

Primerjalna književnost

PKn (Ljubljana) 46.1 (2023)

TEMATSKI SKLOP / THEMATIC SECTION

Intimnost, cenzura in spol
Intimacy, Censorship, and Gender

Uredili / Edited by: Katja Mihurko Poniž, Carmen Beatrice Duțu

Katja Mihurko Poniž, Carmen Beatrice Duțu: **Predgovor / Introduction**

Katja Mihurko Poniž, Carmen Beatrice Duțu: **Censorship—the Knot that Binds Intimacy and Women’s Writing?**

Birgitta Lindh Estelle: **Exposing Censored Themes of Intimacy in Swedish Alfhild Agrell’s *Räddad***

Zita Kärkla, Eva Eglāja-Kristsone: **Censoring the Vulnerability in Women’s Writing**

Alenka Jensterle Doležal: **Male Censorship of Vida Jeraj’s Poetry**

Carmen Beatrice Duțu, Roxana Patraș, Antonio Patraș: **On Becoming “Prinseasa Bibesco”**

Cecilia Annell: **Norm Breaking Strategies by Swedish Women Authors of the 1880s**

Natalia Panas: **Cultural Memory’s Censorship of Intimacy Writing in *Moj život* by Maga Magazinović**

Elena Lindholm: **The Case of Elena Fortún (1886–1952)**

Irena Selišnik: **Samocenzura, družinske interpretacije in vpliv uradne pripovedi na avtobiografije žensk**

Andrej Zavrl: **Koga nagovarjajo *Shakespeareovi soneti* (v slovenščini)?**

Marijan Dovič: **Goreča *Erotika* in Cankarjeva revolucija v slovenskem pesništvu**

IN MEMORIAM

Lado Kralj (1938–2022)

TEMATSKI SKLOP / THEMATIC SECTION

Intimnost, cenzura in spol
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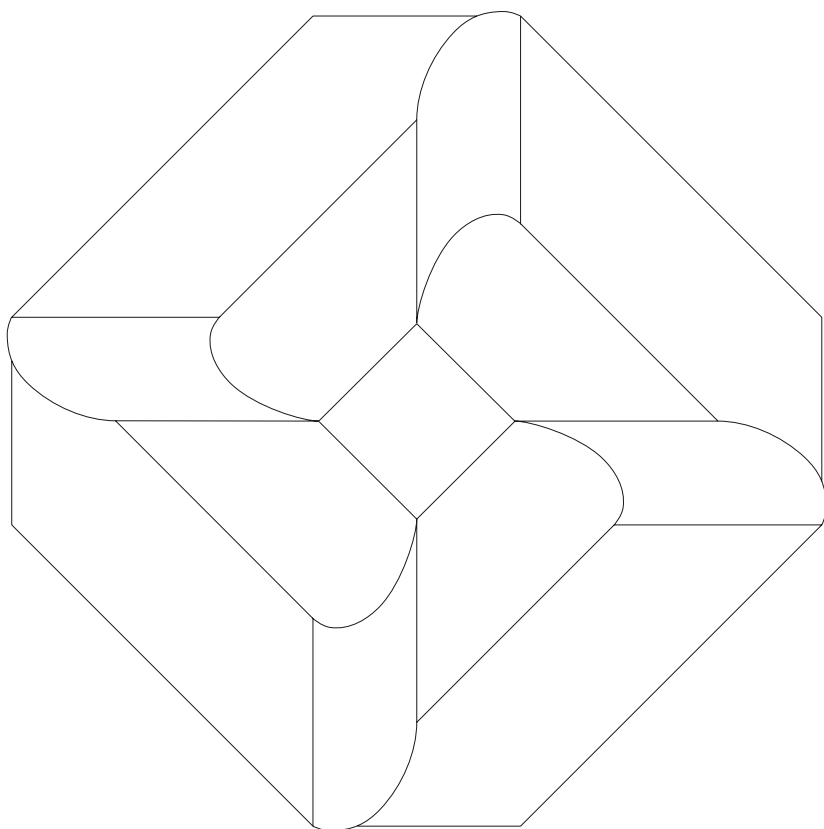
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Primerjalna književnost



