen deeply to the silence of both human presence and landscape. The minor scales, after all, is marked by a darker, more melancholic, more sorrowful tone than a major.

Life is still. And the sea remains silent too. Tiny crabs keep stitching shadows to the ground, while my own immense reflection drifts through the sunlight like a mirage across this coastal hush. Then, suddenly, a faint breeze begins to stir.

I imagine the wind upon the water slowly finding its own voice and language. In a slanting script it patiently practices new letters on the surface of the sea. In that moment, the wind seems like language itself, as precious as the written word of humankind.

Nature writes itself into the world. And it endlessly tells a story of life that will never come to an end. In this act of writing, the brown leaves around us are as valuable as the Dead Sea Scrolls. And the pebbles, twigs, and leaves my daughter places into her backpack carry a wisdom no less significant than that which once radiated from the Library of Alexandria.

Suddenly I am seized by the certainty that nature—whatever human beings may make or do—will always outlast us. It has already outlived us, and will continue to do so, while it is stretching itself without limit into past and future at once.

“Little crabs are much older than we humans,” I tell her. “You can kill as many as you like, but they will still outlive us... The crabs are merely waiting for humans to disappear, you know? For children to grow up, to become older and older—though their childhood will never end, no matter how many years they

carry upon their backs.” I go on explaining, although in truth I do not know exactly what I mean by it. Do I?

My daughter smiles and hands me a sun-warmed stone. The sun has warmed it. From a distance of one hundred and fifty million kilometers. Without purpose, perhaps, one might think, albeit though perhaps not without kindness.

“*Sten*,” my daughter says in Swedish.

“And what is that in Slovene?” I ask.

She thinks for a moment, then shakes her head.

“*Jag vet inte*,” she explains in Swedish that she does not know the Slovene word for it, though I have explained it to her many times, and though she has used the Slovene word for stone, *kamen*, often enough in other situations.

“*Kamen*,” I say. “That is the Slovene word for stone.”

“*Sten*, *kamen*, stone,” she says, placing the stone in her hand atop another one on the ground, as if building a tower. Yet I imagine that she would rather build a house from all the things she has collected.

“*Voda* means water,” she suddenly explains to me. “*Vatten*.”

The languages she speaks simply well up out of her into the world. All at once. In chaos. Yet not with equal force. Her multilingualism is more like a sector light, one that does not illuminate the horizon uniformly, but sends its beams in different directions, in different colors and with different intensities.

I imagine that multilingualism is an entirely new way of orienting oneself in the world. Then I think again of the house she is building. A house that begins as a tower, but is meant to become a house. I know this, because that is her theme at the moment. Because she has just learned to draw a house.

“*Hus*, *hiša*, house,” she says, and for a moment I feel as though she can read my thoughts.

In Western culture, language has, since the time of Odysseus, always been an attempt to find a home—a homeland that may no longer exist the very moment we name it.

Is homeland something that comes into being only when we tell it, over and over, as a story?

The media that bear Odysseus on his long journey are the sea and language. Both seem infinite.

Poseidon curses Odysseus, and so his return home lasts ten years. When the gods finally decide that he may return, he must relive all his ordeals once again

as he tells his son of his wandering. Odysseus tells and tells, so that he may have a future, so that he may return to his homeland—to a place where he will no longer be at home, no matter how often he repeats his tale.

Was Odysseus's wandering perhaps only a strange exile he imposed upon himself, so that he might never truly arrive home? Or is home something altogether different? Something that must first be spoken—whenever, wherever, in whatever language?

The sea is an open surface inviting the imagination to roam across it for long stretches, freely, without compulsion, entirely of its own will. In water as in words, one can easily lose oneself, sink, and disappear utterly, beyond recognition.

And is there not beauty in this too?

Or rather: if beauty is anything at all, if it means anything at all—is that not precisely what beauty is?

To get lost. To wander astray.

Anywhere.

To find oneself.

To find oneself again.

Anywhere.

Any time.

In any language.

Beautiful is:

To be four years old and gather signs everywhere. To read the world, to truly read life: in the gravel, in the water, in the stones, in the reeds, in the breaking of waves and the murmuring swell of the tide—and from this life to build a world in the shape of a story.

To be four years old and catch life in every glance, to imprint something sacred upon memory, with a reality that is almost divine and constant—amid the sensory transience of the gaze, which, in remembering, writes a story that lasts forever.

I think of the primordial sea from which the first bacteria were born. It was about thirty-seven degrees Celsius.

I remember how my daughter held my hand on the way here. Our hands, too, were warm—about thirty-seven degrees Celsius.

I imagine what it was like long ago, thousands of years ago, when there were no humans around to call this place beautiful or ugly, to describe it—because there were not yet concepts for anything at all.

Then I imagine the future. In my mind I draw a future in which I am no longer there.

What will remain?

In the unsettling dream that came to me years ago abroad, in Yokohama, I return one hundred years after I have mysteriously vanished from time to my parents' house, hoping to meet the descendants of my brother there, who might still know me. Perhaps my story has survived after all—the story of a distant ancestor who once simply disappeared from space and time.

In this vision, I am certain that my brother continued speaking of me after I vanished, because we were very close. Moved by the story, which his children probably took for madness, they passed it on—to their children as well. And so on.

At the end of the dream sequence, I stand before my parents' house, which, according to the absurd logic of dreams, still looks exactly as it once did, that is, as it does today.

I ring the bell and wait. All the while, I imagine what it would be like if a stranger came up and said he was my great-great-grandfather's brother.

The message and meaning of that unsettling dream are not entirely clear to me. Not then. And even less so now. Perhaps I simply know, instinctively, where my roots lie. Or perhaps I am only passionately asking what will remain of me.

And what will remain?

A story?

A legend?

Words?

Narratives?

The road to small happiness lies hidden in the foam, in the waves of the sea, in the silent stones that line the shore. The days gone by have never been so densely gathered as around the solitary house my daughter has just built.

What will remain of this?

With a stick, I write something in the sand. A word from childhood that I still remember.

My daughter looks at me inquiringly, then laughs and traces the letters with

a twig. The word of my childhood should become hers as well.

A childhood word.

Because I remember it, I know that I was once a child. And yet that child no longer seems entirely to be me. I am no longer sure whether the images circling in my head are truly my own childhood memories—or whether someone told them to me, and I simply took them into memory. Did I really experience all of this? Or did I merely invent it? Perhaps I read it somewhere and have forgotten where.

I try to find the time that has slipped away from me, that remains trapped in the child I once was.

Perhaps homeland is not a place, but time.

And life?

Language.

Many languages.

Words.

Writing.

And writing is one long wavering line, a wave coming from far away, one that began long before me and will continue long after I am gone. Precisely because the element of language is fluid: slow, deep, latent, carrying, forceful, primordial, engulfing, storing, life-giving, inexhaustible, mirror-like, harboring monsters, and dissolving.

Water is like language, forever in motion.

It is naïve to believe that the stories we tell ourselves again and again have no effect on us, that they do not shape us the way water shapes a landscape. And it is just as naïve to think that these stories have no will of their own.

Sometimes things arise within me that I have learned to call childhood memories, because they seem so intimate. Traces of an attempt to unravel the threads that have woven me. Unprocessed stories my parents deposited within me.

I remember many things, mixed together, with varying intensity.

Sector light.

Then I look out to the sea and think of how all this—all my thoughts, all my life—will disappear.

Where to?

The tide washes over me. The ebb carries me away.

Where to?

Does the tide bring new things?

What things?

In what language?

My daughter and I walk quietly side by side, without speaking. Each of us recognizes the dead animals the sea has gathered along the shore.

Silence.

Silence is all-encompassing; even the sound of the sea is a kind of silence.

Between us: the drifting of remnants, the debris of our traces, lying in the half-light. The traces we have walked, the traces we will still pick up, and also all those tracks we never dared to follow.

I remember.

Whenever we think we are making memories, we are in fact dealing with forms of becoming.

Becoming.

I remember a song from my childhood—and suddenly I am once again entirely a child.

Translated by the author



Foto © Adolfo Frediani

Helena Janeczek

Helena Janeczek (München, 1956) je italijanska pisateljica in pesnica. Rodila se je v družini poljskih Judov, ki je preživela holokavst. Leta 1983 se je preselila v Italijo in po pesniškem prvencu *Ins Freie* (1989; Na prostem) začela pisati prozo v italijanščini. V romanih *Lezioni di tenebra* (1997; Nauki teme), *Cibo* (2002; Hrana) in *Le rondini di Montecassino* (2010; Lastovke Montecassina) obravnava dediščino 20. stoletja, spomine in odrinjeno zgodovino. Leta 2018 je prejela nagrado strega za roman *La ragazza con la Leica* (2017; Dekle z leico) o fotografinji Gerdi Taro, ubiti

med špansko državljansko vojno. Ta uspešnica je prevedena v več jezikov, večina njenega dela pa je dostopna tudi v francoščini, nemščini in španščini. Njena najnovejša knjiga *Il tempo degli imprevisti* (2024; Čas nepredvidljivosti), sestavljena iz štirih novel, je prejela več italijanskih nagrad za kratko prozo. Helena Janeczek je soustanoviteljica literarnega bloga Nazione Indiana in organizatorica literarnega festivala SI – Scrittrici Insieme, posvečenega književnosti in intelektualnemu delu žensk. Deluje kot neodvisna urednica in živi v Gallarateju blizu Milana.

Helena Janeczek (Munich, 1956) is an Italian writer and poet. She was born into a family of Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust. In 1983, she moved to Italy, and after her debut poetry collection *Ins Freie* (1989; Out in the Open), she began writing prose in Italian. In her novels *Lezioni di tenebra* (1997; Lessons of Darkness), *Cibo* (2002; Food), and *Le rondini di Montecassino* (2010; The Swallows of Montecassino), she explores the legacy of the 20th century, memories, and neglected history. In 2018, she received the Strega Prize for her novel *La ragazza con la Leica* (2017; The Girl with the Leica), about the photographer Gerda Taro, who was

killed during the Spanish Civil War. This bestseller has been translated into several languages, and most of her work is also available in French, German, and Spanish. Her latest book, *Il tempo degli imprevisti* (2024; The Time of the Unpredictable), a collection of four novellas, was awarded several Italian prizes for short fiction. Helena Janeczek is a co-founder of the literary blog *Nazione Indiana* and the organizer of the *SI – Scrittrici Insieme* literary festival, dedicated to women's literature and intellectual work. She works as a freelance editor and lives in Gallarate, near Milan.

Confini

Credo che invitandomi a parlare di confini culturali abbiate pensato alla mia biografia: nata in Germania da genitori ebrei-polacchi, sopravvissuti alla Shoah e finiti in un campo profughi in Baviera. Come è consueto nelle famiglie di immigrati, i miei a volte mi diedero da correggere delle lettere formali perché il tedesco lo sapevo meglio, era proprio la mia materia preferita. Dopo la maturità mi trasferii a Milano e mi immatricolai all'università Statale. Passai senza problemi l'esame d'ammissione per stranieri che accertava la conoscenza dell'italiano. Infatti ero cresciuta con quel tipo di bilinguismo per cui una lingua l'hai studiata con tanto di regole grammaticali e l'altra appresa come una bambina immersa nell'acqua del Lago Maggiore per imparare a nuotare. La *full-immersion* dei periodi trascorsi sin da piccola in Italia rendeva il mio italiano fluido ma imperfetto, come del resto le mie bracciate a stile libero.

Nel 1989 – avevo da poco compiuto 26 anni – la casa editrice Suhrkamp di Francoforte pubblicò il mio esordio, una smilza raccolta di poesie con una copertina elegante. Le avevo scritte abitando già a Milano, però fedele agli autori di lingua tedesca che mi ero portata nel bagaglio. I confini del Paese dove mi ero trasferita non combaciavano con quelli letterari ai quali mi sentivo legata da un vincolo tanto profondo quanto, appunto, immateriale. L'Italia, però, era il posto dove avevo scelto di vivere e così lasciai che l'italiano diventasse a poco a poco la mia prima lingua. La lingua delle mie relazioni personali e dei miei studi, la lingua delle mie prime esperienze lavorative e infine della mia scrittura. Dopo l'uscita di *Lezioni di tenebra* nel 1997 non ho mai più usato il tedesco come lingua letteraria. Quindi sì, incarno il multilinguismo, la transculturalità, le appartenenze plurime e fluide. Insomma, transitare i confini culturali per me è stato normale sin da bambina, ma fisicamente sono una persona molto stanziata. Risiedo a Gallarate da oltre metà della vita, abito da più di vent'anni nello stesso appartamento. Magari proprio perché mi è impossibile rispondere concisamente alla domanda “di dove sei?” mi sento tantissimo a casa nella mia casa. Passo le giornate davanti al computer, connessa al mondo via internet. Però se guardo fuori dalla finestra in una giornata limpida, dietro ai tetti della città, dietro la chiesetta in cima alla collina della frazione di Crenna, vedo la catena del Monte Rosa. E quasi mai mi rendo conto che laggiù, in fondo, vedo il confine.

Ecco perché, abituata ai viaggi che terminano in un aeroporto dell'Unione Europea, le volte che prendo il TiLo ("Ti" per Ticino, "Lo" per Lombardia) per andare Lugano anziché a Malpensa ripeto spesso il medesimo errore. Non disattivo il roaming alla stazione di confine di Gaggiolo-Stabio. Il treno sta fermo un po' di più, passano degli uomini in uniforme che a me non hanno mai chiesto nemmeno i documenti.

Le parti italiane della Svizzera sono italiane sin dalla fine del Cinquecento, quando gli elvetici le strapparono al Ducato di Milano. Il Canton Ticino, più antico dell'Italia unita, nasce nel 1803. Però, di qua e di là, sono rimasti uguali: la lingua (italiano), il dialetto (lombardo occidentale), la religione predominante (cattolica), la forma e gli stili architettonici dei centri storici, la cucina a base di polenta, risotto, pesci di lago. L'assenza di un confine culturale palpabile, insieme alla prossimità geografica, è il primo motivo per cui mi dimentico del roaming e pure del franco svizzero, problema ormai aggirabile con la carta di credito.

I leghisti ticinesi si distinguono dai leghisti lombardi giusto perché nella programmatica difesa dei confini prendono di mira i frontalieri che rubano il lavoro ai nativi. La difesa della tradizione autoctona ("Sì alla polenta, no al cous cous" da entrambi i lati) invece farebbe solo ridere se la convergenza, stavolta collaborativa, tra i due identitarismi regionali non avesse avuto bisogno di ribattezzare il perimetro dove gli scambi sono sempre avvenuti. Oggi sulle mappe di quest'area tra la Lombardia e la Svizzera troneggia, altisonante, il nome proto-celtico e latino di "Regio Insubria". Le linee del TiLo la attraversano al placido ritmo del treno che ferma in ogni stazione.

L'autonomia politica della Svizzera, il suo estremo conservatorismo (in materia di naturalizzazioni e non solo), la sua neutralità e, non per ultimo, il suo modello federalista, fornirono garanzie così forti da non generare alcun bisogno di segnare un confine culturale. Per secoli, i ticinesi, in maggioranza molto poveri, potevano gravitare sulla Lombardia (e il Nord Italia in generale) per motivi di sussistenza, eppure quelli scambi generarono anche un reciproco arricchimento culturale. I nati di là restavano liberi cittadini elvetici, mentre i loro omonimi oltreconfine diventarono, di volta in volta, sudditi spagnoli, francesi o austriaci. Lo stesso assetto confederale tutelava la multiculturalità del Canton Grigioni: con le sue tre lingue (italiano, tedesco, romancio) e la coesistenza tuttora pressoché paritetica del cattolicesimo e del protestantesimo, dato che ogni comune era sovrano in materia di religione.

Il romancio diventò lingua ufficiale nel 1938, proprio per rivendicare l'indipendenza culturale svizzera di fronte alle rivendicazioni fasciste su ogni zona "italica" di confine, incluso, ovviamente, il Canton Ticino. L'invasore alle porte non bastò tuttavia a fermare una tendenza di lunga durata che vede il romancio perdere continuamente terreno a vantaggio del tedesco oggi parlato dal 74% dei grigionesi. Da quelle parti non è colpa delle gabbie etniche, come le chiamava Alex Langer, bensì di un'egemonia corrispondente al prestigio, all'utilità e pure alla libertà di fare figli fuori dal gruppo di appartenenza etnico-linguistico. Dove il 60% degli abitanti (dei quali oltre il 20% straniero) lavora nel settore turistico, è pressoché scontato che le nuove generazioni parlino non solo il tedesco, bensì anche l'inglese meglio del romancio ascoltato da un nonno e, magari, pure studiato a scuola.

Perdute le comuni parlate venete in seguito all'esodo dalmata, oggi si mastica lo stesso inglese turistico in un bar di Rovigno e in uno di Caorle, senza che tale omologazione precluda che i baristi croati possano essere grandi nazionalisti e i baristi veneti rinnovare il voto alla Lega. Non cambia niente se tutti guardano Sanremo o vanno al sushi *all you can eat* o comprano dagli ambulanti il telo da mare maghrebino, senza per questo diventare meno razzisti o comunque meno legati alla propria identità locale.

E quindi non serve se la parrocchia o il comitato di quartiere organizza una festa dove ognuna porta "il suo piatto", il cous cous, la pasta al forno, le empanadas, le polpette della nonna? Chi lo sa, visto che la differenza non sta nelle ricette, ma nelle relazioni. I confini immateriali sono permeabili, lo è ogni cultura viva.

Un pomeriggio di qualche anno fa presi il solito treno dei pendolari per andare all'inaugurazione della rassegna letteraria *La Milaneseiana*. Non avendo pranzato fui tentata dal kebabbaro in piazza della stazione, ma in quella giornata afosa non era proprio il caso. Feci un cenno di saluto al titolare curdo seduto con alcuni clienti a un tavolino sotto i portici e mi infilai nel bar tabacchi dentro la stazione per ripiegare su un Magnum. Forse era domenica, c'era molta fila alla cassa. Mentre aspettavo il mio turno, osservai il via vai sulla piazza antistante, dove il sindaco aveva predisposto il taglio degli alberi per sostituirli con grandi pali illuminanti e panche marmoree sulle quali fosse impossibile bivaccare. La piazza è comunque rimasta luogo di spaccio e di bevute della popolazione "extracomunitaria" nonché il punto di ritrovo dei ragazzini senza patente e con

pochi soldi. Era assolutamente normale sentirli ripetere “ueeh bro”, nella loro sbracata cadenza lombarda, come era normale che le compagnie aggregassero ragazzi di tutti i colori. Non c’era nessun motivo per ricordarsi di quei saluti e quelle pacche se, seduta nella platea piena del Piccolo Teatro, non mi fossi d’improvviso accorta che l’unica persona nera nella sala era quella per cui ero venuta a Milano: il premio Nobel, lassù, sotto le luci del palco.