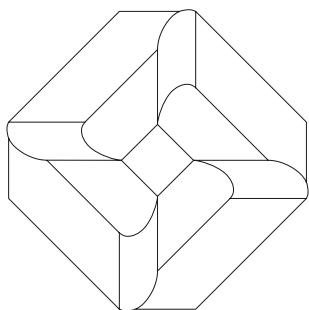
Tematski sklop / *Thematic section*

Intimnost, cenzura in spol

Intimacy, Censorship, and Gender

Uredili / *Edited by*: Katja Mihurko Poniž,

Carmen Beatrice Duțu



Intimnost, cenzura in spol (predgovor)

Katja Mihurko Poniž, Carmen Beatrice Duțu

Tematska številka *Primerjalne književnosti* z naslovom »Intimnost, cenzura in spol« izhaja iz mednarodne delavnice »Cenzuriranje intimnosti v ženskem pisanju in branju v dolgem 19. stoletju«, ki je potekala 23. in 24. avgusta 2022 v Ljubljani. Delavnica je raziskovala načine, kako so se ženske, ki so pisale o intimnih temah, soočale s cenzuro verskih oblasti, državne uprave in samooklicanih cenzorjev (literarnih mentorjev, prijateljev in skrbnikov, ki so poskušali – včasih z dajanjem nasvetov, pogosto pa z bolj agresivnimi posegi v besedila – oblikovati poetiko pisateljic). Ker meniva, da je perspektivo in kontekst pojavov cenzure glede na intimne teme smiselno razširiti tudi na avtorje in njihova dela, je številka obogatena še z dvema temama, ki nista bili del delavnice, raziskujeta pa Shakespearjevo in Cankarjevo literaturo. S tem želiva opozoriti, da so tudi avtorji podvrženi cenzuri intimnosti – zlasti kadar prestopijo meje sprejetih in uveljavljenih konceptov intimnosti.

Avtorice in avtorja v tej tematski številki raziskujejo, kako je cenzura povezana z intimnostjo, če jo obravnavamo v transnacionalnem/transkulturalnem kontekstu, in kako se načini cenzuriranja intimnosti spreminjajo, ko potujejo iz enega prostora v drugega, iz literarnih središč na literarno obrobje. Prav tako analizirajo, kako je koncept cenzure povezan s spolom v ustvarjalnih procesih: ali je deloval kot ovira ali pa je bil produktivna sila, spodbuda za ustvarjalnost, ki je posledično pomagala porajati nove literarne žanre, teme in druga literarna sredstva. Poleg tega članki razkrivajo, kako so se pisateljice in pisatelji odzvali na družbena in literarna cenzurna pričakovanja pri izražanju svojega spola v povezavi z intimnostjo. Raziskujejo tudi, kakšna je vloga družine, prijateljev, mentorjev, založnikov, urednikov in kritikov v procesu cenzuriranja intimnosti. Nekateri članki se osredinjajo tudi na načine povezovanja cenzure s kanonizacijskimi procesi.

Katja Mihurko Poniž in Carmen Beatrice Duțu v preglednem članku »Cenzura – vozlišče, ki povezuje intimnost in žensko literarno avtorstvo?« ponudita kratek zgodovinski pregled zapletenosti razmerja med cenzuro, spolom in intimnostjo. Avtorici nadalje trdita, da bi pri obravnavi ženskega pisanja cenzuro lahko obravnavali kot »vozlišče, ki povezuje intimnost in žensko literarno avtorstvo«, kar je parafraza mnenja Sue Curry Jansen o cenzuri kot »vozlišču, ki povezuje znanje in moč«.

V članku »Strategija zavezniškega branja: razkrivanje cenzuriranih tem intimnosti v švedski drami *Räddad* Alfhild Agrell« Birgitta Lindh Estelle drzno predlaga etično branje z upoštevanjem specifičnega družbeno-zgodovinskega cenzurnega položaja švedske dramatičarke Alfhild Agrell, pri čemer je izpostavila cenzurirane teme intimnosti v drami *Räddad* (Rešena). Avtorica s pomočjo številnih besedilnih referenc uporabi strategijo zavezniškega branja, da bi razkrila zamolčane teme intimnosti v spolno specifični cenzurni situaciji osemdesetih let 19. stoletja na Švedskem.

Prav tako odločno bereta proti toku dosedanje interpretacije latvijske pisateljice Anne Rūmane-Ķeniņa (1877–1950) Zita Kārkla in Eva Eglāja-Kristsonsone v članku »*Njena zgodba je kot plevel*: cenzuriranje ranljivosti v ženskem pisanju«. Raziskovalki s tem pristopom širita feministično preučevanje pisateljic z raziskovanjem razmerja med ženskim pisanjem, intimnostjo, ranljivostjo in cenzuro ter ponovnim odkrivanjem in kanonizacijo ženskega pisanja skozi latvijsko literarno kulturo na začetku dvajsetega stoletja.

V članku »Postati pesnica na koncu 19. stoletja: moška cenzura poezije Vide Jeraj« Alenka Jensterle Doležal obravnava temo cenzure s performativnega vidika na primeru slovenske pisateljice Vide Jeraj (1875–1932). Članek je analiza spolno zaznamovanega cenzurnega diskurza, vidnega v korespondenci med njo in moškimi avtorji v njenem prvem pisateljskem obdobju, ki je močno vplivala na pesniške strategije mlade in obetavne pesnice.

Enak performativni pristop predlagajo Carmen Beatrice Duțu, Roxana Patraș in Antonio Patraș v članku »Kako postati 'princesa Bibesco': intimnost sodobne identitete med jazom in svetom«, v katerem predstavijo razloge in kontekste za izključitev romunsko-francoske pisateljice Marthe Bibescu (1886–1973) iz romunskega nacionalnega literarnega kanona. Članek predstavlja odmik od dosedanjega narativa o cenzuri v primeru Marthe Bibescu in jo predlaga kot kandidatko za transnacionalni literarni kanon, ki oblikuje specifično, moderno, intimno pisavo.

V skladu z novo teorijo cenzure problematiko samocenzure obravnava Cecilia Ansell, ki v razpravi »Neizrekljiva želja? Strategije kršenja norm pri švedskih pisateljicah v osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja« raziskuje načine, ki so jih švedske avtorice devetnajstega stoletja iznašale za obvladovanje cenzure pri pisanju o intimnosti in spolnosti. Avtorica tako razkriva dejstvo, da je dihotomija krepstne in grešne ženske delovala kot močan samocenzurni dejavnik za avtorice skozi zgodovino pri njihovem pisanju o intimnosti, poželenju in spolnosti.

Natalia Panas v članku »Svoboda z dvojno cenzuro? Kulturni spomin in cenzura intimnosti v knjigi 'Moj život' Mage Magazinović« obravnava primer svobodomiselné srbske pisateljice in feministke Mage Magazinović (1882–1968). V razpravi med drugim poudarja, da sta emancipacijsko perspektivo telesa v kulturnem spominu urejala dva cenzurna sistema: moralni/erotični v Kraljevini Jugoslaviji in ideološki/politični v socialistični Jugoslaviji.

Članek Elene Lindholm z naslovom »Cenzura zaprte Španije: primer Elene Fortún (1886–1952)« se ukvarja z vprašanjem, kako sta samocenzura in državna cenzura oblikovali literarno zapuščino španske avtorice knjig za otroke Elene Fortún. *Klozet* je predstavljen kot ključni koncept za razumevanje vpliva cenzure na delo lezbične pisateljice, ki je prispevala k različnim pripovedim o španski ženskosti.

Razprava Irene Selišnik »Samocenzura, družinske interpretacije in vpliv uradne pripovedi na avtobiografije žensk« primerjalno analizira avtobiografije treh slovenskih pisateljic in feministk: Elvire Dolinar, Minke Govekar in Marice Bartol. Avtorica raziskuje njihovo interpretacijo življenjske zgodbe skupaj s tematizacijo pripovedi in pripovednim slogom. Tako razkriva, kako so se avtorice samocenzurirale – včasih izrekle, včasih pa zamolčale pomembne življenjske odločitve.