A volte il tragitto ferroviario dalla decaduta provincia al centro della metropoli ricca di tutto somiglia a una macchina del tempo che va a ritroso. I confini attraversati sono strati di tempo e di generazioni e, naturalmente, anche di classe. Dopo l’incontro mi fermai a chiacchierare un po’ con amici e conoscenti, poi presi la metro e un treno di quelli scalcagnati sui quali i rider possono salire con le bici. Sui suburbani non c’è nessun vagone di prima classe e, dopo un certo orario, non passa quasi mai il controllore.

Meje

Mislím, da ste me povabili, da bi spregovorila o kulturnih mejah zaradi svoje življenjske zgodbe. Rodila sem se v Nemčiji judovsko-poljskim staršem, ki so preživeli holokavst in končali v begunskem taborišču na Bavarskem. Kot je v priseljenskih družinah v navadi, so mi starši včasih dajali v pregled uradna pisma, ker sem nemščino bolje obvladala. Bila je namreč moj najljubši predmet v šoli. Po maturi sem se preselila v Milano in se vpisala na tamkajšnjo javno univerzo, ki se imenuje La Statale. Brez težav sem opravila sprejemni izpit iz italijanskega jezika za tujce. Odraščala sem v takem dvojezičnem okolju, v katerem sem en jezik študirala z vsemi slovničnimi pravili vred, drugega pa sem se kot otrok navzela mimogrede, ko sem se učila plavati v Lagu Maggiore. Zahvaljujoč jezikovni potopitvi v času, ki sem ga od malih nog preživela v Italiji, je bila moja italijanščina tekoča, a še vedno pomanjkljiva, podobno kot moje plavanje v prostem slogu.

Leta 1989 – takrat sem ravno dopolnila 26 let – je frankfurtska založba Suhrkamp objavila moj prvenec, drobno zbirko pesmi z elegantno naslovnico. Pesmi so nastale, ko sem že živela v Milanu, a v duhu nemških avtorjev, ki sem jih nosila v sebi. Meje države, v katero sem se preselila, niso sovpadale z mejami mojega literarnega sveta, s katerim sem bila tako globoko povezana. Ker je bila Italija dežela, v kateri sem se odločila živeti, sem dopustila, da je italijanščina postopoma postala moj prvi jezik, jezik mojih osebnih odnosov in mojega študija, jezik mojih prvih delovnih izkušenj in ne nazadnje tudi mojega pisanja. Po izidu knjige *Nauki teme* leta 1997 nisem pri literarnem ustvarjanju nikoli več uporabila nemščine. Torej da, utelešam večjezičnost, transkulturnost ter večplastno in fluidno pripadnost. A čeprav je bilo prehajanje kulturnih meja zame že od otroštva nekaj povsem običajnega, fizično ostajam zvesta svojemu bivališču. V Gallarateju pri Milanu živim že več kot polovico svojega življenja, v istem stanovanju pa že več kot dvajset let. Verjetno se najbolj domače počutim prav v svojem domu, kajti težko bi na kratko odgovorila na vprašanja, od kod sem. Svoje dneve preživljam pred računalnikom, po internetu sem povezana s svetom. A ko v jasnem dnevu pogledam skozi okno, nad strehami, za cerkvico na vrhu hriba v naselju Crenna vidim gorovje Monte Rosa. In se skoraj nikoli ne zavem, da je tam daleč onstran navsezadnje meja.

Tako se mi dogaja ta čudna stvar. Vedeti morate, da pogosto potujem z letalom po Evropski uniji, pot pa začenjam ali v Malpensi ali v Luganu. Kadar se z vlakom TiLo* odpravim v Lugano, vedno znova ponavljam isto napako: na mejnem prehodu Gaggiolo-Stabio na telefonu ne izklopim mednarodnega gostovanja. Vlak tam stoji malo dlje, mimo hodijo možje v uniformah, ki me še nikoli niso ničesar vprašali. Niti po osebnih dokumentih.

Tiste dele Švice, v katerih se govori italijansko (t. i. italijansko Švico) so Helveti iztrgali Milanskemu vojvodstvu konec 16. stoletja. Kanton Ticino je nastal leta 1803, torej je starejši od Združene Italije (1861). Vendar so kljub odcepitvi od Italije na obeh straneh meje ostali enaki jezik (italijanščina), narečje (zahodnolombardsko), prevladujoča vera (katoliška), arhitektura in slog zgodovinskih središč ter kulinarika (polenta, rižote in jezerske ribe). Odsotnost jasno začrtane kulturne meje skupaj z geografsko bližino je glavni razlog, da pozabim na *roaming* in celo na švicarske franke. Na srečo je zdaj slednjo težavo mogoče zaobiti kar s kreditno kartico.

Člani politične stranke Lige v kantonu Ticino se od članov Lige v Lombardiji razlikujejo le po tem, da v svojem programskem zagovarjanju meja napadajo čezmejne delavce, češ da domačinom kradejo delo. Zagovarjanje avtohtone tradicije (slogan je isti na obeh straneh meje: »Hočemo polento, ne kuskusa«) bi sicer izzvalo le smeh, a žal je zaveznitvo med tema dvema regionalnima identitetnima gibanjema pripeljalo do tega, da je območje med Lombardijo in Švico, ki je bilo že od nekdaj središče različnih izmenjav, spremenilo ime: danes se je za to ozemlje uveljavilo pompozno ime protokeltskega in latinskega izvora *Regio Insubrica*. Vlaki na progi TiLo ga nemoteno prečkajo in se ustavljajo na vsaki postaji.

Politična avtonomija Švice, njen skrajni konservativizem (na področju naturalizacije in še marsičesa), njena nevtralnost ter ne nazadnje njen federalistični model so bili tako močno jamstvo, da nikakor ni bilo treba vzpostaviti kulturne meje. Več stoletij so se prebivalci Ticina, ki so bili večinoma zelo revni, lahko zatekali v Lombardijo (in na splošno v severno Italijo), da bi našli izhod iz težkih razmer. Ti stiki, ki so nastali predvsem zaradi preživetja, so vendarle spodbudili tudi vzajemno kulturno obogatitev. Tisti, ki so ostali na švicarski strani meje, so bili še naprej svobodni švicarski državljani, medtem ko so njihovi rojaki onkraj meje sčasoma postali španski, francoski ali avstrijski

* Vlaki, ki povezujejo švicarsko regijo Ticino z italijansko deželo Lombardijo. (Op. prev.)

podaniki. Ista državna ureditev je varovala večkulturnost Graubündna, ki je edini kanton v Švici s tremi uradnimi jeziki (italijanščino, nemščino in retoromanščino), v njem pa še danes skoraj enakopravno sobivata katoliška in protestantska vera (saj so bile občine suverene v verskih zadevah).

Retoromanščino so določili za uradni jezik leta 1938 prav zato, da bi uveljavili švicarsko kulturno neodvisnost pred fašističnimi teritorialnimi zahtevami na vseh italijanskih obmejnih območjih, vključno seveda s kantonom Ticino. Vendar ta ukrep ni mogel ustaviti dolgotrajnega upadanja rabe jezika: retoromanščina se neprestano umika nemščini, ki jo danes govori 74 odstotkov prebivalcev Graubündna. V tem primeru ne moremo govoriti o »etničnih kletkah«, kot jih je imenoval Južni Tirolec Alex Langer, temveč o jezikovni hegemoniji, saj se en jezik uveljavlja pred drugimi in se tudi povezuje z družbenim uspehom. Hkrati nemščina odpira možnost preseganja omejitev, ki jih nalaga pripadnost določeni etnični in jezikovni skupini. V regiji, kjer 60 odstotkov prebivalcev (od tega več kot petina tujcev) dela v turističnem sektorju, je skoraj samoumevno, da nove generacije ne govorijo le nemščine, temveč tudi angleščino bolje kot retoromanščino oziroma jezik, ki so ga poslušali pri starih starših in se ga celo učili v šoli.

Naj navedem še drug primer. Po drugi svetovni vojni so v Istri in Dalmaciji beneška narečja izginjala. Tako se danes v Rovinju in Caorleju govori enaka »turistična angleščina«. Brez težav lahko v kateremkoli baru naročiš kavo. To pa ne izključuje nasprotij: četudi govorijo v istem tujem jeziku, so lahko hrvaški natakariji strastni nacionalisti, beneški pa volivci Lige. Prav lahko vsi gledajo Sanremo ali zahajajo v samopostrežno restavracijo s sušijem ali pri prodajalcih na plaži kupujejo magrebske brisače, a to še ne pomeni, da so zato kaj manjši rasisti ali manj predani svoji lokalni identiteti.

Ali je torej smiselno, da župnija ali sosedska skupnost organizira zabavo, na katero vsakdo prinese svojo tradicionalno jed – kuskus, lazanjo, empanade ali babičine mesne kroglice? Kdo ve, kajti razlika ni v receptih, temveč v odnosih. Nematerialne meje so prepustne tako kot vsa živa kultura.

Pred nekaj leti sem se z rednim primestnim vlakom odpeljala na odprtje literarnega festivala La Milaneseana. Ker ob prihodu v Milano še nisem kosila, me je zamikala okrepečevalnica s kebabom na trgu pred železniško postajo, vendar tisti soparni popoldan to res ni bilo primerno. Kurdskega lastniku, ki je sedel z nekaj strankami za mizico pod arkadami, sem pomahala v pozdrav in se raje zri-

nila v bar s trafiko znotraj železniške postaje, da bi se zadovoljila z magnumom iz skrinje. Verjetno je bila nedelja, saj je bila pred blagajno dolga vrsta. Čakajoč tako v vrsti, sem opazovala dogajanje na trgu pred postajo, kjer je župan odredil posek dreves in njihovo zamenjavo z velikimi svetilkami in marmornimi klopmi, da bi preprečil posedanje in bivanje na javnem prostoru. Trg je bil kljub temu še naprej prizorišče preprodaje mamil in popivanja priseljencev pa tudi zbirališče mladih brez voznškega izpita in z malo denarja. Povsem naravno jih je bilo slišati, kako ponavljajo »ueeh bro« z značilnim lombardskim naglasom, in enako naravno je bilo, da so se zbirali mladi vseh barv polti. Vsakdanji prizori pač, ki si jih ni vredno zapomniti. Kasneje, v gledališču Piccolo Teatro, pa sem se nenadoma zavedela, da je v polni dvorani ena sama temnopolta oseba, tista, zaradi katere sem prišla v Milano: Nobelova nagrajenka, zgoraj, pod odrskimi lučmi.

Včasih je potovanje z vlakom iz propadle province v središče metropole, ki ima vsega v izobilju, podobno potovanju s časovnim strojem, ki se vrti nazaj in prečka meje, ki so plasti časa in generacij ter hkrati tudi razredne meje. Po prireditvi sem še malo poklepetala s prijatelji in znanci. Nato sem se odpravila na metro in vstopila v enega od tistih obrabljenih vlakov, na katere lahko dostavljavci hrane jemljejo tudi svoja kolesa. Na primestnih vlakih ni vagonov prvega razreda in po določeni uri sprevodnika ni več na spregled.

Prevedla Martina Clerici

Borders

When you invited me to speak about cultural boundaries, I imagine you were thinking of my background: I was born in Germany to Polish-Jewish parents who survived the Holocaust and ended up in a refugee camp in Bavaria. As is common in immigrant families, my parents would sometimes ask me to proofread their formal letters because I knew German better—it was, in fact, my favorite subject. After high school, I moved to Milan and enrolled at the University of Milan. I passed the entrance exam for foreign students—which tested my knowledge of Italian—without any trouble. In fact, I had grown up with the kind of bilingualism where you study one language with all its grammatical rules and learn the other like a child immersed in the waters of Lake Maggiore to learn how to swim. The ‘full immersion’ of the time I’d spent in Italy since I was a child made my Italian fluent but imperfect—much like my freestyle strokes.

In 1989—I had just turned 26—the Suhrkamp publishing house in Frankfurt published my debut, a slim collection of poems with an elegant cover. I had written them while already living in Milan, yet remaining faithful to the German-language authors I had brought with me. The borders of the country where I had moved did not coincide with the literary ones to which I felt bound by a bond as deep as it was, in fact, immaterial. Italy, however, was the place I had chosen to live, and so I let Italian gradually become my first language. It became the language of my personal relationships and my studies, the language of my first work experiences, and finally, of my writing. After the publication of *Lezioni di tenebra* in 1997, I never again used German as a literary language. So yes, I embody multilingualism, transculturalism, and multiple, fluid identities. In short, crossing cultural boundaries has been normal for me since I was a child, but physically I’m a very settled person. I’ve lived in Gallarate for more than half my life, and I’ve lived in the same apartment for over twenty years. Perhaps precisely because it’s impossible for me to answer the question ‘Where are you from?’ concisely, I feel so very much at home in my home. I spend my days in front of the computer, connected to the world via the internet. But when I look out the window on a clear day, beyond the city rooftops, beyond the little church atop the hill in the hamlet of Crenna, I see the Monte Rosa. And I almost never realize that way over there, in the distance, I’m looking at the border.

That's why, being used to trips that end at an airport in the European Union, whenever I take the Tilo—"Ti" for Ticino, "Lo" for Lombardy—to go to Lugano instead of Malpensa, I often make the same mistake. I don't turn off roaming at the Gaggiolo-Stabio border station. The train stops a little longer; men in uniform walk by, though they've never even asked me for my ID.

The Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland have been Italian since the late 16th century, when the Swiss wrested them from the Duchy of Milan. The Canton of Ticino, older than unified Italy, was founded in 1803. Yet, on both sides of the border, everything 'cultural' is the same: the language—Italian—the dialect—Western Lombard—the predominant religion—Catholicism—the architectural forms and styles of the historic centers, and the cuisine based on polenta, risotto, and lake fish. The border is so close and so imperceptible that I forget about roaming charges and even the Swiss franc, a problem that can now be easily circumvented with a credit card.

Supporters of "La Lega dei Ticinesi" differ from their Lombard counterparts in one key way. In their programmatic defense of borders, the Swiss-Italians include Italian cross-border workers in the category of foreigners "stealing jobs" from locals. Their defense of local tradition—"yes to polenta, no to couscous"—would be laughable if the convergence of the two regional identities hadn't inspired them to redefine the boundaries of trade. Today, maps of the area between Lombardy and Switzerland prominently feature the grand-sounding Proto-Celtic and Latin name "Regio Insubria." The TILO railway lines cross it at the leisurely pace of a train that stops at every station.

Switzerland's political autonomy, its extreme conservatism (regarding naturalization and beyond), its neutrality, and, last but not least, its federalist model provided such strong guarantees that there was no need to mark a cultural boundary. For centuries, the people of Ticino—most of whom were very poor—were able to gravitate toward Lombardy (and Northern Italy in general) for reasons of subsistence, yet these exchanges also fostered mutual cultural enrichment. But even the poorest ticinesi were free Swiss citizens, while their namesakes across the border became, at various times, Spanish, French, or Austrian subjects. The same confederal structure safeguarded the multiculturalism of the Canton of Graubünden: with its three languages—Italian, German, and Romansh—and the coexistence, still nearly equal to this day, of Catholicism and Protestantism, given that each municipality was sovereign in matters of religion.

Romansh became an official language in 1938, precisely to assert Switzerland's cultural independence in the face of fascist claims over every 'Italic' border area, including, of course, the Canton of Ticino. The invader at the gates, however, was not enough to halt a long-standing trend in which Romansh has been steadily losing ground to German, which is now spoken by 74% of the people of Graubünden. In those parts, the fault does not lie with 'ethnic cages,' as Alex Langer called them, but rather with a hegemony rooted in prestige, practicality, and even the freedom to have children outside one's own ethnic-linguistic group. Where 60% of the population—more than 20% of whom are foreign nationals—works in the tourism sector, it is almost a given that the younger generations speak not only German but also English better than the Romansh heard from a grandparent and, perhaps, even studied in school.

With the common Venetian dialects lost following the Dalmatian exodus, today the same tourist English is spoken in a bar in Rovinj as in one in Caorle, though this standardization does not preclude Croatian bartenders from being staunch nationalists or Venetian bartenders from renewing their vote for the Lega. It doesn't change a thing if everyone watches Sanremo or goes to an 'all-you-can-eat' sushi place or buys a Maghreb-made beach towel from street vendors—they don't become any less racist or any less attached to their local identity because of it.

So what's the point if the parish or neighborhood committee organizes a potluck where everyone brings 'their own dish'—couscous, lasagne, empanadas, Grandma's meatballs? Who knows, since the difference lies not in the recipes but in the relationships. Immaterial boundaries are permeable; every living culture is.

One afternoon a few years ago, I took the usual commuter train to attend the opening of the *La Milaneseana* literary festival. Since I hadn't had lunch, I was tempted by the kebab stand in the station square, but on that sweltering day, it just wasn't the right choice. I waved hello to the Kurdish owner, who was sitting with a few customers at a table under the arcades, and slipped into the bar-tobacco shop inside the station to settle for a Magnum. Maybe it was Sunday—there was a long line at the register. While I waited my turn, I watched the comings and goings in the square out front, where the mayor had ordered the trees to be cut down to make way for tall light poles and marble benches on which it was impossible to linger. The square, however, remained a place

where the *extracomunitari* dealt drugs and drank, as well as a hangout for teenagers without driver's licenses and with little money. It was perfectly normal to hear them say 'ueeh bro,' in their slurred Lombard accent, just as it was normal for groups to include kids of all races. There was no reason to remember those greetings and those pats on the back, had I not suddenly realized, while sitting in the packed audience of the Piccolo Teatro, that the only Black person in the hall was the very person I had come to Milan to see: the Nobel laureate, up there under the stage lights.

Sometimes the train ride from the run-down province to the heart of the metropolis, rich in everything, feels like a time machine traveling backward. The boundaries crossed are layers of time and generations—and, of course, class as well. After the event, I stopped to chat a bit with friends and acquaintances, then took the subway and one of those rickety trains where delivery riders can board with their bikes. On the commuter trains, there are no first-class cars, and after a certain time, the conductor almost never comes by.

Translated by the author



Foto © Francesca Mantovani

Said Khatibi

Said Khatibi (Bou Saâda, 1984) je alžirski pisatelj. Študiral je francosko književnost na Univerzi v Alžiru in kulturološke študije na Sorboni. Doslej je napisal pet knjige, ki so bile prevedene v 8 jezikov, roman *Konec Sahare* (2025) tudi v slovenščino. Poleg leposlovja piše potopise in prevaja; ustvarja v arabščini in francoščini. V preteklosti je bil dejaven kot novinar na področjih kulture in vojni dopisnik, poročal je s kriznih žarišč v Afriki in Ukrajini. Kot predavatelj je gostoval na številnih univerzah po svetu, npr. v Parizu, Sofiji, Beogradu, Kairu, Berlinu in Tunisu. V zadnjih letih živi in deluje v Sloveniji. Za svoje literarno delo je prejel več priznanj: leta 2017 nagrado katara za najboljši arabski roman (za roman *Štirideset let čakanja na Isabel*), leta 2023 književno nagrado šejka Zajeda (za roman *Konec Sahare*) in leta 2026 mednarodno nagrado za arabsko prozo oz. »arabskega bookerja« (za roman *Plavanje proti toku*).