Vprašanje homoerotike in cenzure obravnava Andrej Zavrl v članku »Koga nagovarjajo *Shakespearovi soneti* (v slovenščini)?«, ki obravnava prevajanje Shakespearovih sonetov. Avtor ugotavlja, da v primeru dveh novejših prevodov v slovenščino ne moremo govoriti o cenzuri v klasičnem smislu skrivanja ali brisanja nezaželenih vsebin. Nasprotno, v teh prevodih sonetov je med drugim mogoče zaslediti navidezno nasproten učinek, saj lirski subjekt nagovarja moškega v veliko več sonetih kot v izvirniku – to pa je nasprotno od tega, kar bi pričakovali v primeru cenzure. Pogojno bi morda lahko govorili o »cenzuri« spolne ali fluidne narave izvirnih besedil.

Razmerje med moškim avtorstvom, intimnostjo in cenzuro raziskuje Marijan Dovič v razpravi »Goreča *Erotika* in Cankarjeva revolucija v slovenskem pesništvu«. Avtor obravnava recepcijo *Erotike* (1899) Ivana Cankarja, pri čemer se osredotoča na razloge za zloglasni nakup in sežig pesniške zbirke, ki ga je ukazal ljubljanski škof Anton Bonaventura Jeglič. Dovič ugotavlja, da ob koncu 19. stoletja v habsburški monarhiji knjige niso bile več podvržene državnim cenzuram, vendar je bila *Erotika* kljub temu deležna posebne vrste neuradne cenzure, ki je avtorju po svoje celo koristila, saj ga je postavila v središče pozornosti – kot znanilca erotične revolucije v slovenski poeziji.

Uredniško delo za to tematsko številko je financirala Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije v okviru raziskovalnega projekta »Transformacije intimnosti v literarnem diskurzu slovenske 'moderne'« (J6-3134, Univerza v Novi Gorici) in raziskovalnega projekta »Slovenski pisatelji in cesarska cenzura v dolgem 19. stoletju« (J6-2583, Inštitut za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede ZRC SAZU).

Intimacy, Censorship, and Gender (An Introduction)

Katja Mihurko Poniž, Carmen Beatrice Duțu

This thematic issue of *Primerjalna književnost* titled “Intimacy, Censorship, and Gender” originates from the international workshop “Censoring Intimacy in Women’s Writing and Reading in the Long Nineteenth Century” which was held in Ljubljana on August 23–24, 2022. The workshop explored the ways in which women, writing about intimate topics, faced censorship from religious authorities, state administration and self-appointed censors (literary mentors, friends, and guardians who attempted—sometimes through giving advice, but often with more aggressive interventions in the texts—to shape the poetics of women writers).

Initially focused only on women’s writing, the editors of this special issue have felt that there is need for broadening the perspective and context of occurrences of censorship vis-a-vis intimate topics in relation to authorship and censorship. Consequently, we have added new insights to the debate on the censorship of intimacy by including two articles examining the works of two male authors. Thus, we aim to point out that male authors are also subject to the censorship of intimacy when they transgress the boundaries of accepted and established concepts of intimacy.

All in all, the articles in this issue explore how censorship is linked to intimacy when looked upon within a transnational/transcultural context, as well as investigate how modes of censoring intimacy change when they travel from one space to another, from literary centers to literary peripheries or fringes. They also analyze how the concept of censorship is related to gender in creative processes: whether it hindered them or it was a productive force, a stimulus to creativity, whether it led to new literary genres, themes and other literary devices. Moreover, the articles reveal the way in which writers have responded to social and literary censorious expectations in articulating their gender in relation to intimacy, further exploring what the role of family, friends, mentors, publishers, editors, and critics is in the process of censoring intimacy. Last but not least, the articles focus on modes of linking censorship to the canonizing processes.

To start with, Katja Mihurko Poniž and Carmen Beatrice Duțu’s review article “Censorship—the Knot that Binds Intimacy and

Women's Writing?" opens this thematic issue with a brief historical overview of the intricacies of the relationship between censorship, gender, and intimacy. The authors (who are also the editors of the volume) further claim that when dealing with women's writing, censorship could be regarded as "the knot that binds intimacy and women writing," which is merely a paraphrase of Sue Curry Jansen's view on censorship, regarded as "the knot that binds knowledge and power."