Said Khatibi (Bou Saâda, 1984) is an Algerian writer. He studied French literature at the University of Algiers and cultural studies at the Sorbonne. To date, he has written five books, which have been translated into eight languages; his novel *The End of the Sahara* (2025) has also been translated into Slovenian. In addition to fiction, he writes travelogues and translates; he writes in Arabic and French. In the past, he worked as a cultural journalist and as a war correspondent, reporting from crisis hotspots in Africa and Ukraine. As a lecturer, he has been a visiting professor at numerous universities around the world, including Paris, Sofia, Belgrade, Cairo, Berlin, and Tunis. In recent years, he has been living and working in Slovenia. He has received several awards for his literary work: in 2017, the Katara Prize for Best Arabic Novel (for the novel *Forty Years Waiting for Isabel*); in 2023, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award (for the novel *The End of the Sahara*); and in 2026, the International Prize for Arabic Fiction, also known as the "Arab Booker" (for the novel *Swimming Against the Tide*).

روشاع

توملأ نم توجن امل ،يَمَع نبا فتك يف امتزرغ يتلا نيكسلا اول
رَحْل حفل نيح ،حابصلأ لُكْذ تَأدب يتلا ،يتيالكح يورأل تشع الو
،قيرقلأ نم ينولحَر نيزلا ىلع أدقح دقتي يظيغو ،ءارمسلأ يتعلص
جرَعَتو ينيج تبَطَّق .ينلباق يذلا دهشلأ نم عزف ينيرتعي نأ لبق
ليبس أضررتعُم ضرألأ ىلع ياصع تبرض .رعرع قرچش ىلع يَلْظ
تجمل شيح ،تيبلا ىلإ امتدقأ مَث ،قَتَس ىلإ دحاو نم امتددع ،يهايش
امن دبب ةينحنم ،امرمع نم قرشع ةيناثلا دَعَت مل يتلا ،قزيول يتنبا
موتل ملَعَت يذلا افيقش بعالتُ ،بابلا مأم صاصر ملق لثم فيحنلا
توصرب امفلَكُو ،مترَس ولعي رضخأ صيمق نم ىوس أيراع ،يشملأ
ياصع تطقسف ،يرمأ ذفنت تدماقتسا .قبيرزلا اخلدت ناب بخاص
نيو:» ينلأس تدان نيحو ،أحمر فذقي يضايرك امفدق امدعب ،اممأم
يَلْجرتحت ضفتني أرابغ أَفْلَخم تدعتبا دق تنك ،«؟يَبَأ يشام

ىلع ،نيتجرفنم نيقياسب امرهظ ىلع ءاقلُمْلأ قنَجْلأ ناكم ىلإ تدع
يذلا ينقذ تدسم ،«!يَبَر يديس اي:» حيشلا باشعأ نيح قردحنم ضرأ
أعاترم ،يغدص ىلإ ينميلا يدي عار تعفر مَث ،عوبسأ نم قحلح مل
دَسْأ نأ لبق ،يرسيلا اهفتكو امرخنم نيح دَمَتِي سبَيَتُم مد رظنم نم
رفغا مهللأ ،يهد دقع رهظ شيح ،جيبلأ امصيمق حتف ىلإ يرصب
يتدعم يف أرخو أرعشتسم ،«اهل

.ةيوتلم فصن تالصخب يمتني يذلا ليوطلا محافلأ امرعش يف تققَد
قَبَح لثم روكملأ افنأ امنيب ،لحَلْأاب قَبَضْخَم امهشومرو ناتِيَنب اهاني ع
ةعول أَلْيَحْتَم يلفسلأ امكَف ىلع قَبْدن تيأرو .بارت تارذب رفَعَم ،بنع
،امرمع نم تايينيرشعلأ يف امنأ اهجو تامسوق يل تحوأ .امب لَح امل اهلهأ
قبيبط امنأ أنكَتَم ،قموعن رثكأ قرشبب ،يتجوز نم فحنأ امنأ تطحالو
يف امدحو رماغثُ ءلقاع ءأرمأ ال ؟انه ىلإ تلصو فيك :أراتحم ،قسَرْدُم وأ
اذه تعمس) ءَيَدود قَدَائز لثم ،قنيذملأب قصتلملأ ،يوارحصلأ جرملأ اذه
ىرخأو قمأس تاتابن رثكت شيح ،(ةَيَدْلَبلا يف فظوم نم هيبتشلا
ريصدق نم مهل ءيئأوشع نكاسم اونب ءارقف ىوس هيف محازتي ال ،ةَيَبْط
تويب ىلإ اولقتن يف ،ايندلأ مهيلع فطعت نأ لمأ ىلع ،شَقو بصقو
ءابرملكو ءامب ءلوصوم

يَبَر مالك» ،نأرقلا نم تايأ ولتأو امتهبج ىلع ينميلا يدي عضأ نأ تددو

نم لجخب أنوكسم تلز ام .اسم نل نع تزج ع يننكل ،«يتوملل عفشي
يقي رط عطاقتي نيحف ،يرغص يف يعم يّم قوسق نم هتثرو ،ءاسنل
يّرطان نع بيغت نأ لىل يادخ رّمحي دقو يرصب ضفخ افرع ال فارم عم
يتنبا نأ لىل تمبنتو امن ذاقم حش لىل ولؤل ةيّركب أنيّرّم أطرق تنيا ع
يف دحأ ينم مدي نأ ففاخم نيوطخ تعجارت مّث ،ةيلح أموي سبلت مل
يف قربت ةعاس لىل تنطف .هيكترأ مل مرجب ينم مّتيو ينّم قلفغ
دجوي دق امّع ينم هذ درشو ،ةليوطلا افرطاظا لىل ع يّدرو ءالط ،نم يال اممص عم
؟بّمذ ملام :اهي قاس نيّب ترّق تسا يتل ديل قبيق ح يف

قئاثو بقاري .جرملا يذاحي قي رط لىل ع عقي نم زجاج لىل تلوره
لك بصتن يو ،ةعرسل يف نو طرفي نمل تافللخم رّرحيو تابكرملا
نات يّرو د هيلع بوانت .ءاسم قنم اثل لىل أحابص ةعباسل نم موي
تاملك تفدرأ مّث ،فج تري لّغب ،نمي موادملا نيي طرشلل ةيحتلا تيذأ
نلكم لىل يتبابسب أريشّم ،«...ةحياط ...امتفش ...ةتيّم» :ةعطّتم
قلب ر لّحي وهو ،«!ضيرم تنأ» :يصوص قنن نيي طرشل دحأ مّ .قثجل
قرظن ناي طرشل لدابت .«...لكن يعب ...فوش ت ...حاورأ» .ينميلا قاس
يذل لّحمل لىل ان هجّتاو امترايّس يف امه عم تبكر مّث ،اشوشو ،بارغتسا
هيل امه تدشراً

امن يّب ،قفّاج قواسو ةئتان راجح امللّختت ةيبارت أقيرط انكلس
أناذي ،قبيرقلا دجاسملا دحأ توص ربكّم نم نأ رقلل قولات تقّلطن
ل. عفأ مل امب ين اممّتي نأ نم يفواخم تلّحتساو ،عمجل ءالصل بارتقاب

اي» :اهقنن ع قسّم المّب امض بن سّحتو زافّقب مدي نيي طرشل دحأ ىطّغ
بطاخّي نأ لبق ،لهم لىل ع اسمار عفر .للامش لىل ع قصب مّث ،«!راتس
:ل يّمز

افقلا لىل ع قبرض امّن ع —

دّحو ،(امال نم يكلساللا قملك تملّعت) يكلساللا مزاج نم لصتأ
أدارج رص بن ،تمص يف هانيضق ،ةعاس ثلث ضمي مل .هعقوم هتّحم
نأ لىل ،دحأ لوضف ريثي دعي ملو رهشأ نّم قن يدملا هجو ازغ ،بثاوتي
قئاقد قرغتسي ملو ةتيّملا قن ياعمل بيبط مدّقت .فاعس! قرايس تلّصو
أروص امه دحأ ذخأ ،نالجر امن لزن .يرخأ قطرش قرايس لصت نأ لبق ،تودعم
،امو حف نيّبتّي نأ نود نم اهدي قبيق ح رخال طقتل امن يّب ،ةيّحضلل
دالوا وذه» :بيبطلا لىل سامه ي فاعس إل قرايس قئاس تعمس .افرصناو
ممنكاسم نم نولّطي اوعرش نيذلا ،يناري ج لىل مسأرب أريشّم ،«مارح

تیار. بارتقالا ىلع مهنم دحاً اَرَجْتِي نأ نود نم مہر اص باب نوعلّطتو
لمح مّث، اہي عارذب اھي قش قوْطت، تيبل باب مام، دي عب نم، قزيول
يطرش ينلأسو، ضيبأ رازاب اھتي طغت دعب، تّجّال ناف عسّم

؟كمسرا -

يридиح روشاع -

ھدي نم ھزافّق عزني ھو رخال فاضأ امنيب

!انعم بکرا -

يتيشام قوسأ. يفکي امب يمانغأ عراً مل يننأ تتركذتو فوخ ينلجاء
للّقِي يذلا، حيشلا طرس ىلإ اھجّوأ، رثكأ وأ تاعاس ثالذ فداعلا يف
تتركّف. قنمھس اھديزت يتلا قروملا بورخل ناصغأ اھل حيتأ وأ، اھشطع
يذلا، سبایلا زبخل اھل تّمأ نأب يل حامسلا نييطرشلا نم سمّتلا نأ
ألدب لکذب مايقلا يتجوز نم بلطأ وأ، قني دمل طسو نم يتنبا ھعمجت
قّحضلا نأ يّلا ىحوأ اھي ھجو مّجّتف، اھل عف قّدر تبّيّت يننّکل، يّنم
اھل قبيرق

قّبر لّحي ناک يذلا، يطرشلا ىفتخا، رّفخمل ىلإ لوصول درّجّب
بتکم فلخ فقو مل ألي مزي ناثلا لأسو، يضررأا قباطلا يف، ھقاس
ل: ابقّسال

؟سيارلا لصو -

معن -

لوال قباطلا ىلإ متقفارو

جلوو، رىاجس قباحس مّترمغ قاور يف يّبشخ يّسرك ىلإ ينسلجأ
عقّتما. لوخدلاب ينرمأ مّث جرّخ نأ ثبلي مل. أريرص مباب رصأ أبتکم
أمّثا! تبکّترا يّلع: «قّتئافلا مايّال يف متلعف ام ترضحتس او يّھجو
،روھقم قايح يتايحّف، رکذلا قحتسي أئيش دجأ مل. «ھيلع للال ينبقاع
فشترأ مّث يّلّصأ، ريس يّب اھدعب وأ قعباسلا لي ببق أحابص طقيّتسأ
ىعرأ، دجسملل مخاتم رىب نم حىافص ألم، نيتملاخ نيتمفشب أئيش
نم وأ نالّد نم قطيسب اضارغأ عاتبأ دقو، ومطلّل أبطح عمجأ مّث، يّمنغ
ينکسرم ىلإ دوعأ مّث، نامثالا يف قضاوفم دعب، قفصرأالا ىلع عاب
ئفّدي أئيش غضمأ، يّتريصح ىلع عجّطضأ نأ لبق، قبيرزلا دقّتل
قوس سيّمخ لک دصقأ. يّشارف ىلإ ولخال ليلال لبق يّ نأ رظتنأو يّتدعم

وأأسأر يرتشأل لثمأل تقولا نيّحتأو راعسأل فكّرح دصرأ ،ةيشاملأ
يف لمع مويب رفظأ رخأل نيح نمو ،يتراجت يف رمتسأل رخأ عيبأ
شيعلأ قفلأ لّمحت يف مترجأ يننيعت ،ءانب قشرو

،يلكش نم تلجخو ،سولجلأ قطرشلأ شتفم يّلع حرتقا نيح ينهذ درش
دوسألأ يلأورسو ،نايلفس نارز ألآ هنم قبي مل يذلا يزمرقلأ يصيمقب
يربكلأ يعبصأ هنم تلطأ يذلا ،يطاطمأ ضيبألأ يلدنصو ربّغملأ

ينلأس ؟جوّزتم -

معن -

ألأفطأ كيذل -

نانتا -

يننأ ،رضخأ فالغب شانك يّلع ،سيارلأ بهيلأ راشي يذلا ،شتفمأ نود
،أرتمتنس نيّعبسو أرتم يدعتي أل يلوطنأ رّق ،1955 ديلأوم نم
نع يغالبأ ،وّلقت نم ةيلاخلأ يمالك ققي رطف ،أبنذم نوأ نأ أدعبتسم
،مأهتال نم يننيشتست لئالء اهلك ،روضحلل يتباجتساو فتيملأ
قلا يّلع مّب تيلدأ ام ،مبناج يّلا سلج ،رخأ يطرش نقر امنيب ،لاق امك
راتمأ تارشع دعب يّلع اهتلجلج عمست ،قتاك

ةيملعلأ قطرشلأ نوع نأ مبأصل لوقي ،ديمح يّمسملأ ،شتفمأ تعمس
شامق نم ضيبأ ليّدم يّلع يّوس قلوّتملأ دي قبيقح يّف رثعي مل
يلا لّدت ققيشو أل ناو ،ةيّدقن قاروأو رطع قورواق ،رفاظأ ءالط ،ييريح
اهتيّوه

فدرا .اهيلأ فرّعتن يك ءافتخاب غالب لوصو رظتنن -

يوس قطنأ أل ،حيرم هيلع سولجلأ ،نيعارذ يّسرك يّف أتبأث تيقيب
يّف تعطس .منهمو ينأريج ءامسأ ،يمأيأ يّضرقأ فيك .ينلأس ي امّدن
ققالع مّب ينعمجتو ،متفلّخ يذلا لوالأ ركذلا وهف ،ينبأ قروص يلاب
ببتكملأ كّلذ يّف يدوجو ينرعشأ ،يتنباب يتقالع نم ةيميمح رثكأ
،ةيئابرمك ةحورم هفقسب ثبّشتت يذلا ،ثأثالأ ليلقلا ،حيّسفلأ
هيلأ قايّتشاب

؟جرملأ يّف نوموحي ءابرغ ،قريخالأمأيالأ يّف ،تدهاش له -

أل -

هتي حل غبصي يذلا ،يراج وئشأل كانه يدوجو نيحتأ نأ ترف
 قرتخيو ،أزارحأ نبلطي قوسن ،موي لك ،مباب مامأ فطصتو ،ءانحل اب
 نكل .نهنكست يتلا حاورألأ نم نصلخي وهو نهحايص ماودلا ىلع ينذا
 دعب ةيحلل روص لمحي ،بتكملا ىلإ ،يطرش لخدي ناسل كرأ نأ لب
 يلفسلأ هلف امنيب هيفك نيب هسأر أكسمم ديمح دةنتف ،ضيحتلا
 ىلع أمان ينكرتو ،أجراخ ضاكر مآ خرص ،«!ملحن ينار ...ال» :دعترى
 .ةثجلا نع يغالب

Ašur

Brez noža, ki sem ga zadrl bratrancu v ramo, ne bi ušel smrti. Ne bi preživel in ne bi mogel povedati svoje zgodbe: začela se je tisto jutro, ko mi je sonce ožgalo rjavo plešo, ko je v meni vrelo od sovraštva do tistih, ki so me pregnali iz vasi, in ko me je prestrašil prizor, ki sem ga zagledal pred sabo. Namrščil sem čelo in se opotekel k brinovemu grmu. S palico sem udaril ob tla, da bi ustavil ovce. Preštel sem jih, od ena do šest, nato pa sem jih gnal domov. Tam sem zagledal svojo še ne dvanajstletno hčer Luizo. Suha kakor trska, naslonjena na vrata, se je igrala s svojim bratom, ki je komaj shodil. Bil je nag, oblečen samo v zeleno srajčko, ki mu ni pokrivala popka. Zadrl sem se, naj zapre ovce v ogrado. Luiza je poskočila, da bi izpolnila ukaz, in palica, ki sem jo vrgel, kakor športnik vrže kopje, je pristala pred njo. Ko je zavpila: »Kam greš, očka?«, sem bil že daleč in prah se mi je dvigal pod nogami.

Vrnil sem se tja, kjer je na pobočju med grmi pelina na hrbtu in z razkřečnimi nogami ležalo truplo. »Ljubi bog!« Pogladi sem si teden dni staro brado, nato pa desnico dvignil ob sence, zgrožen ob pogledu na zasušeno kri, ki se ji je razširila med nosnicami in levo ramo. Zazrl sem se v izrez njene bež srajce, izpod katere je kukala zlata ogrlica. »Bog ji odpusti,« me je stisnilo v želodcu.

Pogledal sem njene ogleno črne, ob konicah skodrane lase. Oči je imela rjave in trepalnice pomazane s kajalom, njen nos, podoben grozdni jagodi, pa je bil prekrit z grudicami zemlje. Opazil sem brazgotino, ki jo je imela na spodnji čeljusti, in pomislil, kako hudo bo njeni družini, zaradi tega, kar se ji je zgodilo. Sodeč po potezah njenega obraza je bila sredi dvajsetih in opazil sem, da je vitkejša od moje žene, z mehkejšo kožo – zdravnica morda ali učiteljica, in tega nisem razumel: Kako je prišla sem? Razumna ženska se ne bi sama podala na ta travnik kakor slepo črevo, pripeto na mesto (to primerjavo sem slišal od uslužbenca na občini), in je v resnici samo kup peska, poraščen z nizkim grmičevjem, med katerim se bohotijo zdravilne in strupene rastline. Sem se zgrinjajo zgolj reveži, ki si iz pločevine, resja in slame postavljajo začasna prebivališča in upajo, da bo svet prijazen do njih in da se bodo preselili v hiše, priklopljene na vodovod in elektriko.

Hotel sem ji položiti desno dlan na čelo in recitirati verz iz Korana, saj božja beseda mrtvim pomaga v paradiž, pa se je nisem mogel dotakniti. Ko sem bil otrok, je bila mati stroga z mano, in zato me je žensk še vedno strah: če mi pot

prekriža katera, ki je ne poznam, pogledam v tla in lica mi zardijo, dokler mi ne izgine izpred oči. Zagledal sem uhan z biserom na njenem ušesu in pomislil, da moja hči ni še nikoli nosila uhanov. Odmaknil sem se za dva koraka, prestrašen, da se ne bi kdo nepričakovano pojavil in me obtožil zločina, ki ga nisem zagrešil. Opazil sem lesketajočo se uro na njenem desnem zapetju in rožnat lak na njenih dolgih nohtih. Le kaj je v torbi, ki ji leži med nogami, sem pomislil: denar ali zlato?

Stekel sem do varnostne zapore na cesti, ki gre mimo travnika. Vsak dan med sedmo zjutraj in osmo zvečer dve patrulji izmenično pregledujeta dokumente in pišeta kazni prehitrim voznikom. Brada se mi je tresla, ko sem pozdravil policista, ki sta delala na zaporu, in izjekljal: »Mrtva je ... videl sem jo ... leži ...« S prstom sem pokazal proti kraju, kjer sem našel truplo. Eden od policistov je iztegnil vrat proti meni: »Bolan si!« in se popraskal po mečih leve noge. »Pojdita ... poglejta ... na lastne oči ...« Policista sta se presenečeno spogledala, nato pa sem se usedel z njima v avto in odpravili smo se proti kraju, h kateremu sem ju usmeril.

Vozili smo po kolovozu, polnem kamnov in obdanem s suhimi strugami. Iz zvočnikov bližnje mošeje se je zaslišal Koran, ki je opozarjal, da se bliža petkova molitev. Vse bolj sem se bal, da me bosta obtožila za nekaj, česar nisem storil.

Eden od policistov si je nadel rokavico in ji tipal pulz na vratu. »O, bog!« je pljunil na svojo desno. Počasi je dvignil glavo, preden je rekel svojemu kolegu:

»Dobila je udarec v zatilje.«

Poklical je po brezžičnem radiu (besedo brezžičen sem se naučil od imama) in sporočil lokacijo. Manj kakor dvajset minut smo v tišini strmeli v poskakujoče kobilice, ki so se pred meseci spustile nad mesto in se jim ni nihče več čudil, preden je prišel rešilec. V le nekaj minutah je zdravnik pregledal truplo pokojne. Pripeljal se je še en policijski avto, iz katerega sta izstopila moška in zavarovala kraj z rumenim trakom. Eden od njiju je poslikal žrtev, drugi pa pobral njeno torbico, vendar je ni odprl. Nato sta odšla. Slišal sem, kako je voznik rešilca zašepetal zdravniku: »Poglej te barabe« in z glavo pomignil proti sosedom, ki so se prikazali iz svojih domovanj in opazovali, nihče pa se ni upal približati. Od daleč sem videl Luizo, ki je pred vrati naše hiše držala brata za rame. Reševalca sta truplo pokrila z belo rjuho in ga dvignila, policist pa me je vprašal:

»Ime?«

»Ašur Hadiri.«

Drugi si je snel rokavico in dodal:

»Pojdi z nami.«

Zgrabil me je strah. Pomislil sem, da nisem dovolj poskrbel za čredo. Pona-vadi jih med pelinom pasem tri ure ali več, da se odžejajo, ali pa jim dam zelene veje rožičevca, da se poredijo. Policista sem že hotel prositi, naj mi dovolita, da jim dam suh kruh, ki ga hči zbira po mestu, ali prosim ženo, naj to opravi namesto mene, pa me je bilo strah, kako se bosta odzvala. Njuna namrgodena obraza sta dala vedeti, da sta žrtev poznala.

Ko smo prišli na postajo, je policist, ki se je praskal po mečih, izginil v prtičju, drugi pa je vprašal kolega, ki je stal na recepciji:

»Je načelnik prišel?«

»Da.«

In šel sem z njim v prvo nadstropje.

Posedel me je na lesen stol na hodniku, ovitem v oblak cigaretne dima. Izginil je za škripajočimi vrati pisarne, vendar se je kmalu vrnil in mi ukazal, naj vstopim. Vsa kri mi je šla z obraza in po spominu sem brskal, kaj sem storil v minulih dneh: »Morda sem zagrešil kaj, zaradi česar Bog kaznuje.« Ničesar pomembnega nisem našel. Moje življenje je življenje reveža. Vstanem vsako jutro okoli sedmih, molim in nato leno popijem čaj. Pri vodnjaku poleg mošeje napolnim kante z vodo, pasem ovce, potem nabere les za štedilnik, kupim nekaj skromnih reči v trgovini ali se pogajam za ceno zanje pri uličnih prodajalcih, se vrnem domov in pregledam staje. Potem se zlekнем na slamnato podlogo, žvečim kaj, kar mi ogreje želodec, in čakam, da se bo znočilo in bom šel lahko v posteljo. Ob četrtrkih hodim na tržnico z živino, opazujem rast in padanje cen ter čakam na najprimernejši trenutek, da bi kupil ali prodal živino in tako ohranil posel. Vsake toliko mi uspe najti kakšen dan dela na gradbišču in plača mi pomaga pokrivati življenjske stroške.

Misli so mi zatavale, ko me je policijski inšpektor povabil, naj se usedem. V zadregi sem bil zaradi svojega videza, škrlatne srajce, ki je imela le še dva gumba, prašnih črnih hlač in belih plastičnih natikačev, iz katerih mi je štrlel palec.

»Poročen?«

»Ja.«

»Kaj otrok?«

»Dva.«

Inšpektor, ki so mu rekli »šef«, je v zvezek z zelenimi platnicami zapisal, da sem bil rojen leta 1955, in ocenil, da nisem višji od meter sedemdeset. Po njegovem nisem bil kriv; govoril sem jasno, sam sem jih obvestil o umrli in prostovoljno prišel na postajo – vsi ti dokazi, je rekel, me izključujejo kot osumljenca, policist, ki je sedel poleg njega, pa je njegove besede tipkal na stroj, katerega zvok se je slišal na desetine metrov naokrog.

Slišal sem inšpektorja, ki mu je bilo ime Hamid, kako je rekel kolegu, da so forenziki v torbici umorjene našli samo bel svilen robec, lak za nohte, stekleničko parfuma in bankovce. Nobenih dokumentov, ki bi kazali na njeno identiteto.

»Počakajmo na poročilo o pogrešanih osebah, da jo bomo identificirali.«

Obsedel sem v naslanjaču, kar udoben je bil. Govoril sem samo, če so me kaj vprašali. Kako preživljam svoje dni. Imena sosedov in kaj so po poklicu. V misli se mi je prikradla sinova podoba. Moj prvorojenec je in z njim sem si bliže kakor s hčerko. Ko sem sedel v tisti prostorni, skopo opremljeni pisarni z ventilatorjem na stropu, sem začutil vonj po dezodorantu – da, dezodorantu, ne kolonjski. Poznam razliko, čeprav ne uporabljam ne enega ne drugega. Stožilo se mi je po sinu.

»Si v zadnjih dneh videl kakšnega neznanca, ki bi hodil po travniku?«

»Nisem.«

Pomislil sem, da lahko izrabim priložnost in se pritožim nad sosedom, ki si brado barva s kano. Pred njegovimi vrati se dan za dnem vije vrsta žensk, ki prihajajo po amulete, ušesa pa mi para njihovo kričanje, ko iz njih izganja duhove. A še preden sem premaknil jezik, je v pisarno vstopil policist s pravkar razvito fotografijo žrtve. Hamid je zajel sapo in se zgrabil za glavo, spodnja čeljust se mu je zatresla. »Ne ... zagotovo se mi sanja!« je zakričal, potem pa planil ven. Jaz pa sem obžaloval, da sem prijavil truplo.

Prevedla Barbara Skubic

Vir:

Said Khatibi, *Konec Sahare*. Maribor: Litera (2024).

Achour

If not for the knife I had plunged into my cousin's shoulder, I wouldn't have been saved from death, and would not have lived to tell my tale which began that morning when the heat scorched my dark bald spot and my anger raged against those who had made me leave the village. I was startled by what I saw laying before me. I furrowed my brow and staggered over to a juniper tree. I struck the ground with my staff to block my sheep's path. I counted them off from one to six, then drove them home where I caught sight of my daughter, Louisa, who was not yet twelve. She was leaning her pencil-thin body against the door as she played with her brother, Salim, who had just learned to walk. He was naked save for a green shirt that went down to his belly button. I shouted at her to put the sheep in the pen. She straightened up to carry out my order. My staff landed on the ground in front of her where I had thrown it like a javelin. When she called out to ask me "Where're you going, Papa?" I was already gone, leaving dust in my wake.

I went back to where the body had been dumped on its back, legs apart, on the sloping ground among the wormwood plants. "Dear Lord!" I stroked my chin which I hadn't shaved for a week, then raised my right palm up to my temple, horrified at the sight of drying blood running from her nose to her left shoulder. I turned my eyes to the opening of her beige shirt where a gold necklace came into view. "God forgive her." I felt a sharp pain in my stomach.

I examined her long, black hair that ended in half-twisted tufts. Her eyes were brown and she had black kohl on her eyelashes. Her round nose looked like a grape dusted with bits of dirt. I noticed a scar on her lower jaw as I imagined her family's anguish upon hearing the news. She looked to be in her twenties. I noticed she was thinner than my wife, with softer skin, guessing she was a nurse or a teacher. I was baffled. How did she get here? No woman in her right mind would venture alone into this wild meadow where poisonous and medicinal plants proliferate, attached to the edge of the city like an appendix (I had heard this analogy from a municipal employee). The only people here were the poor souls who crowded into informal dwellings they built out of tin, cane, and straw, hoping that one day the world would look kindly on them and they could move into houses with running water and electricity.

I wanted to place my hand on her forehead and recite some verses from the Qur'an ("My Lord's words heal the dead") but I couldn't bring myself to touch her. I was still possessed by a shyness of women that I had internalized as a result of my mother's strictness with me when I was young. I still lower my eyes and might blush until she disappears from sight when a woman I don't know crosses my path. I looked at the pearl earring in her ear and realized that my daughter had never worn jewelry a day in her life. I took two steps back, scared that someone might happen upon me and accuse me of a crime I did not commit. I noticed a watch sparkling on her right wrist and pink nail polish on her long nails. I wondered what might be in the purse lying between her legs. Money or gold?

I rushed to a security barrier located on the road opposite the meadow where they check vehicles' documents and issue speeding tickets. It's set up every day from seven in the morning to eight at night. Two patrols alternate shifts. I saluted the policemen stationed there, my jaw trembling, then added some broken words: "Dead... I saw her... laying there..." I pointed in the direction of the body. One of the policemen craned his neck toward me and said, "You're sick!" as he scratched his right calf. "Souls... you'll see... with your own eyes..." The two policemen exchanged puzzled looks. Then I got into their car with them and told them where to go.

We followed a dirt road dotted with stones and lined with dry streams. The sound of Qur'an recitation came out of a loudspeaker from one of the nearby mosques calling the approaching Friday prayer. I was terrified they would accuse me of something I didn't do.

One of the policemen put a glove on and felt her neck for a pulse. He uttered, "Oh Lord!" then spit on the ground to his left. Slowly, he looked up before addressing his colleague: "She's been struck on the back of the neck."

He got on his wireless radio and specified his location (I had learned the word "wireless" from the Imam). We waited less than twenty minutes for the ambulance to arrive, passing the time in silence as we watched the hopping locusts which had invaded the city some months ago and no longer raised an eyebrow. A doctor came forward to examine the dead body which did not take more than a couple of minutes. Then another police car arrived. Two men got out. They encircled the area with yellow tape. One of them took pictures of the victim and the other grabbed her purse without looking at what was inside.

Then they left. I heard the ambulance driver whisper to the doctor, “These sons of bitches,” gesturing with his head toward my neighbors who had started to emerge from their dwellings to take a look, not a single one of them daring to come close. I saw Louisa off in the distance in front of our door, her arms around her brother. Then, after covering it with a white sheet, two paramedics picked up the body. A policeman asked me for my name

“Achour Hadeeri.”

As he pulled the glove off his hand, the other one barked:

“Come with us!”

I was gripped by fear. I remembered that I had not yet sufficiently grazed my flocks. I usually drive them for three hours or more so they can gobble down the wormwood that quenches their thirst, or I might give them some leafy carob tree branches to fatten them up. I thought about asking the two policemen for permission to give the sheep some of the dry bread my daughter collects from the neighborhoods downtown, or to ask my wife to do it instead, but I was afraid of what they might say. The frowns on their faces indicated to me that they knew who the victim was.

As soon as we got to the police station, the first policeman disappeared while the second one addressed a colleague standing behind the reception desk:

“Has the boss arrived yet?”

“He has.”

I went with the policeman to the first floor.

He sat me down on a wooden chair in a smoke-filled waiting area. He went into an office, the door creaking as he opened it. As soon as he came back out, he ordered me in. My face went pale as I thought about what I had done over the past few days. Perhaps I had committed a sin that God was punishing me for. I couldn't think of anything of note. Mine is the life of the hard-working stiff. I wake up in the morning a little before or after seven. I perform my prayers, then listlessly sip my tea. I fill the metal basins with water from the well adjacent to the mosque. I pasture my sheep then gather up some wood for the cookfire. I might buy some simple items from a store or a sidewalk vendor after negotiating the price, after which I return home to inspect the animals' pen before lying down on my straw mat. I gnaw on something to warm my stomach and wait for nightfall to get into bed. Every Thursday I head to the cattle market where I watch the rise and fall of prices, waiting for the most opportune time to buy

a head or sell another in order to keep my business going. From time to time, I get a day of work on a construction site, the wages of which help me bear the cost of living.

My mind drifted when the Police Inspector suggested I sit. I was embarrassed by my appearance. I was wearing a crimson-red shirt with only the bottom two buttons remaining, dusty black pants, and white plastic sandals with my big toe sticking out.

“Your parents’ names?”

“Mouhhad and Ramla Ben Addi.”

“Are you married?”

“I am.”

“Do you have children?”

“Two.”

The Inspector, whom they called “the boss,” wrote down in a green-covered notebook that I was born in 1955. He guessed I was no taller than a hundred and seventy centimeters. He deemed it unlikely that I was guilty from the unfaltering way that I spoke, and because I had reported the dead woman and agreed to come to the station; all evidence that exonerated me, as he put it. Another policeman sitting next to him typed what I said on a typewriter whose clacking sound could be heard dozens of meters away.

I heard the Inspector, whose name was Hamid, tell his colleague that the forensic policeman on the scene found only a white silk handkerchief, some nail polish, a bottle of perfume, and some cash in the dead woman’s purse. There were no documents that might point to her identity. “We’ll await the missing persons’ report in order to identify her.”

I sat still in my chair which had arms and was comfortable. I only spoke when spoken to. How did I spend my days? The names and occupations of my neighbors? An image of Salim popped into my head. He’s my first-born son. I’m closer to him than I am to my daughter. Sitting in that spacious, sparsely-furnished office with its electric ceiling fan and the smell of deodorant – that’s right, deodorant, not cologne, for I know the difference between the two even though I don’t use either one – made me miss my son.

“Over the last few days, have you noticed any strangers wandering around the meadow?”

“No.”

As long as I was there, I thought I should lodge a complaint against my neighbor, Sheikh Lahmar, who dyes his beard red with henna. Women line up every day in front of his door to get amulets, their screams constantly ringing in my ears as he rids them of the spirits that inhabit them. Before I could say a word, a policeman entered the office carrying just-developed photos of the victim. Hamid gasped as he grabbed his head, his lower jaw trembling: “No... I must be dreaming!” he yelled, then ran out of the room. It made me regret ever reporting the body.

Translated by Alexander E. Elinson

From:

Saïd Khatibi, *The End of the Sahara*. London: Bitter Lemon Press, 2026.



Foto © Franco Volpi

Ana Marwan

Ana Marwan (Murska Sobota, 1980) je slovenska pisateljica. Po študiju primerjalne književnosti na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani se je leta 2005 preselila na Dunaj. Na literarno pot je stopila tri leta zatem, ko je prejela literarno nagrado Schreiben zwischen den Kulturen (medkulturne pisave). Piše tako daljša kot krajša prozna besedila, tako v nemščini kot v slovenščini. Leta 2019 je objavila prvi roman *Der Kreis des Weberknechts* (v slovenskem prevodu Lipitsch, 2023). Roman *Zabubljena* (2021) je napisala v slovenščini in leta 2022 zanj prejela nagrado kritiško sito. Sočasno je za prozno besedilo *Wechselkröte* (*Krota*) na 46. Dnevih nemške literature v Celovcu prejela nagrado Ingeborg Bachmann. Pozneje je med drugim objavila še zbirko proznih miniatur *Sei Erich* (2024; Bodi Erich). V letih 2023 in 2024 je bila glavna urednica revije Literatur und Kritik, od leta 2026 pa je kuratorka za literaturo na dunajskem festivalu Kultursommer.

Ana Marwan (Murska Sobota, 1980) is a Slovenian writer. After studying comparative literature at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, she moved to Vienna in 2005. She began her literary career three years later, after receiving the “Schreiben zwischen den Kulturen” (Writing Across Cultures) literary award. She writes both long and short prose works in both German and Slovenian. In 2019, she published her first novel, *Der Kreis des Weberknechts* (The Weavers Circle, translated into Slovenian as *Lipitsch*, 2023). She wrote the novel *Zabubljena* (2021; *Cocooned*) in Slovenian and received the Kritiško sito Award for it in 2022. At the same time, she received the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize for her prose piece *Wechselkröte* (The Toad) at the 46th Days of German Literature in Klagenfurt. She later published, among other works, a collection of prose miniatures titled *Sei Erich* (2024; *Be Erich*). In 2023 and 2024, she served as editor-in-chief of the journal Literatur und Kritik, and since 2026, she has been the literary curator for the Kultursommer festival in Vienna.

Levitve

Pred letom dni je bila Vera ob pregledu za vozniški izpit izmerjena. Bila je dva centimetra višja kot ob zadnji meritvi. Zdravnik je v odgovor na njeno začudenje zamahnil z roko, kot bi bilo navadna muha, ki jo velja pregnati, in menil, jutro ali večer ali drža ali meritvena napaka prejšnjega zdravnika. Toda Vera je nazadnje merila mama, ki je natančna, in tudi sama je meritve jemala resno, k vsaki pristopila zdravna. Zvečer je meritev z istim izidom ponovila doma, naslednji dan pa z vlakom odpotovala k mami, ki ima na okviru vrat svoje spalnice še vedno narisano ravnilo, ki je v poljubnih presledkih s črticami označevalo leto in Verino višino. Tudi ta okvir je potrdil njeno rast. Zadnja črtica je bila narejena pred dvajsetimi leti, pri dvajsetih; po dvajsetem ne raste nobena ženska več.

Teden zatem je opazila, da ji je klobuk premajhen. Deset let ga že ima in ne spomni se več, ali ji je bil takoj premajhen, ko je prišel po pošti, ona, ki nikoli ne vrača pošiljk, pa si je rekla *bo že v redu*, kot tolikokrat; gotovo ga je naročila po pošti, tak drag klobuk dobiš sicer le v majhnih butikih, kjer ti lastnica reče *Odlično vam pristaja!* In ne moreš samo gledati, hvala, ampak si prignan do evforije, v kateri pritrdiš *Ja, čudovit je!*, in prisiljen si v nakup povsem neprimerne klobuka.

V takih primerih, ko klobuk, ki je bil prej po velikosti nevpadljiv, nenadoma tišči, to se pravi, če kak nenavaden sum v kratkem času naleti na potrditev, se Vera pogosto zdrami iz nedejavnosti. Nered, ki vlada v njenih elektronskih arhivih, je ne odvrne, ne zdi se ji preveč zamudno, da si naredi novo datoteko, jo poimenuje Klobuk in vanjo preslika ne le fotografije, na katerih nosi klobuk, ampak tudi tiste, ki so bile po vsej verjetnosti narejene tik po tistem, ko ga je snela. Natančno jih pregleda; na tistih, na katerih nosi klobuk, gleda, kako globoko je poveznjen, na tistih, na katerih ga nima, pa išče sledi vdolbine ali rdeče lise na vrhu čela.