The volume continues with the first case study. "A Complicit Reading Strategy: Exposing Censored Themes of Intimacy in Swedish Alfhild Agrell's *Räddad*" is a seminal text by Birgitta Lindh Estelle who boldly proposes an ethical reading by taking the specific socio-historic censorship situation of the Swedish female playwright Alfhild Agrell into account. Through multiple textual references, the author adopts a complicit reading strategy in order to expose silenced themes of intimacy in the gendered period-specific censorship situation of the 1880s in Sweden.

Zita Kārklā and Eva Eglāja-Kristsonsone take a militant stance in "*Her Story is Like a Weed: Censoring the Vulnerability in Women's Writing.*" Focusing on the example of Latvian writer Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa (1877–1950), the authors' outspoken intention is to broaden the feminist scholarship on women writers by exploring the relationship between women's writing, intimacy, vulnerability and censorship and rediscovering and canonizing women's writing through the Latvian literary culture, in the early twentieth century.

In "Becoming a (Slovenian) Poet at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century: Male Censorship of Vida Jeraj's Poetry" Alenka Jensterle Doležal approaches the theme of censorship from a performative viewpoint, discussing the case-study of the Slovenian woman writer Vida Jeraj (1875–1932). The article is an analysis of the gendered censorship discourse visible in the correspondence between her and the male authors in her first period of writing—with great impact on the poetic strategies of the young promising poet.

The same performative approach is proposed by Carmen Beatrice Duțu, Roxana Patraș and Antonio Patraș in the article "On Becoming 'Princesse Bibesco': The Intimacy of Modern Identity, Between the Self and the World." The authors present reasons and contexts of the exclusion of the Romanian-French writer Martha Bibescu (1886–1973) from the Romanian national literary canon. The authors' specific aim is to move away from the enduring narrative of censorship in Martha Bibescu's case and to propose her as a candidate figure for a transnational literary canon forging a specific, modern, intimate *écriture*.

In line with the more recent “new censorship” theories, the problems of self-censorship are brought into discussion by Cecilia Anell who, in “Unspeakable Desire? Norm Breaking Strategies by Swedish Women Authors of the 1880s,” explores strategies that nineteenth-century Swedish women authors invented to handle censorship when writing about intimacy and sexuality. The author thus reveals the fact that the dichotomy of the virtuous and the sinful woman has functioned as a strongly self-censoring factor for women authors throughout history in their writing on intimacy, desire, and sexuality.

On the other side of the spectrum, Natalia Panas’ “Double Censored Freedom? Cultural Memory’s Censorship of Intimacy Writing in *Moj život* by Maga Magazinović” discusses the case of the Serbian woman writer Maga Magazinović (1882–1968), a free thinker and a feminist advocate. Moreover, the article underlines that this perspective was regulated by two censorship systems in cultural memory: that of moral/erotic nature in Kingdom of Yugoslavia and ideological/political one in Socialist Yugoslavia.

Elena Lindholm’s article “The Censorship of a Closeted Spain: The Case of Elena Fortún (1886–1952)” focuses on how self-censorship and state censorship have shaped the literary legacy of the Spanish author of children’s books, Elena Fortún. The homosexual *closet* is presented as a key concept for understanding the impact of censorship on the work of a lesbian writer such as Fortún who has contributed to various narratives of Spanish femininity over the course of almost a century.

Irena Selišnik’s article “Self-censorship, Family Interpretation and the Influence of Legitimate Narrative on Autobiographies of Women” presents a comparative analysis of autobiographies of three Slovenian women writers and feminists: Elvira Dolinar, Minka Govekar and Marica Bartol. Selišnik explores their interpretation of life story together with the thematization of their narrative as well as the narrative style. Thus, Selišnik reveals how the authors self-censored themselves, sometimes voicing and sometimes keeping silent about important life decisions.

The issue of homoeroticism and censorship is addressed in Andrej Zavrl’s article “Who are the Addressees of *Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (in Slovenian)?” which discusses the translation of Shakespeare’s sonnets. The author contends that in the case of two recent translations into Slovenian, one cannot speak of censorship in the classical sense of hiding or deleting undesirable content. Rather, in these translations of the sonnets, among other things, a seemingly opposite effect may be traced, as the lyric subject addresses a man in many more sonnets than in the

original, which is the opposite of what one would expect in the case of censorship. Conditionally, one could perhaps speak of a ‘censorship’ of the gendered or fluid nature of the source texts.