Na nobeni fotografiji ne vidi take kot v ogledalu. Seveda dopušča možnost, da z leti njena koža izgublja prožnost in da vdolbine dlje časa ne izginejo. Prav tako se zaveda, da ni nujno, da ji je zrasla glava, in da je prav tako mogoče, da se je skrčil klobuk.

Nelagodnega dvoma ne more pregnati, še nekaj časa bo ostal v ozadju njene velike glave. Izmerila si jo je in številko zapisala v dnevnik, da bi spremljala razvoj. Na naslednjo prazno stran je še položila dlan in jo obrisala s svinčnikom, kot to človek počne, ko je majhen.

Čudno je rasti po štiridesetem. Verino vedénje je povsem naravno.

Morda se levi.

Saj: tudi njena koža se lušči. Vsak drugi dan si pred ogledalom v kopalnici odstranjuje luske z lic, kot bi ličkala koruzo.

Da vse to ni psihosomatsko, je prepričana, saj je o tem, da se poleg kač in njih pastirjev levijo tudi raki samotarji, prebrala šele po tistem, ko je:

- zaradi pogoste menjave hiš potegnila vzporednico med sabo in njimi;
- opazila, da raste.

Večkrat so ji rekli, da v hiši, kjer zdaj živi, ne sme ničesar spreminjati – ti, ki je ne poznajo. Ki ne vedo, kako nerada posega v stvari. (Nekateri drugi, ki je prav tako niso poznali, so to njeno lastnost zamenjevali z lenobo. (A davno so minuli časi, ko bi ji še kdo oponašal njene morebitne lastnosti.))

Še dve leti lahko ostane, pet so ji jih obljubili, preden se vrne svakov brat. Vera si misli, da ji ne bo težko, da te hiše ne bo pogrešala. Obenem ni pozabila določenih kontorzionističnih figur svojega spomina, ki jim je bila presenečena priča. Ponovno se bo morala pustiti presenetiti.

Njena sedanja hiša stoji ob tiru, a vlak se ne ustavi ob njej. Do najbližje postaje kolesari 40 minut. Ko na njivah leži sneg, prečka gola koruzna polja peš, za kar potrebuje enako dolgo. Ko stopi na vlak proti mestu, se deset minut pozneje pelje mimo svoje hiše. Seveda bi se lahko s kolesom takoj peljala v pravo smer, ampak v tem primeru bi se do postaje vozila 50 minut. Ravno toliko nazaj grede. Seveda bi bilo to učinkoviteje, celo 12 minut pozneje bi lahko šla od doma, ampak 100 minut noče kolesariti, če obstaja možnost, da kolesari samo 80 minut. Poleg tega na srečo ni v položaju, ki bi ga neučinkovitost znatno poslabšala.

Okoli hiše rasejo tuje, kot okoli vsake druge hiše v vasi. Dobro razumejujejo *tuje* od *mojega*.

Ko za grmi sliši vlak, Vera ve: deset čez štiri je.

Čez pet minut bo udaril cerkveni zvon.

Nikoli še ni živela tako zelo v času. Kot s pavlovskim zvoncem se zdaj uči, kakšne barve je svetloba ob določeni uri v določenem letnem času, kako padajo sence.

Odkar živi na vasi, vstaja zgodaj kot nikoli prej – z zvonom, vlakom, petelinom.

Tolikokrat že se je selila, da ve, kako hiše puščajo barvo. Dobra tretjina lastnosti, ki jih imenuje svoje lastne, pride od hiše, bi rekla zdaj.

Še pred dvajsetimi leti bi rekla, da je *po naravi* taka in taka in taka, zdaj misli, da je z naravo mišljena preprosto prva hiša, ki ji radi dajemo prednost, in da je v tem primeru jezik čez mejo točnejši: *von Haus aus*. Po hiši.

Veliko se lahko naučimo od jezikov.

Vera dopušča možnost, da se je samota razširila po hiši, ko je ta dolga leta stala prazna, preden je prišla tudi vanjo. Njena luščeca se koža je gotovo porozna, gotovo lahko taka nevidna, neulovljiva stvar pronica v človeka s tanko kožo.

Ob tem Vera pomisli na tistega lepega starega pianista, ki je rekel, da je bilo njemu, v nasprotju z vsemi drugimi, ki so z zagrizeno natančnostjo sledili idealu, vseeno, kakšen klavir so mu postavili na oder. Igral je brez zahtev po popravkih na vsakem, in pustil, da je zvenel drugače.

Na tak način želi biti Vera v svojih hišah.

Beseda *moja* je povzetek, ki ga Vera uporablja, da olajša sporazumevanje, ki je že *po naravi* in *po hiši* težko. Nobena hiša ni bila v človeškem smislu njena. A doslej je še vedno lahko našla prazno ali polprazno hišo, v katero se je prehodno vselila. Kakor rak samotar je hodila z golim, nebu na milost in nemilost prepuščenim zadkom iz ene – *a leap of faith* – v drugo.

Ne le hiša, torej, tudi selitve so jo določale. Sčasoma je skrčila število stvari, ki jih potrebuje, na 47.

Sedeminštirideset je obenem tudi število stvari, nad katerimi ima lahko pregled,

ne da bi jih morala iskati. Niti minute ne izgubi z iskanjem. Ta njena zmožnost se morda zaradi objektivno majhnega števila stvari ne zdi omembe vredna, a poudariti je treba, da imajo hiše tudi mnogo raznovrstnih lastnih stvari, ki včasih prekrijejo njene ali pa vsaj ustvarijo vrvečo sliko, ki občutno oteži iskanje. Toda za svojih 47 stvari vedno najde mesto, ki si ga zapomni. Ne premešča jih, uporablja jih, kjer so. Tako kot jablane na vrtu ji ni treba iskati nobene svojih stvari.

Vera se je torej iz *po hiši* neredoljubne osebe spremenila v redoljubno.

Seveda razume smisel iskanja drobnih predmetov. Primerjati ga je mogoče z bolečino, ki jo povzročajo lepi neudobni čevlji. Vendar trenutno ne potrebuje nobenega malega iskanja, ki bi zamenjalo veliko, nobene male bolečine, ki bi prekrila veliko, trenutno se Vera lahko odpove vsemu, v velikem in v malem, ter se preda udobju kavča vsake hiše. Čedalje bolj postaja nekdo, ki natanko ve, česa noče.

Shedding Skin

A year ago Vera had her height measured as part of a driving licence checkup. She was two centimetres taller than the last time. The doctor responded to her amazement with a wave of the hand, as if he were shooing away a housefly, and said something about morning or evening or posture or a measuring mistake by the previous doctor. But last time Mother, who is precise, measured her and Vera herself took the measurements seriously, standing upright every time. That evening she repeated the exercise at home, with the same result, and the next day she took the train to Mother's, who still has that line drawn on the frame of the bedroom door, dashes drawn at random intervals, indicating the year and Vera's height. Even this doorframe confirmed that she had grown. The last line was done twenty years ago, at the age of twenty; after twenty a woman stops growing.

A week later she noticed that her hat was too small. She'd had it for ten years already and could no longer remember whether it had been too small from the start, from the time it had arrived in the mail. Since she was never one to send things back, she perhaps told herself, *it'll be fine*, as she often did. It must have been a mail order because you can only find hats that expensive in little boutiques where the owner says, *It looks great on you!* And you can't be *just looking around, thank you*, you're pushed into a euphoria that makes you agree, *Yes, it's wonderful!*, and you're forced to buy some entirely unsuitable hat.

Cases like this, when, for example, a hat that used to fit suddenly feels too tight, that is, when a certain inkling is suddenly confirmed, make Vera emerge from her inertia. Regardless of how chaotic and messy her hard drive is, she sees it as no waste of time to create a new folder, label it "Hat," and fill it not only with photos where she is wearing the hat but also with those probably taken right after removal. She examines them closely; in the ones where she's wearing a hat, she looks to see how its seated or on her head, and in the ones where she's hatless, she seeks out traces of an indentation or red marks at the top of her forehead.

In none of the photos does she see what she sees in the mirror. Of course, she allows for the possibility that her skin is losing its elasticity with age and

that the indentations no longer disappear. She is also aware that her head hasn't necessarily grown, that it's also possible that the hat has shrunk.

She cannot get rid of this nagging doubt, which will keep lingering in the back of her big head. She took a measurement and wrote the number down in her journal so she could track the development. Then she placed her hand on the next page and traced it with a pencil, just like you do when you're little.

It's odd to grow after you're forty. Vera's behaviour is completely rational.

Maybe she's shedding her skin.

For her skin is also peeling. Every other day she stands before the bathroom mirror and removes flakes of skin from her cheeks. Like she's shucking corn.

This can't be just in the head, she's convinced, since in addition to snakes and dragonflies also hermit crabs moult. She read about this only after she:

- drew a parallel between herself and them due to her frequent moving from one to another,
- noticed that she was growing.

She has often been told, by those that don't know her, that she mustn't change a thing in the house she's living in, by those that don't know how she hates to meddle with things (Others, who also don't know her, confuse this quality with laziness). (But the times have long past when anyone who would reproach her for presumed qualities.))

She can stay for two more years of the five they promised her before her brother-in-law comes back. Vera thinks it won't be difficult, that she's not going to miss this house. Yet she hasn't forgotten the odd contortions of memory that she has, to her surprise, witnessed. She'll have to let herself be surprised anew.

Her present house is right next to the tracks, but the train doesn't stop nearby. The nearest station is forty minutes by bike. When the snow comes, she crosses barren corn fields on foot, which takes her just as long. When she takes the train to town, she passes her own house ten minutes faster. She could of course bike

in the same direction, but then she would have to cycle 50 minutes to the station. And just as long on the way back. That would, of course, be more efficient, since she could leave home a whole 12 minutes later, but she has no desire to cycle 100 minutes if she has the possibility of cycling only 80 minutes. Moreover, she is fortunate enough not to be in a position that would be rendered considerably worse through inefficiency.

Thuja grow around the house, just as that same foreign tree grows around the other houses in the village. They can well divide what is *foreign* from what is *mine*.

When she hears the train behind the little trees, Vera knows: it's ten past four.

In five minutes, the church bell will ring.

She has never been so in tune with the passing of time. Now she learns, like Pavlov's dog with that bell, what colour the light is at certain times in a certain season, how the shadows fall.

Ever since she's been living in the village, she's been getting up earlier than she ever did—to the sound of the bell, the train, the rooster.

She's moved so many times that she knows how each house leaves a mark. A third of the qualities she calls her own come from the house, she'd say now.

Twenty years ago she still would have said she was, *by nature*, such and such and such, but now she thinks that *by nature* just meant the first house, the favoured one, and that in this case, the language across the border is more precise: *von Haus aus*. By the house.

We can learn much from languages.

Vera grants the possibility that loneliness spread through the house as it stood empty for so many years, before it got into her. Her peeling skin is certainly porous; surely such an invisible, elusive thing can seep through a person's thin skin.

This makes Vera think of that grand old pianist who said that, for him, unlike all those who were so fervently chasing an ideal, he didn't care what kind of piano they put on stage for him. He never demanded adjusted strings, he let each one sound different.

That is how Vera wants to be in her houses.

The word *my* is a summation Vera uses to make it easier to communicate, something that is *by nature* and *by house* hard enough already. No house has been hers in the human sense. But she has always been able to find an empty or half-empty house she could move for the time being. Like a hermit crab, she took a leap of faith from one to the next, her bare backside at the mercy of the sky.

Not just the house, also moving house has determined her. Over time she reduced the number of things she needs to 47.

Forty-seven is also the number of things she can keep monitor of without having to search for them. She wastes not a minute looking for things. This is no great ability, given the objectively small number of things, but it's crucial to emphasize that houses also contain many of their own things, which sometimes obscure hers or at least create a cluttered scene that makes searching significantly more difficult. However, she always finds a place for her each of her 47 things that lets her remember where they are. She doesn't move them around; she leaves them right where she uses them. Just like the apple trees in the garden, she never has to search for any of her belongings.

Vera has thus grown from a person who can't stand disorder to one who thinks order is fine.

She of course understands the point of searching for small objects. It is like the pain caused by beautiful but uncomfortable shoes. But now she doesn't need little searches to replace the big one, doesn't need little pains to overshadow the big one, now Vera can now renounce everything, big and small, and take comfort in the sofa in any house. Increasingly, she is becoming someone who knows exactly what she doesn't want.

Translated by Jason Blake



Foto © Jana Radičević

Natalija Milovanović

Natalija Milovanović (Niš, 1995) je slovenska pesnica in prevajalka, piše v slovenščini in srbsčini. Na Univerzi v Gradcu je študirala prevajalstvo. Dela kot književna prevajalka in producentka festivala Pranger. Za prvo pesniško zbirko *Samoumevno* (2021) je prejela nagrado za najboljši literarni prvenec Slovenskega knjižnega sejma, za drugo zbirko *Tuja mehkoba* (2025) pa Veronikino nagrado. Obe knjigi sta bili uvrščeni v kritiški izbor 10 Books from Slovenia. Njene posamezne pesmi so prevedene v španščino, nemščino, makedonščino, korejščino, maratščino in češčino. V angleščini so dostopne na evropskem pesniškem portalu Versopolis in v spletni reviji Asymptote Journal.

Natalija Milovanović (Niš, 1995) is a Slovenian poet and translator who writes in Slovenian and Serbian. She studied translation at the University of Graz. She works as a literary translator and as a producer for the Pranger Festival. For her first poetry collection, *Samoumevno* (2021; Taken for Granted), she received the Slovenian Book Fair Award for Best Literary Debut, and for her second collection, *Tuja mehkoba* (2025; Foreign Softness), she received the Veronika Award. Both books were included in the critics' selection "10 Books from Slovenia." Her individual poems have been translated into Spanish, German, Macedonian, Korean, Marathi, and Czech. They are available in English on the European poetry portal Versopolis and in the online magazine Asymptote Journal.

Tujerodne vrste

(Ljubov)

Odhod pomeni spoznanje
nove vrste neizrekljivosti,

ki se razraste med glagolskimi časi,
bliskovito in trdovratno,

kot invazivne tujerodne vrste,
ki se požvižgajo na permakulturo.

Ni rečeno, da nihče ne posluša,
da nihče ne poskuša populiti plevela,

toda preteklost je z vsakim dnem
vse bolj negotova,

glede na to, kdo jo pripoveduje
in kaj ob tem pripoveduje sebi.

Perspektive

Sosed na balkonu dela
 hišico za ptice,
 hišico za ljudi,
 za občudovanje
 človeškega očesa.
 Kaj bo kosu ali vrabcu ali sinički
 rdeča streha s sivim dimnikom?

Zakaj ne morem preprosto
 videti lepote,
 me sprašuješ,
 misliš pa,
 zakaj nočeš videti, zakaj izpostavljaš
 le slabosti vsega okoli sebe?

In potem se spomnim
 tistih lastovk,
 ki so na Premudi padale
 iz gnezd,
 in natarja, ki jih je
 z lestvijo vračal v podboj,
 reševal pred mačkami
 in pri tem godrnjal:
jebiga mali,
kud si krenija kad ne znaš letit?

Lepoto je lažje videti
 iz ptičje
 kot iz žabje
 perspektive,
 ki razkriva brazgotine.

Žerjav

Oče je pravil, da se po pokopališču
 pozna intimna zgodovina naselij.
 Ko se sprehajaš po njem, ni bolj živega mesta.

Na Žalah sem se najraje ustavila ob
 spomeniku sovjetskimi vojakom,
 kjer je jata kamnitih žerjavov
 večno pripravljena na polet
 kot vse nenadne smrti, ki odvršijo,
 še preden dojamejo, da so se zgodile.

Z očetom obmolčiva ob vprašanju,
 kje počivajo priseljenci.
 Ali se bom še mrtva ozirala proti krajem,
 na katerih sem si med sprehodi
 predstavljala svoj nagrobnik?
 Ali je tistim, ki rečejo, da jim je vseeno,
 resnično vseeno? On pravi, naj ga kar vržemo
 v zrak ali vodo, da mu ne bo treba hraniti korenin.

Pred leti je za svojega očeta sam narisal spomenik,
 kot sta skupaj narisala načrt hiše, ki nabira
 prah na nekem daljnem podeželju. V osrčju tišine
 nad moškim imenom kompromisna zvezda,
 nad ženskim brezkompromisni katoliški križ.

Ali bo šel k staršem nadet še en simbol?
 Ali pa ga bom kljub globi za razsipanje ostankov
 kot žerjava poslala vseeno kam,
 tako da povsod, kjer se sprehajam, lahko pomislim:
 ni bolj živega mesta.

Svet gre naprej

Bila je svetla noč v avgustu in bila je velika povodenj.
Iz prevrnjenih smetnjakov za biološke smeti
je voda nosila množico našrtih, nabuhlih
belih črvov. Na stotine jih je bilo,

plavali so s tokom vsaj deset metrov,
preden jih je odneslo v odtok.
Ježi so ždeli pod strehami grmovij in čakali,
da se spravijo na naplavljenje.

Bila je povodenj in bela luna in beli črvi,
bila je narava *s svojo v norost spravljajočo nevtralnostjo*
in neustavljivo razsipno vsemogočnostjo.^{*}
Vse sem videla od blizu, vendar mene ni bilo.

* * *

Bila je svetla noč v juliju, nekaj let zatem,
in bila je velika povodenj, ponovno ob polni luni.
In bil je moški z velikim dežnikom,
ki me je počakal in vso premočeno sprejel podenj.

Brez vprašanj ali domislic
in predvsem brez pričakovanj.
Hodila sva proti toku vsaj deset metrov,
preden sem izginila v vhod, ki ga je poznal,

saj je tu nekoč živel, je navrgel mimogrede,
in predvsem brez podvprašanj,
z blagim nasmehom, ki je v hipu
izrisal, kako dobra sosedica bi šele lahko bila.

^{*} László Krasznahorkai, Tezej – univerzalni, Tretji govor, I., v: *Svet gre naprej* (prev. Marjanca Mihelič).

*Nič se ni spremenilo, da, narava je še kar
ravnodušno razsipno udrihala,
ampak bila sem in bil je človek, ki
je kazal, v kakšnem svetu bi želel živeti.**

* Prav tam, Drugi govor, I.

Tuja mehkoba

Svet, na katerega so te pripravljali,
ne obstaja.

Tisti, ki so te pripravljali,
ti nimajo več česa povedati.

Ne vedo, ali je bilo od nekdaj tako,
menda ne. Po kratkem premisleku
o pretresih pred nekaj desetletji
rečejo, mogoče, ne vem.

Vsakomur se zdijo lastni sunki najmočnejši,
vsakomur tuja mehkoba pretrda.
Svet stoji, vsakič najslabši,
vsakič najboljši doslej.

Foreign Species

(Lyubov)

To depart is to recognize
new species of the unutterable,

running wild amidst the tenses,
rapidly and tenaciously,

like invasive, foreign species
that take no notice of the permaculture.

That doesn't mean nobody's listening,
that nobody's trying to pull out the weeds,

but with each passing day
the past becomes more uncertain,

depending on who tells it
and what they tell themselves.

Perspectives

The neighbor on the balcony is making
a bird house,
a person house,
for the admiration of
the human gaze.
What is a red roof with a grey chimney
to a blackbird or a sparrow or a finch?

Why can't you simply
see beauty,
you ask me,
thinking,
why can't you see, why do you focus
only on the flaws in everything around you?

And then I remember
those sparrows
in Premuda falling
from their nests,
and the waiter on the ladder
returning them to the doorframe,
saving them from the cats,
all the while muttering:
fuck it, little one,
where do you think you're going if you can't fly?

Beauty is easier to see
from a birds-eye perspective
than from a frog's,
revealing the scars.

The Crane

My father said that cemeteries
know the intimate histories of the neighborhood.
When you walk through a cemetery, there is no place more alive.

My favorite place in the Žale cemetery
is the monument to Soviet soldiers
where a flock of stone cranes
eternally prepares for flight
like all unexpected deaths that flutter off
before even realizing they have occurred.

My father and I are silent on the question
of where immigrants are laid to rest.
When we're dead, will we still look toward the places
where we once imagined our headstones to be
as we took our daily walks?
Do the ones who say they don't care, really not care?
He says we should scatter him
into the air or the water so that he won't nourish any roots.

Years ago, he drew a gravestone for his own father
just like they had together drawn the plan for a house that now collects
dust in some distant countryside. In the heart of silence
a compromised star fades above the man's name,
an uncompromising Catholic cross above the woman's.

Will he go to his parents to add yet another symbol
or will we scatter him wherever,
despite the fine, like a crane,
so that wherever I walk I can think:
there is no place more alive.

The World Goes On

It was a luminous August night and a great deluge.
The water carried a mass of gorged and bloated
white worms from overturned bins of
organic waste. There were hundreds of them,

they swam in the current for at least ten meters or so
until they were swept down the drain.
Hedgehogs crouched beneath the tops of bushes
waiting to get at the drowning ones.

There was a deluge and a white moon and white worms,
there was nature itself *with its maddening neutrality*
its untameable, prodigal omnipotence.^{*}
I saw it all up close but I was never there.

*

It was a bright July night, a couple of years later,
and it was a great deluge, again on the full moon.
And there was a man with a big umbrella,
waiting for me, soaking wet, welcoming me beneath it.

Without questions or schemes
and mainly without expectations.
We walked against the current for another ten meters or so
before I disappeared into a doorway that he knew,

as he used to live there himself, he added in passing,
and mainly without additional questions,
with a mild smile that immediately
showed me what good neighbors we would make.

^{*} László Krasznahorkai, *The World Goes On: Universal Theseus, The Third Lecture* (trans. John Bitki).

Nothing changed, yes, nature went on,
pounding down, prodigal, even-handed,
but I was there and there was a person, who had
shown *what kind of world I would want to live in*.*

* Ibid., Second Lecture, I.

Foreign Softness

The world for which you were prepared
doesn't exist.

Those who prepared you
have nothing left to say.

They don't know whether it's always been like this,
probably not. After brief reflection
on the shocks of the past few decades
they say, maybe, I don't know.

Everyone feels their own blows the hardest,
every foreign softness feels too hard.
The world stands, always the worst,
always the best that it's ever been.

Translated by Lukas Debeljak



Foto © Siniša Sunara

Neven Ušumović

Neven Ušumović (Zagreb, 1972) je hrvaški pisatelj. Odraščal je v Subotici. Na Univerzi v Zagrebu je študiral filozofijo, primerjalno književnost in hungaristiko ter tudi turkologijo. Od leta 2002 je ravnatelj Mestne knjižnice v Umagu, prevaja pa literaturo iz madžarščine in slovenščine v hrvaščino. Velja za enega najpomembnejših sodobnih avtorjev kratke proze v regiji, s svojim delom povezuje hrvaški, srbski, madžarski in slovenski kulturni prostor. V Zagrebu je objavil zbirke kratkih

zgodb *7 mladih* (1997), *Makovo zrno* (2009), *Rajske ptice* (2012), *Zlatna opeklina* (2019) in roman *Ekskurzija* (2001). V Beogradu je leta 2014 izšel izbor njegove kratke proze, v Novem Sadu pa leta 2021 madžarska izdaja njegovih izbranih kratkih zgodb *A csalogány nyelve* (Slavčkov jezik). V slovenščini sta izšli zbirki kratke proze *Zlata opeklina* (2022) in *Rajske ptice* (2025). Njegova kratka proza je bila vključena v ameriško antologijo *Best European Fiction* (2009) in *Zagreb Noir* (2015).

Neven Ušumović (Zagreb, 1972) is a Croatian writer. He grew up in Subotica. He studied philosophy, comparative literature, Hungarian studies, and Turkish studies at the University of Zagreb. Since 2002, he has been the director of the Umag City Library, and he translates literature from Hungarian and Slovenian into Croatian. He is considered one of the most important contemporary authors of short prose in the region, and his work connects the Croatian, Serbian, Hungarian, and Slovenian cultural spaces. In Zagreb, he published the short story collections *7 mladih* (1997; 7 Young People), *Makovo zrno* (2009; A Poppy Seed),

Rajske ptice (2012; Birds of Paradise), *Zlatna opeklina* (2019; Golden Sunburn), and the novel *Ekskurzija* (2011; Excursion). A selection of his short prose was published in Belgrade in 2014, and a Hungarian edition of his selected short stories, *A csalogány nyelve* (The Language of the Nightingale), was published in Novi Sad in 2021. The short story collections *Zlata opeklina* (2022; Golden Sunburn) and *Rajske ptice* (2025; Birds of Paradise) have been published in Slovenian. His short stories have been included in the American anthologies *Best European Fiction* (2009) and *Zagreb Noir* (2015).

Slavujev jezik

(odlomci iz priče)

2.

Da kojim slučajem živim u Istri, ne bih morao izmišljati ljepote svoga kraja. U slučaju subotičkog krajolika i veduta, računao sam na snagu nostalgije. Bilo ih je više vrsta: austrougarska nostalgija, čisto mađarska, židovska, pa čak i aktualna jugonostalgija. Moja ciljana publika bila je prilično široka i turističke skupinice koje bih okupljao na svojim edukativnim stazama imale bi nacionalni sastav mnogo raznolikiji od aktualnog vojvođanskog: uz Mađare i Nijemce, odnosno Austrijance, našlo bi se tu i Židova neuhvatljivih nacionalnih identiteta, Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, a za izlet bi se čak zainteresirao i po koji zalutali Talijan, Amerikanac.

Ponuda se s vremenom svela na dva dobro osmišljena cjelodnevna izleta, s noćenjem pod šatorima u Hrastovači: prvi se završavao na Palićkom, drugi na Ludoškom jezeru. Hrastovača je sedam kilometara udaljena od centra Subotice i nalazi se u blizini naselja Makova sedmica. Jedna je od šuma zaštićenog prirodnog dobra – Subotičke peščare. Iz centra bismo krenuli pješice ili biciklima širokom cestom čiji su se rubovi postupno gubili u pijesku prepustajući nam slobodu lutanja po nepreglednoj ravni; niz kuća sa strane prorjeđivao se do tek pokojeg salaša, voćnjaka ili vinograda. Skupine koje sam vodio najviše su se veselile stadima ovaca koje su lijeno trgale rijetke jestive travčice na pustim površinama ispred šume. U hladnjaku lovačkog doma čekalo je moje goste delikatesno iznenađenje: ovčje kiselo mlijeko kojim me opskrbljivao moj dragi poslovni partner, stari Mátyás.

Sve veći interes za ovakav tip izleta koju je priču za nekoliko godina doveo do rutine. Iako sam radije živio u prošlosti i u gradu podnosio samo ona mjesta za koja su me vezala intimna sjećanja – za razliku od Zrilića koji je usprkos svojim Zrinyijama živio u strogoj sadašnjosti i užicima koje ona pruža – izbjegavao sam povijesne anegdote; u mojoj priči povijest je bila prisutna samo u onoj mjeri u kojoj se mogla uočiti. Dakako, ništa oko nas nije bilo izvorno: postotak autohtonih šuma spustio se ispod 10%, pa iako se naša šuma zvala Hrastovača (s autohtonim stablima hrasta lužnjaka), uokolo su prevladavali borovi i bagremi, o raširenosti gelegunje (američki kopriivić) da i ne govorimo!

Neposredna blizina mađarske granice imala je dobre i loše strane: to malo vode što je dopuštalo da se Kereš (Körös) nazove rječicom, uzimali su Mađari za svoje ribnjake; ipak, zauzvrat, uvozili smo iz Mađarske divljač za naša sve popularnija lovišta: jeleni lopatari prelazili su granicu uz pomoć naše vlade... Popularnost je lovišta, treba li to reći, bila u proporcionalnom odnosu s ilegalnošću nekih od lovačkih aktivnosti, ali to je već druga priča.

Istina, ja sam sve do tog trenutka izbjegavao lovačke priče: kako je moj posao (koji sam u početku doživljavao kao izliku što ne nadničarim po njivama i voćnjacima kao većina mojih prijatelja) postajao unosniji, rasla je i količina šećera u jeziku koji sam, kako je rasla potražnja, postupno usvojio, da ne kažem formirao... Bogatstvo i raznolikost, kao temeljni vojvođanski lajtmotivi, nezaobilazni su ukrasi i moje jezične bujice; prostranost i očuvanost (stalno mjesto: Obedska bara stavljena je prvi put pod zaštitu 1874. godine, dvije godine nakon prvog nacionalnog parka na svijetu, Yellowstone!), dvije su prave odskočnice za jezične bravure; a zatim, u odsustvu ozbiljnijih vodenih pojava, slijede usporedbe s valovitim morem (vjetar-gospodar!), velikim pustinjama (pijesak što krcka pod zubima) i oazama, koje se mozaički raspoređuju po prostoru, kao da prate žeđ i žudnju turističkih isposnika. Sve u svemu, predstavljao sam to kao mali posjet pustinjskom svijetu, bezopasnom kao i sama riječ peščara.

U početku nismo noćili u šumi. Tek kada su lovci pružili logistiku i za logorovanje, s obzirom na to da je ponekad broj gostiju bio veći od smještajnog kapaciteta lovačkog doma, iskoristio sam tu mogućnost. Tihe noći pod svodovima hrastovih (borovih!) stabala, šapat uz pucketanje vatre, zvukovi i mirisi koji bi nam ulazili u šatore i snove i vodili nas preko nedalekog ruba šume u tamna prostranstva, bili su moja hrana za ovakve izlete, te ujedno glavni razlog zašto sam ostao u poslu.

[...]

5.

„Eichelhäher?”

„Eichhörnchen!”

To je bio naš način pozdravljanja. Kada je sve obuzeo san i masivna tišina zavladała logorištem, izašao sam iz šatora i krenuo u šetnju šumom. *Eichelhäher*, *Eichhörnchen*, *Eichelhäher*, *Eichhörnchen*...

Taj pozdrav je, dakako, smislila Jelena, kao i gomilu drugih sitnica koje su činile naš svijet. Bile su te sitnice moje zakopano blago, sve dok ih Tünde svojim likom nije osvijetlila. Jelena mi je odjednom bila kao nadohvat ruke, mogao sam je vidjeti u liku slavljene ljepotice, ona je bila njezina sjena, njezin sjaj, njezina vatra.

Slučajno, došao sam do ruba, gdje je počinjala streljana. Otvarala se među stablima tamna čistina pa sam promijenio smjer; sigurno je tu koji vojnik, ako ne i cijela stražarska smjena. Ušao sam dublje među hrastove i nakon nekoliko koraka, primijetio da stabla postaju to viša i deblja kako se udaljavam od streljane. Trebalo mi je najviše pola sata da se napokon nađem u pravoj šumi.

Ova sam stabla dobro poznao, ali nikad se nisam usudio dovesti svoju skupinu dovde. Jelena me nekoliko puta vodila do ovog dijela šume. Tu bismo sjeli, svatko uz svoje stablo i slušali šum lišća, udisali zrak prožet mirisima drevnog života.

Jelena je ustvari bila veliki cinik, njezina mržnja prema gradu, prema ljudima općenito vodila ju je do ovih granica. Prije je neprestano boravila u Dudovoj šumi, tom velikom parku kraj Hale sportova na Radijalcu. I ja sam živio u tom bloku i bježao iz usijanih višekatnica u hlad šume. Seleći se s klupe na klupu s knjigom u ruci, ostao sam jedan cijeli dan s Jelenom: sjela je kraj mene i naše čitanje pretvorilo se u nadmetanje tko će zadnji ustati i otići. Kada je Dudova šuma utonula u potpuni mrak, shvatili smo da nam nema druge do da se upoznamo. Počevši od sljedećeg dana zakazivali smo sastanke u parku.

Bila je starija od mene, već je završavala studij biologije u Novom Sadu. Naši susreti pretvarali su se u stručne obilaske pojedinih stabala. Nije voljela goleme, napumpane platane koje su bile zaštitni znak Dudove šume (u kojoj više uopće nije bilo dudova); s uživanjem otkrivala mi je svijet kukaca koji je rovario među njihovim korijenjem i uzimala neku bubicu na vrh kažiprsta, držala govor njoj u čast kao da će upravo ona i njezin ugriz konačno srušiti odurno stablo! Jelena je tražila hrastove, znala je točno koliko ih ima u parku. Kada smo ih, nakon nekoliko mjeseci, sve obišli, sama od sebe nametnula se Hrastovača, kao naše jedino moguće utočište, i kako će se ubrzo pokazati: svetište.

Još uvijek se ratovalo i nije baš bilo preporučljivo ići prema streljani. Znali smo se mimoići s kolonama kamiona punim naoružane vojske. Nikad nas međutim nitko nije oslovio, znali smo tek uhvatiti poneki očajnički pogled iz duboke sjene kamionske cerade. Noge su nam tonule u pijesak, vjetar nam ga

je nosio u oči, ispirali smo usta povremeno i nakašljavali se da bismo ga se riješili. To je sve bilo dijelom našeg ritualnog veselja što smo zajedno i što smo na putu prema šumi. Lijepo je bilo znati da postoji granica ovog sumornog grada, države, vremena koja se može prijeći. Iako samo nekoliko sati, ali bili smo s onu stranu, govorila bi Jelena na povratku. A Jelena je ustvari davno prešla „s onu stranu”. Ja sam pak, eto, od tog kapitala pokrenuo svoj jeftini i plitki turizam.

Ali do ovih stabala nisam vodio svoje turiste. Otkako je Jelena nestala nisam se ni sam usudio ići do njih. *Eiche*, inače, na njemačkom znači hrast, pa su Nijemci i vjevericu i šojku nazvali prema njihovom omiljenom stablu: *Eichhörnchen* je vjeverica, a *Eichelhäher* šojka. I evo me među našim hrastovima. Zagrlio sam prvo stablo koje mi se učinilo Jeleninim i dugo ostao tako.

„U ovim su stablima duše mojih predaka,” rekla mi je prilikom našeg posljednjeg izleta, „duše malene kao bubice”, zacerekala se. Podigao sam sa zemlje sasušeni primjerak takvog jednog bića (i opet mi se javio Jelenin glas: *Cicindela germanica!*), stavio je u džep i vratio se u logor.

Neven Ušumović, *Rajske ptice*. Zagreb: Profil (2012).

Slavčkov jezik

(odlomka iz kratke zgodbe)

2.

Če bi po kakšnem naključju živel v Istri, si mi ne bi bilo treba izmišljati, kako lep je moj kraj. V primeru subotiške pokrajine in vedut pa sem računal na moč nostalgije. Teh nostalgij je bilo več vrst: avstro-ogrška, zgolj madžarska, judovska, in celo aktualna jugonostalgija. Moja ciljna publika je bila precej široka in turistične skupinice, ki sem jih zbiral na svojih poučnih poteh, so bile po narodnostni sestavi veliko bolj raznolike od aktualnega stanja v Vojvodini: poleg Madžarov in Nemcev oziroma Avstrijcev so bili tu še judje nedoločljive nacionalne identitete, Srbi, Hrvati in Slovenci, za izlet pa se je zanimal celo kakšen zabedel Italijan ali Američan.

Ponudba se je sčasoma omejila na dva dobro premišljena celodnevna izleta, s prenočevanjem pod šotori v Hrastovači: prvi se je končeval na Paličkem, drugi pa na Ludoškem jezeru. Hrastovača je sedem kilometrov oddaljena od središča Subotice in je v bližini naselja Makova sedmica. Spada med gozdove zaščitene naravnega območja – Subotičke peščare. Iz središča mesta smo se običajno peš ali s kolesi odpravili po široki cesti, katere robovi so se postopoma izgubljali v pesku, kar nam je omogočilo, da se svobodno potikamo po nepregledni ravnici; vrsta hiš ob strani se je redčila, dokler nismo naleteli le še na kakšno pristavo, sadovnjak ali vinograd. Skupine, ki sem jih vodil, so se najbolj veselile tropov ovac, ki so leno mulile redke užitne travice na pustem svetu pred gozdom. V hladilniku lovskega doma je moje goste čakalo delikatesno presenečenje: ovčje kislo mleko, s katerim me je oskrboval moj dragi poslovni partner, stari Mátyás.

Zaradi vse večjega zanimanja za tovrstne izlete je moja zgodba v nekaj letih postala rutina. Čeprav sem raje živel v preteklosti in sem v mestu prenašal samo tiste kotičke, s katerimi so me povezovali intimni spomini – v nasprotju z Zrilićem, ki je kljub svojim Zrinskim živel izključno v sedanosti in v užitkih, ki jih ta ponuja –, sem se izogibal zgodovinskim anekdotam; v moji zgodbi je bila zgodovina prisotna samo toliko, kolikor je je bilo mogoče videti. Kajpada nič okoli nas ni bilo izvorno; delež avtohtonih gozdov je padel pod 10 odstotkov, in čeprav se je naš gozd imenoval Hrastovača (z avtohtonimi drevesi lužnega hrasta oziroma doba), so vsenaokrog prevladovali bori in akacije, da o razširjenosti

ameriškega koprivovca (tu imenovanega gelegunja) sploh ne govorimo! Neposredna bližina madžarske meje je imela tako dobre kot slabe strani: tisti kanček vode, zaradi katerega je bilo Kereš (Körös) mogoče imenovati rečica, so Madžari napeljevali v svoje ribnike; vendar pa smo iz Madžarske v zameno uvažali divjad za naša vse bolj priljubljena lovišča: jeleni lopatarji so ob pomoči naše vlade mirno prehajali mejo ... Odveč je reči, da je bila priljubljenost lovišč v sorazmerju z nezakonitostjo nekaterih lovskih dejavnosti, toda to je že druga zgodba.