The relation between male authorship, intimacy and censorship is explored by Marijan Dovič in “Burning *Erotika* and Ivan Cankar’s Revolution in Slovenian Poetry.” The author discusses the reception of Ivan Cankar’s poetry collection *Erotika* (1899), focusing on the reasons for the infamous purchase and burning of the collection ordered by the Bishop of Ljubljana, Anton Bonaventura Jeglič. Dovič points out that around the turn of the century in the Habsburg Monarchy, books were no longer subject to state censorship, however, this particular book was nevertheless subject to a special kind of informal censorship that actually benefited the author by putting him in the spotlight—as a harbinger of the erotic revolution in Slovenian poetry.

The editorial work on this special issue has been funded by the Slovenian Research Agency in the framework of the research project “Transformations of intimacy in the literary discourse of Slovene ‘moderna’” (J6-3134, hosted at the University of Nova Gorica) and the research project “Slovenian Writers and Imperial Censorship in the Long Nineteenth Century” (J6-2583, hosted at the ZRC SAZU Institute of Slovenian Literature and Literary Studies).

Censorship—the Knot that Binds Intimacy and Women’s Writing

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The connection between the private—often considered as the realm of the intimate—and women’s writing has long preoccupied feminist criticism. Recent feminist criticism has revealed the social impact of the connection between intimacy and women’s writing. This also raises the question of how women have negotiated these nuances and positions. Were there any strategies, any coping mechanisms with regard to employing intimacy in their writing? In this review article, we provide a brief overview of how censorship, gender and intimacy have been intertwined throughout history. Building on Sue Curry Jansen’s view which regards censorship as “the knot that binds knowledge and power” we further claim that we could regard censorship as the knot that binds intimacy and women’s writing. We also corroborate our assertions with examples from prominent studies focusing mainly on Western European literatures and add further examples of encounters with various forms of censorship, as experienced by Zofka Kveder, a writer who actively participated in Slovenian, German, Czech, and Croatian literary systems.

Keywords: feminist literary criticism / women’s writing / intimacy, censorship / self-censorship / Kveder, Zofka

Introduction

The connection between the private—often considered as the realm of the intimate—and women’s writing has long preoccupied feminist criticism.¹ In the reader edited by Susan Ostrov and entitled *Women*

¹ This work was written as part of the project “Slovenian Writers and Imperial Censorship in the Long Nineteenth Century” (J6-2583), financially supported by the Slovenian Research Agency.

and Romance the studies selected by the editor enable us to trace this preoccupation ever since the first wave feminism. Within the triad private space, romantic love and writing, intimacy seems to have played a crucial role in forging a new feminine identity, at odds with the patriarchal blueprint of traditional societies. Women's writing circulated these ideas, established invisible—but nonetheless powerful—connections and inscribed women's perspectives on all matters intimate onto their reader's mentality. More recent studies within feminist criticism have revealed the social impact of the connection between intimacy (now regarded as a cultural category) and women's writing. *At Home in the World: Women Writers and Public Life, from Austen to the Present* (DiBatista), or *Writing Intimacy into Feminist Geography* (Moss and Donovan) articulate detailed exposés on women's role as cultural transmitters. Such studies reveal the role women had in history, when dealing with matters of the intimate, domestic life, love and escapism. In effect, these issues had been thoroughly explored outside the scope of the gendered perspective by Anthony Giddens in his referential study *The Transformation of Intimacy*. In contrast to much of the dominant discourses on the role of intimacy in modern culture, Giddens takes a Habermasian² stance in arguing that women's writing played a major role in in the radical blurring between the private and the public spheres, thus triggering a paradigm shift in the way emergent modern societies were *doing intimacy* (Jackson and Sik Ying Ho). However, feminists have since then critiqued this position—starting from drawing attention to the particular nuances of a post-bourgeois conception of a public sphere (Fraser) and ending with the latest study in the field: *Women Writing Intimate Spaces. The Long Nineteenth Century at the Fringes of Europe* (Lindh Estelle, Duşu, and Parente-Čapková). The particular concern of the editors of the latter volume was the issue of intimacy bound up with spatiality. As the title suggests, the contributors focused on a neglected geographical area—the fringes (or, arguably, peripheries) of Europe in relation to intimacy, or better yet, to the different intimacies identifiable in the emerging modern societies in these parts of Europe, at the turn of the twentieth century.