Jaz sem se vse do tega trenutka resda izogibal lovskim zgodbam: toda bolj ko je moj posel (ki sem ga v začetku doživljal kot izgovor, da se mi ni treba udinjati po njivah in sadovnjakih kot večini mojih prijateljev) postajal donosen, bolj je postajal pocukran jezik, ki sem ga z naraščanjem povpraševanja postopoma osvojil, da ne rečem ustvaril ... Bogastvo in raznolikost kot temeljna vojvodinska leitmotiva neizogibno krasita tudi moj plaz besed; prostranost in ohranjenost (stalno mesto: Obedska bara je bila prvič zaščiteni leta 1874, dve leti po prvem narodnem parku na svetu, Yellowstonu!) sta pripravi odskočni deski za jezikovne bravure; potem pa, v odsotnosti resnejših vodnih prizorov, sledijo primerjave z valovitim morjem (veter gospodar!), velikimi puščavami (pesek, ki škrti pod zobmi) in oazami, ki so mozaično razporejene po prostoru, kot da spremljajo žejo in željo turističnih puščavnikov. Skratka, vse skupaj sem predstavljal kot kratek obisk puščavskega sveta, nenevaren kot sama beseda peščara.

V začetku nismo prenočevali v gozdu. Šele ko so lovci vzpostavili tudi logistiko za šotorjenje, glede na to, da je bilo število gostov včasih večje od nastanitvenih zmogljivosti lovskega doma, sem izkoristil to možnost. Tihe noči pod svodi hrastovih (borovih!) dreves, šepet ob prasketanju ognja, zvoki in vonji, ki so prodirali v šotore in sanje in nas prek bližnjega roba gozda vodili v temna prostranstva, to je bila moja hrana za takšne izlete ter obenem glavni razlog, zakaj sem ostal v tem poslu.

[...]

5.

»Eichelhäher?«

»Eichhörnchen!«

To je bil naš način pozdravljanja. Ko so vsi utonili v sen in je v taboru zavl-

dala gosta tišina, sem stopil iz šotora in se odpravil na sprehod po gozdu. *Eichelhäher, Eichhörnchen, Eichelhäher, Eichhörnchen ...*

Ta pozdrav si je, kakopak, izmislila Jelena, kot tudi kopico drugih malenkosti, ki so sestavljale najin svet. Te malenkosti so bile moj zakopani zaklad, vse dokler jih ni s svojo podobo osvetlila Tünde. Naenkrat je bilo, kot da mi je Jelena na dosegu roke, lahko sem jo videl v podobi čaščene lepote, ona je bila njena senca, njen sijaj, njen ogenj.

Po naključju sem prišel do roba, kjer se je začejalo strelišče. Med drevesi se je odpirala temna jasa, zato sem spremenil smer hoje; tukaj je gotovo kakšen vojak, če ne kar celotna stražarska izmena. Zašel sem globlje med hraste in opazil, da postajajo drevesa višja in debelejša, bolj ko se oddaljujem od strelišča. Potreboval sem kvečjemu pol ure, da sem se naposled znašel v pravem gozdu.

Ta drevesa sem dobro poznal, a svoje skupine si še nikdar nisem upal pripeljati sem. Jelena me je nekajkrat peljala do tega dela gozda. Tukaj sva se usedla, vsak ob svoje drevo, in poslušala šumenje listja, vdihavala zrak, prežet z vonji starodavnega življenja.

Jelena je bila pravzaprav velik cinik, njeno sovraštvo do mesta, do ljudi nasploh, jo je pripeljalo do teh meja. Prej se je ves čas potikala po Dudovi šumi, tem velikem parku zraven športne hale na Radijalcu. Tudi jaz sem živel tam v bloku in bežal iz pregretyh večnadstropnih zgradb v gozdni hlad. S knjigo v roki sem se selil z ene klopce na drugo in nekoč ves dan prebil z Jeleno: usedla se je zraven mene in najino branje se je spremenilo v tekmovanje, kdo bo zadnji vstal in odšel. Ko se je v Dudovi šumi popolnoma zmračilo, sva dojela, da nama ne preostane drugega, kot da se spoznava. Od naslednjega dne sva se začela sestajati v parku.

Bila je starejša od mene, v Novem Sadu je že končevala študij biologije. Najina srečanja so se spreminjala v strokovne obhode posameznih dreves. Ni imela rada ogromnih, napihnjenih platan, ki so bile zaščitni znak Dudove šume (v kateri murv sploh ni bilo več); z užitkom mi je odkrivala svet hroščev, ki so rili med njihovimi koreninami, in si dala kakšnega žužka na vrh kazalca ter imela govor njemu v čast, kot da bo prav on s svojim ugrizom končno podrl odvratno drevo! Jelena je iskala hraste, točno je vedela, koliko jih je v parku. Ko sva po nekaj mesecih vse obredla, se je kot najino edino možno zatočišče – in kot se bo kmalu pokazalo: svetišče – sama od sebe ponujala Hrastovača.

Še vedno je bila vojna in ni bilo ravno priporočljivo hoditi blizu strelišča.

Včasih se je zgodilo, da sva srečala kolono kamionov, polnih oboroženih vojakov. Toda nikoli nama ni nihče nič rekel, včasih sva le ujela kakšen obupan pogled iz globoke sence kamionske cerade. Noge so se nama vdirale v pesek, veter nama ga je nosil v oči, od časa do časa sva si izpirala usta in se izkašljevala, da bi se ga znebila. Vse to je bilo del najinega obrednega veselja, ker sva skupaj in ker sva na poti proti gozdu. Lepo je bilo vedeti, da obstaja meja tega mrakobnega mesta, države in časa, ki jo je mogoče prečkati. Bila sva na oni strani, pa čeprav samo za nekaj ur, je ob vrnitvi govorila Jelena. Toda Jelena je pravzaprav že zdavnaj prešla »na ono stran«. Jaz pa sem, lej no, na tem kapitalu osnoval svoj ceneni in plitvi turizem.

Toda do teh dreves svojih turistov nisem peljal. Odkar je Jelena izginila, si še sam nisem upal do njih. *Eiche* sicer v nemščini pomeni hrast, zato so Nemci tako veverico kakor šoja poimenovali po svojem priljubljenem drevesu: *Eichhörnchen* je veverica, *Eichelhäher* pa šoja. In zdaj sem tu med najinimi hrasti. Objel sem prvo deblo, ki se mi je zdelo Jelenino, in dolgo ostal ob njem.

»V teh drevesih so duše mojih prednikov,« mi je rekla med najinim zadnjim izletom, »duše, majhne kot žužki,« se je zarežala. Dvignil sem s tal posušeni primerek takšnega bitjeca (in spet sem zaslišal Jelenin glas: *Cicindela germanica*!), ga dal v žep in se vrnil v tabor.

Prevedla Seta Knop

Vir:

Neven Ušumović, »Slavčkov jezik«, v: *Rajske ptice*. Ljubljana: LUD Literatura (2025).

The Nightingale's Tongue

(excerpts from the short story)

2.

If, by any chance, I lived, say, in Istria, I wouldn't have to invent the beauties of my homeland. In the case of the Subotica landscapes and sights, I relied on the power of nostalgia. There were several of them: Austro-Hungarian nostalgia, purely Hungarian, Jewish, and even the current Yugonostalgia. My target audience was very wide and the small tourist groups I gathered on my educational paths were made up of so many different nationalities that they were much more versatile than the current mixture in Vojvodina: along with the Hungarians and Germans, that is Austrians, there were also some Jews of untraceable national identities, Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, and sometimes even some lost Italian or American would get interested in going on a trip with us.

In time, the offer included only two well thought-out one-day trips, with a night spent under the tents in Hrastovača: one trip ended at Palić Lake, and the other one at Ludoš Lake. Hrastovača is seven kilometers away from the center of Subotica and is close to the suburb Makova sedmica. It is one of the forests of the protected natural area: the Subotica Sands. From the city center we would set off on foot or on bikes, following a wide road whose rims slowly disappeared in the sand, which allowed us the freedom of roaming across the vast plain; a string of houses on the flank got thinner and thinner until it diminished into a farm, an orchard and a vineyard. The groups that I led mostly enjoyed seeing flocks of sheep that languidly grazed on rare edible grass in the areas close to the forest. A delicious surprise was awaiting my guests in the refrigerator of the hunting lodge: the sour sheep milk that my dear 'business partner', old Mátyás, provided for me.

The growing interest in this type of trips in a few years turned my story into a routine too. Unlike Zrilić, I avoided history; my story tolerated it as much as it was naturalized in the surroundings. Of course, nothing around us was authentic: the percentage of indigenous forests went down below 10%, and although our forest was called Hrastovača/Oak Grove (comprising indigenous trees of the common oak), we were surrounded with pine and acacia groves, not to mention nettle trees! The immediate proximity of the Hungarian border had

its good and bad sides: the little water that allowed us to call Kereš (Körös) a little river was being used by the Hungarians for their fish ponds. However, in return, from Hungary we imported game for our hunting grounds that were growing in popularity: fallow deer were entering Serbia aided by the Ministry... The popularity of the hunting grounds, needless to say, was proportionate to some of the illegal hunting activities, but that is a different story altogether.

True, until this very moment I have been avoiding the hunters' stories: as my business developed (which, at first, I considered an excuse for not earning my wages working in the fields and orchards like the majority of my friends), it enhanced the sweetness of my language that, as the demand increased, I slowly acquired, or, if I may say so, formed... Opulence and diversity, as the seminal Vojvodina leitmotifs, are also the unavoidable decorations of my currency of words; spaciousness and virginity (the permanent place: Obedska Swamp was first put under protection in 1874, two years after the first national park in the world, the Yellowstone!) are the next pair of devices for the expressive bravura in my language; and then, in the absence of any real watery phenomena, there are comparisons with a roaring sea (the ruling wind!), great deserts (the sand that cracks under the teeth) and oases, which are spread in space in a mosaic-like manner, as if they followed the thirst and desire of the tourist ascetics. On the whole, I represented it as a miniature trip into the desert world, a harmless one just as the word 'Sands' suggests.

At first, we didn't spend the night in the forest. Not until the hunters, after they had redecorated the hunting lodge, provided us with the logistics. for camping, since the number of the hunters was sometimes higher than the accommodation capacities in the lodge, did I make use of that possibility. Silent nights under the arches of the oak trees, whisper by a crackling fire, the sounds and smells that crawled into our tents and dreams, and took as beyond the nearby rim of the forest into the regions of the dark, was something that fueled me to go on trips like that, and it was also the main reason why I haven't quit this job.

[...]

5.

"Eichelhäher?"

"Eichhörnchen!"

It was our way of greeting each other. When everybody fell asleep and massive silence took over the camping site, I got out of the tent and went for a walk into the forest. Eichelhäher, Eichhörnchen, Eichelhäher, Eichhörnchen...

This greeting, of course, was invented by Jelena, just as she did a lot of other little things that our world consisted of. Those little things were my buried treasure, until Tünde brought it to light with her figure. Jelena suddenly appeared to be so close to me, I could see her in the figure of the celebrated beauty; it was her shadow, her glow, her fire.

By accident, I came to the rim where the shooting range began. A dark clearing was opening up among the trees, so I changed direction, for there must have been at least one soldier if not the entire guarding unit. I went deeper into the oak trees and after a few steps I noticed that the width and height of those trees was getting bigger as I was moving away from the shooting range. It took my half an hour at the most to finally reach a real forest.

Those were the trees I knew well, but I never dared bring my group up to this place. Jelena took me all the way to that part of the forest several times. We used to sit there, each by a separate tree and we used to listen to the leaves rustle, breathing in the air surged with the fragrances of an ancient life.

Jelena was actually very cynical; her hatred of the city, of people in general, took her to those extremes. Before that, she would spend all her time in Mulberry Grove, that big park next to the Hall of Sports at Radijalac. I also lived in that block and used to run away from the hot high-rise buildings into the shade of the forest. Moving from one bench to another carrying a book in my hand, I spent one whole day with Jelena: she sat next to me and our reading turned into a competition of the type which one of us would get up first and leave. When Mulberry Grove sank into total darkness, we realized we had no choice but to introduce each other. Starting from the next day, we set dates in the park.

She was older than me; she was already finishing her biology studies in Novi Sad. Our meetings would turn into scientific investigations of particular trees. She didn't like huge, 'pumped-up' plane trees that were the landmark of Mulberry Grove, as well as the whole of Radijalac; with great pleasure she would reveal to me the world of insects that drilled holes in its roots and would put a little bug on the tip of her index finger, giving me a speech in its praise as if it and its bite were going to pull down the odious tree eventually! Jelena was looking for the oak trees; she knew exactly how many of them there were in the

park. After we had seen them all, a few months later, Hrastovača spontaneously popped up in our minds, as our only possible retreat, and as it turned out soon afterward: our sanctuary.

The war was not over yet, so it was not clever to go toward the shooting range. We used to pass by the convoys of military vehicles full of armed soldiers. However, nobody ever spoke to us; we only used to catch a desperate gaze or two coming from under the deep shade of a truck tilt. Our feet were sinking into the sand; the wind was blowing it into our eyes, we washed our mouths from time to time to get rid of it, we coughed. It was all part of our ritual enjoyment of being together and walking toward the forest. It was nice to know that there was a boundary of this ghastly city, this state, this time that could be crossed. Even if it was for just a few hours, we were on the other side nevertheless, Jelena used to say on our way back. And Jelena had actually crossed onto 'the other side' much earlier than that and was only sharing that with me for a couple of hours. However, I have, capitalizing on that, started my cheap and tawdry tourist business.

But, I didn't take my tourists to these trees. I didn't dare go that far since Jelena had disappeared. Incidentally, Eiche, in German, means the oak tree, so the Germans named both the squirrel and the jay after their favorite tree: Eichhörnchen is the squirrel, and Eichelhäher is the jay. And here I am, among our oak trees. I hugged the first tree that seemed to be Jelena's tree and stayed like that for a long time.

In these trees the souls of my ancestors live, she told me, during our last trip together, the souls as small as these bugs, she giggled. I picked up a dried-up sample of such an entity (and again I heard Jelena's voice: *Cicindela germanica*!), I put it into my pocket and returned to the camp.

Translated by Domagoj Orlić

From:

Neven Ušumović, "The Nightingale's Tongue", in: *RELATIONS Literary Magazine*. The Journal of Croatian Literature, 3-4/2011.

***Dosedanji udeleženci in nagrajenci
Vilenice
Previous Participants and Vilenica
Prize Winners***

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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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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Veno Taufer: Izziv ali zgaga?* / *Challenge or Hassle?*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: Vlado Gotovac: *Skica o Atlasu / Sketch of the Atlas*

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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

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Georges-Arthur Goldschmidt, Vlado Gotovac, László Krasznahorkai, Antonin J. Liehm: Edvard Kocbek – Palica / Edvard Kocbek – The Stick*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Alain Finkielkraut: Intelektualci, politika in vojna / Intellectuals, Politics and War*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: Lojze Kovačič: *Ali pisatelj potrebuje svet, ki njega ne potrebuje?* / *Does a Writer Need the World Which Doesn't Need Him?*

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Svoboda imaginacije – imaginacija svobode / Imagination of Freedom – Freedom of Imagination*

Branko Miljković: Poezijo bodo vsi pisali / Everybody Will Be Writing Poetry

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Daimon zapeljevanja / Daimon of Temptation*

Rainer Maria Rilke: Orfej • Evridika • Hermes / Orpheus • Eurydike • Hermes

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DISPUT / DISPUTATION: *Timothy Garton Ash: Konec stoletja, začetek tisočletja / The End of the Century, the Beginning of the Millennium*

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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*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2000 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2000 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Slavko Mihalič

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Veno Taufer*

KRISTAL VLENICE 2000 / 2000 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *István Vörös*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2000* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2000* and took part in the literary readings:

Zoran Ančevski, Peter Božič, Uke Bucpapaj, Aleš Čar, Primož Čučnik, Jacques Darras, Lidija Dimkovska, Mircea Dinescu, Michael Donhauser, Janis Elsbergs, Leopold Federmair, Mila Haugová, 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 Sendecki, Ronny So-

meck, Marjan Strojan, Brina Švigelj Mérat, Yórgos Veis, Istvan Vörös, Gerald Zschorsch
DISPUT / DISPUTATION: Friederike Kretzen: Vloga in pomen literature danes /
The Meaning and the Role of Literature Today
Niko Grafenauer: Pisatelj v ekscentru časa / Writer in the Off-Centre of Time
Régis Debray, Zdenko Vrdlovec: Literatura in mediji / Literature and the Media

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PI-
SATELJEV ZA LETO 2001 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION
AWARDED THE 2001 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Jaan Kaplinski

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: Veno Taufer

KRISTAL VILENICE 2001 / 2001 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Natalka Bilocer-
kivec*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2001* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The fol-
lowing 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 Natsuiishi, Claudio Pozzani, Matthew Rohrer, Erik Stinus, Franco
Supino, Vivienne Vermes, Thor Vilhjálmsson, Hans van de Waarsenburg, Adam
Wiedemann*

DELAVNICE / WORKSHOPS: Prevajanje poezije, O estetski komponenti vsakdanje-
ga življenja / Translating Poetry, On the Aesthetic Component of the Everyday Life
MLADA VILENICA 2001 / 2001 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *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 Dimkovska*

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 Dücker, Oswald Egger, Chuah Guat Eng, Jakša Fiamengo, Ioan Flora, Janice Galloway, Sinan Gudžević, Michál Hvorecký, Anatol Kudravec, Anatolij Kudrjavicki, Leena Lander, Franco Manzoni, Maciej Melecki, Dušan Merc, Petr Mikeš, Vinko Möderndorfer, Herta Müller, Patricia Nolan, Knut Odegård, Justo Jorge Padron, Monika Van Paemel, Ratimir Pavlović, Janis Rokpelnis, Ken Smith, Glen Sorestad, Luan Starova, Vidosav Stevanović, Lucija Stupica, Tone Škrjanec, Willem Van Toorn, Pál Závada

DELAVNICE / WORKSHOPS: *Prevajanje poezije, O literaturi na internetu, O vizualni in literarni podobi / On Translating Poetry, On Literature on the Internet, On Visual and Literary Image*

MLADA VILENICA 2002 / 2002 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *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 / 2003 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Žiga Mohorič, Agata Venier*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKEGA PI-SATELJEV 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 Prokopić, 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 / DISPUTATION: Primer Edvard Kocbek in svoboda izražanja danes / The Edvard Kocbek Case and the Freedom of Expression Today

MLADA VILENICA 2004 / 2004 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – Eva Renner, Brigita Berčon

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKEGA 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 Braziūnas

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. Aguilar, Veljko Barbieri, Juras Barisevič, Vladas Braziūnas, Anna Maria Carpi, Theodora Dimova, Jure Jakob, Janez Kajzer, Viliam Klimáček, Olivera Korvezirovska, Cvetka Lipuš, Jaan Malin, Jim McGarrah, Anna Mitgutsch, Sinead Morrissey, Duško 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 / 2005 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – Rožana Švara, Eva Mohorič

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2006 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2006 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Miodrag Pavlović

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: Veno Taufer

KRISTAL VILENICE 2006 / 2006 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – Mojca Kumerdej

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2006* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2006* and took part in the literary readings:

Inga Abele, Michál Ajvaz, Venko Andonovski, Lindita Arapi, Alhierd Bacharevič, Szilárd Borbély, Yiorgos Chouliaras, Daiva Čepauskaitė, Ervin Fritz, Tatjana Gromača, Brian Henry, Oto Horvat, Nora Iuga, Iva Jevtić, Ekaterina Yossifova, Zdenko Kodrič, Márius Kopcsay, Miran Košuta, Mojca Kumerdej, Terézia Mora, Birgit Müller-Wieland, Tōnu Ōnnepalu, Claudio Pozzani, Gabriel Rosenstock, Goran Samardžić, Ostap Slyvynsky, Breda Smolnikar, Olga Tokarczuk, Marko Uršič, Raphael Urweider

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: ›Kdo sliši sosedovo zgodbo?‹ / 'Who Can Hear One's Neighbour's Story?'

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: Simona Škrabec

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2006 / 2006 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: 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 / 2006 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Dita Škalič, Aljaž Ferencek, Miroslava Furtkevičová*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2007 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2007 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

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'

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Alenka Puhar*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2007 / 2007 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Mariana Kijanovska / Marianna Kiyanovska, 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 Siomóin, Dairena Ní Chinnéide, Micheál Ó Conghaile, Cathal Ó Searcaigh, Gabriel Rosenstock*

MLADA VILENICA 2007 / 2007 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Katja Lavrenčič, Matic Može*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH 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 Nekit, Imre Oravecz, Marina Palej, Ulrich Peltzer, Ivana Sajko, Peter Stamm, Magdalena Svetina Terčon, Dušan Šarotar, Bina Štampe Žmavc, Jüri Talvet, Zoé Valdés, Andrea Winkler, Yo Yo, Inga Žolude

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: ›Avtor med tekstom in kontekstom‹ / 'The Author between Text and Context'

MODERATOR: Marko Uršič

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2008 / 2008 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: Ivana Sajko, Hrvatska / 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 / 2008 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – Liam Visentin, Ana Šemrov

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2009 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2009 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Claudio Magris

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: Veronika Simoniti

KRISTAL VILENICE 2009 / 2009 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – Luljeta Lleshanaku
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2009 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2009 – Boris Pahor

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2009* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2009* and took part in the literary readings:

Jana Beňová, Ines Cergol, Kalin Donkov, Umberto Galimberti, Forrest Gander, Andrea Grill, Miljenko Jergović, Štefan Kardoš, Yasmina Khadra, Herkus Kunčius, Alejandra Laurencich, Luljeta Lleshanaku, Dan Lungu, Tone Partljič, Jana Putrle Srdić, Peter Rezman, Víctor Rodríguez Núñez, Maria Şleahitişchi, Ewa Sonnenberg, Vlada Urošević, Oksana Zabuzko

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: >Izbira 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 / 2009 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: 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 / 2009 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – Jana Stekar, Gaja Rupnik Caruso

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2010 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2010 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Dževad Karahasan

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jana Unuk*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2010 / 2010 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – Goran Vojnović
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2010 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2010 – Tomaž Šalamun

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2010* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2010* and took part in the literary readings:

Max Blaeulich, Jacek Dehnel, Kristin Dimitrova, Veronika Dintinjana, Aris Fioretos, Ludwig Hartinger, Enes Karić, Blaže Minevski, Salvatore Niffoi, Radoslav Petković, Taras Prohasko, Viktória Radics, Maja Razboršek, Joachim Sartorius, Illja Sin, Octavian Soviany, Veronika Šikulova, Jáchym Topol, Suzana Tratnik, Goran Vojnović, C. D. Wright, Agnė Žagrakalytė

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: »O branju: bralna izkušnja in njene oblike v sodobnem času« / 'On Reading: Reading Experience and its Forms in Modern Times'

MODERATORICA / MODERATOR: *Tanja Lesničar Pučko*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2010 / 2010 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *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 / 2010 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *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 Espitalier, Xavier Farré Vidal, Guy Helminger, Stanka Hraščelj, 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, Lúbia Somolayová, Og-njen 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 / 2011 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: Ognjen Spahić, Črna gora / Montenegro

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: Turčija na Vilenici / Turkey at Vilenica: Nazli Eray, Nedim Gürsel, Mehmet Yaşin

MLADA VILENICA 2011 / 2011 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – Julija Železnik, Teja Gerjovič, Lara Ružič Povirk

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH 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 / 2012 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Ajla 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 / 2012 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *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*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2013 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2013 – *Florjan Lipuš*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2013* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2013* and took part in the literary readings:

Anna Auziņa, Mauro Covacich, Silvija Čoleva, Radka Denemarková, Rodica Draghinescu, Miriam Drev, Katharina Hacker, Olli Heikkonen, Brian Henry, Ignacy Karpowicz, Vladimir Kopić, 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 / 2013 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Artem Čapaj* / *Artem Chapeye*, Ukrajina / Ukraine

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI EVROPE NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES OF EUROPE AT VILENICA: *Švica na Vilenici* / *Switzerland at Vilenica*: *Lukas Bärfuss*, *Arno Camenisch*, *Pietro de Marchi*, *Michel Layaz*, *Ilma Rakusa*

MLADA VILENICA 2013 / 2013 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Ajda Furlan*, *Jerneja Rupnik*, *Eva Salopek*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH 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 Dobráková*, *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 / 2014 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Mirko Božić*, Bosna in Hercegovina / Bosnia and Herzegovina
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 / 2014 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Lota Martinjak, Patricija Kavčič, Lara Ružič Povirk*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2015 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2015 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Jáchym Topol

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Alenka Jensterle-Doležal*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2015 / 2015 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Blerina Rogova Gaxha in Polona Glavan*
SLOVENSКИ 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 Hmeľjak, Andrej Hočevár, Egar 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 / 2015 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Katerina Kalitko / Kateryna Kalytko, Ukrajina / Ukraine*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Indija na Vilenici / India at Vilenica: Sitanshu Yashaschandra, K. Satchidanandan*

MLADA VILENICA 2015 / 2015 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *David Čop, Kiara Sara Knafelc, Chiara Lepore, Lina Malovič, Špela Zadel*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2016 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2016 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Dubravka Ugrešić

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Đurđa Strsoglavec*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2016 / 2016 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Katerina Kalitko*
SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2016 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS
2016 – *Suzana Tratnik*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2016* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2016* and took part in the literary readings:

Adisa Bašić, Alexandre Bergamini, Aleš Berger, Jana Bodnárová, Julja Cimafejeva, Patricija Dodič, Martin Dyar, Dana Grigorcea, Jovica Ivanovski, Katerina Kalitko, Cvetka Lipuš, Valerio Magrelli, Aksinija Mihajlova, Carlos Pascual, Ūlar Ploom, Gábor Schein, Robert Schindel, Korana Serdarević, Mariusz Sieniewicz, Bogdan Suceavă, Kateřina Tučková, Les Wicks

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: ›Literatura in etika‹ / 'Literature and Ethics'

MODERATOR / MODERATOR: *Carlos Pascual*

DOBITNICA ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2016 / 2016 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Tanja Bakić, Črna gora / Montenegro*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Latvija na Vilenici / Latvia at Vilenica: Ingmāra Balode, Artis Ostups, Arvis Viguls*

MLADA VILENICA 2016 / 2016 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Miša Gregorič, Nejka Vratnik, Ekaterina Mihajloska, Aljaž Primožič, Lara Ružič Povirk, Alja Tursunović, Eric Renzi, Lota Martinjak, Tomi Petek*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2017 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2017 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Jurij Andruhovič

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Aleš Šteger*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2017 / 2017 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Antonella Bukovaz*
SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2017 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2017 – *Maja Vidmar*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2017* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2017* and took part in the literary readings:

Tanja Bakić, Andrej Blatnik, Antonella Bukovaz, Rumena Bužarovska, Anja Golob, Alenka Jensterle Doležal, Boris Jukić, Esther Kinsky, Vladimir Pištalo, Delimir Rešicki, Samir Sayegh, Fahredin Shehu, Hedi Wyss, Kerrie O'Brien, Iain Reid

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: ›Literatura, ki spreminja svet, ki spreminja literaturo‹ / 'Literature That

Changes the World That Changes Literature'

MODERATORKA / MODERATOR: *Iva Kosmos*

DOBITNIK ŠTIPENDIJE SEP 2017 / 2017 CEI FELLOWSHIP WINNER: *Andrij Ljubka / Andriy Lyubka, Ukrajina / Ukraine*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Norveška na Vilenici / Norway at Vilenica: Inger Elisabeth Hansen, Torgeir Schjerven*

MLADA VILENICA 2017 / 2017 YOUNG VILENICA AWARD – *Rebeka Deželak, Sara Lindič, Una Ljubin, Laura Markič, Nika Mravljja, Vesna Muzek, Laura Vuga*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2018 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2018 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Ilija Trojanow

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Vesna Kondrič Horvat*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2018 / 2018 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Šota Iatašvili*
SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2018 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS
2018 – *Mojca Kumerdej*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2018* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2018* and took part in the literary readings:

David Bandelj, Petre Barbu, Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Wioletta Grzegorzewska, Brian Henry, Šota Iatašvili, Noémi Kiss, Uršula Kovalyk, Andrij Ljubka, Karin Peschka, Primož Repar, Stuart Ross, Simona Semenič

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: *»Pisati in preživeti« / 'Writing and Surviving'*

MODERATOR / MODERATOR: *Aljoša Harlamov*

PREJEMNICA PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2018 / 2018 CEI AWARD FOR

WRITERS IN RESIDENCE: *Maria Paula Erizanu*, Moldavija / Moldova
MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Malta na Vilenici / Malta at Vilenica: Clare Azzopardi, Norbert Bugeja, Immanuel Mifsud, Loranne Vella*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2019 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2019 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Dragan Velikić

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jutka Rudaš*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2019 / 2019 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Manjola Nasi*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2019 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2019 – *Esad Babačić*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2019* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2019* and took part in the literary readings: *Mohamad Abdul Al Munem, Petar Andonovski, Ayesha Chatterjee, Maria Paula Erizanu, Jasmin B. Frelih, Zvonko Karanović, Enes Karić, Nataša Kramberger, Jonas Lüschner, Ace Mermolja, Amanda Mihalopulu, Manjola Nasi, Sverrir Norland, Carolina Pihelgas, Elizabeth Reapy, Ivana Šojat*

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: *»Ego in fabula«*

MODERATOR: *Andrej Pleterski*

PREJEMNIK PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2019 / 2019 CEI AWARD FOR WRITERS IN RESIDENCE: *Ivan Šopov / Ivan Shopov*, Severna Makedonija / North Macedonia
MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Sodobna italijanska poezija na Vilenici / Contemporary Italian Poetry at Vilenica: Silvia Brè, Maria Grazia Calandrone, Claudio Damiani, Gian Mario Villalta*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2020 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2020 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Mila Haugová

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Andrej Pleterski*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2020 / 2020 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Sibila Petlevski*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2020 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2020 –
Vinko Möderndorfer

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2020* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2020* and took part in the literary readings: *Thomas Antonic, Mary Costello, Krystyna Dąbrowska, Nina Dragičević, Volha Hapejeva, Aušra Kaziliūnaitė, Marko Kravos, Miroslav Lajuk, Elena Medel, Sibila Petlevski, Marek Šindelka, Kaja Teržan*

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT VILENICA: ›Evropa se širi in krči. Quo vadis?‹ / ›Europe is expanding and shrinking. Quo vadis?‹

MODERATOR: *Luka Novak*

PREJEMNIK PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2020 / 2020 CEI AWARD FOR WRITERS IN RESIDENCE: *Jasen Vasilev / Yassen Vasilev, Bolgarija / Bulgaria*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Islandija na Vilenici / Iceland at Vilenica: Ragnar Helgi Ólafsson, Kristín Ómarsdóttir, Bergþóra Snæbjörnsdóttir*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2021 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2021 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Josef Winkler

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Amalija Maček*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2021 / 2021 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Jazra Khaleed*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2021 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2021
– *Milan Dekleva*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2021* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2021* and took part in the literary readings:

Zoltán Danyi, Matthias Göritz, Kristina Hočevar, Jazra Khaleed, Larissa Lai, Jani Oswald, Lena Ruth Stefanović, Nenad Veličković

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS AT VILENICA: ›Evropa se širi in krči. Strah in pogum‹ / 'Europe is expanding and shrinking. Fear and courage'

MODERATOR: *Aljoša Harlamov, Luka Novak*

PREJEMNIK PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2021 / 2021 CEI AWARD FOR WRITERS IN RESIDENCE: *Stefan Bošković, Črna gora / Montenegro*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Portugalska na Vilenici / Portugal at Vilenica: Sandro William Junqueira, Álvaro Seiça*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2022 JE PREJELA / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2022 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Amanda Aizpuriete

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Aljoša Harlamov*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2022 / 2022 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Gail McConnell*

SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2022 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2022
– Andrej Blatnik

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2022* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2022* and took part in the literary readings:

Katia Sophia Ditzler, Dejan Dukovski, Hanna Komar, Gail McConnell, Kristian Novak, Renato Quaglia, Nataalka Snjadanko, Ivo Stropnik, Tatiana Țibuleac

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS AT VILENICA: ›Evropa se širi in krči. Pisatelj in njegov habitus‹ / 'Europe is expanding and shrinking. The writer and their habitus'

MODERATOR: Aljoša Harlamov, Nina Jerman

PREJEMNICA PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2022 / 2022 CEI AWARD FOR WRITERS IN RESIDENCE: Luiza Bouharaoua, Hrvaška / Croatia

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Estonija na Vilenici* / *Estonia at Vilenica*: Kätlin Kaldmaa, Igor Kotjuh

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2023 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2023 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Ottó Tolnai

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Jutka Rudaš*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2023 / 2023 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Shpëtim Selmani*
SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2023 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2023
– *Barbara Korun*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2023* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2023* and took part in the literary readings:

Jake Buttigieg, Marij Čuk, Ariane Koch, Gašper Kralj, Wojciech Kuczok, Shpëtim Selmani, Jan Škrob, Tonia Tziritza Zaharatu

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS AT VILENICA: ›Raznoliki obraz Evrope‹ / 'The Diverse Face of Europe'

MODERATOR: *Aljoša Harlamov*

PREJEMNICA PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2023 / 2023 CEI AWARD FOR WRITERS IN RESIDENCE: *Tijana Rakočević, Črna gora / Montenegro*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Avstrija in Nemčija na Vilenici / Austria and Germany at Vilenica: Silke Scheuermann (Nemčija / Germany), Max Sessner (Nemčija / Germany), Thomas Stangl (Avstrija / Austria), Andreas Unterweger (Avstrija / Austria)*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSKIH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2024 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2024 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Miljenko Jergović

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Đurđa Strsoglavec*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2024 / 2024 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Dominik Srienč*
SLOVENSKI AVTOR V SREDIŠČU 2024 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2024
– *Dušan Šarotar*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2024* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2024* and took part in the literary readings:

Lamija Begagić, Ryan Falzon, Efstatia Paliodzika, Paolo Rumiz, Robert Šerban, Muanis Sinanović, Dominik Srienč, Jernej Županič

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS AT VILENICA: ›Ikar 2.0‹ / 'Icarus 2.0'

MODERATOR: *Aljoša Harlamov*

PREJEMNICA PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2024 / 2024 CEI AWARD FOR YOUNG WRITERS: *Monika Herceg, Hrvaška / Croatia*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Češka na Vilenici / Czech Republic at Vilenica: Petr Hruška, Dora Kaprálová, Lenka Kuhar Daňhelová*

MEDNARODNO LITERARNO NAGRADO VILENICA DRUŠTVA SLOVENSКИH PISATELJEV ZA LETO 2025 JE PREJEL / THE SLOVENE WRITERS' ASSOCIATION AWARDED THE 2025 VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE TO

Georgi Gospodinov

Utemeljitev nagrade / Laudation: *Gregor Podlogar*

KRISTAL VILENICE 2025 / 2025 CRYSTAL VILENICA AWARD – *Aleksander Peršolja (častni kristal ob 40. obletnici)*

SLOVENSKA AVTORICA V SREDIŠČU 2025 / SLOVENIAN AUTHOR IN FOCUS 2025 – *Maja Haderlap*

V publikaciji *Vilenica 2025* in na literarnih prireditvah so sodelovali / The following are represented in the *Vilenica Almanac 2025* and took part in the literary readings: *Georgi Gospodinov, Maja Haderlap, Dragan Velikić, Ilma Rakusa, Miha Obit, Veronika Simoniti, Ana Svetel*

OKROGLA MIZA SEP NA VILENICI / CEI ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS AT VILENICA: ›Nova pravila bivanja‹ / ›New rules of living‹

MODERATOR: *Muanis Sinanović*

PREJEMNICA PISATELJSKE NAGRADE SEP 2025 / 2025 CEI AWARD FOR YOUNG WRITERS: *Ana Svetel, Slovenija / Slovenia*

MANJ POZNANE KNJIŽEVNOSTI NA VILENICI / LESSER-KNOWN LITERATURES AT VILENICA: *Katalonska književnost na Vilenici / Catalan literature at Vilenica: Tina Vallès, Francesc Serés, Maria Josep Escrivà.*

Člani žirije 2026

Jury Members 2026

Gregor Podlogar, predsednik žirije, pesnik / president of the jury, poet

Aljaž Koprivnikar, podpredsednik žirije, pesnik, literarni kritik / vice-president of the jury, poet, literary critic

Veronika Dintinjana, pesnica / poet

Ludwig Hartinger, urednik, prevajalec, pesnik / editor, translator, poet

Martin Lissiach, literarni posrednik / literary mediator

Aleš Mustar, pesnik, prevajalec / poet, translator

Tone Peršak, pisatelj / prose writer

Sašo Puljarević, prevajalec, urednik / translator, editor

Diana Pungersič, literarna kritičarka, prevajalka / literary critic, translator

Đurđa Strsoglavac, izredna profesorica za južnoslovanske književnosti in prevajanje v slovenščino na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani / Associate Professor of South Slavic Studies and translation into Slovenian at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana

Konzultanti 2026

Consultants 2026

Lindita Arapi, pisateljica, prevajalka (Albanija, Nemčija) / writer, translator (Albania, Germany)

Agneszka Będkowska-Kopczyk, prevajalka, docentka na Tehniško-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)

Orsolya Gállos, prevajalka (Madžarska) / translator (Hungary)

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)

Andreja Kalc, prevajalka, lektorica (Slovenija) / translator, proofreader (Slovenia)

Arian Leka, pisatelj, pesnik, prevajalec, urednik revije Poeteka (Albanija) / writer, poet, translator, editor of Poeteka (Albania)

Valžina Mort, pesnica, prevajalka (Belorusija) / poet, translator (Belarus)

Klemen Pisk, pisatelj, prevajalec (Slovenija, Češka) / writer, translator (Slovenia, Czech Republic)

Kornelijus Platelis, pesnik, prevajalec (Litva) / poet, translator (Lithuania)

Marjeta Prelesnik Drozg, bibliotekarka, prevajalka (Slovenija) / librarian, translator (Slovenia)

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)

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