It is thus clear that the feminist scrutiny has raised awareness and has called for further nuancing the discussion related to the intimacy paradigm shift. There are, in fact, a variety of viewpoints on intimacy in regard to women's writing from the eighteenth century onward,

² We are referring here to the concept of public sphere as developed by Jurgen Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*.

ranging from attachment to the culture of adultery, from eros to anti-intimacy. This also raises the question of how women have negotiated these nuances and positions. Were there any strategies, any coping mechanisms with regard to employing intimacy in their writing?

In her research on German romantic female authors, Barbara Becker-Cantarino tackles this issue by coining the concept of “gender censorship.” She notes that in the canon of German romanticism the discourse on sexual difference and writing functions “as a discourse of censorship” (Becker-Cantarino 81). In the wake of classicist and romantic aesthetics, the German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte is extremely resolute when addressing the issue of regulating women’s writing within the scope of utilitarianism: he deems women writers’ “products” as not being worthy of the Republic of Art, namely the realm of philosophy or science, traditionally regarded as male only areas, not to be trespassed by women. This would be, Fichte contended, against “natural law.” Even if this Fichtean social philosophy had been challenged, women were still subordinated to men at the period of the intellectual movements, according to subsequent Becker-Cantarino’s argument (82). Moreover, even after several generations, when certain women writers did manage to establish themselves as authors, the status of a woman writer was still regarded as beyond the realm of respectability of their gender norms. In actual fact, when applied onto the emerging women’s literary production, all the overt or covert control exercised by men around them did not differ fundamentally from the formula of censorship practices (84).

Historically, various forms of censorship have markedly shaped the creative process of writers. Not only state censorship but also interventions by editors, publishers and translators may be regarded as censorship practices. They could be understood as an implicit form of censorship, which comprises “an area that is not strictly codified legally, wherein no one can ever be sure whether the boundaries have been trespassed or not, or predict what kinds of penalties they might face” (Dović 169). Particularly subjects pertaining to a broad range of morality, gender, and intimacy (love, sexuality, family connections, friendship) have been severely scrutinized by censors who determined what was (in)appropriate in the field of artistic expression. It didn’t take long for censors to realize that the moral standards imposed on women could be questioned, and in the worst case, even rejected, by the influence that popular women’s works had on other women.

In this review article, we provide a brief overview of how censorship, gender and intimacy have been intertwined throughout history. Using

Sue Curry Jansen's perspective as a foundation, which sees censorship as "the knot that ties knowledge and power," we further assert that we could see censorship as the knot tying intimacy and women's writing together. We further add additional examples of encounters with various forms of censorship, as experienced by writer Zofka Kveder, who actively participated in Slovenian, German, Czech, and Croatian literary systems, to support our claims with examples from renowned studies focusing primarily on Western European literatures.

Censorship conducted by religious and secular authorities

Probably the first influential female voice that was violently silenced belonged to Hypatia (born c. 350–370 AD; died 415 AD), a Neoplatonic philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician. The aggressive mob murdered her to stop her influence on Alexandrian politics.

Gender censorship was applied by critics also after the death of the female author. This can be traced in the early reception of Sappho's work in the Attic comedy. The latter attributed to Sappho many lovers who lived before or after her, so that even the Roman philosopher Seneca seriously wondered whether Sappho was a public whore and Byzantine grammarians even speculated that there were two women of that name: one was said to have been a famous poetess, the other a notorious courtesan and heroine of comedies. In the second century, the Roman Catholic writer Tatian painted an even more negative picture of her when he wrote about her promiscuous sexual life, which was supposedly described shamelessly in her poems (Gantar 60). Such portrayals did not affect Sappho's creativity, since they occurred only after her death, but for many women writers after her, equating their literature or heroines with themselves and their intimate lives had far more negative consequences.

However, for the very origins of the word censorship, we need to shift to Rome, where the word censor was used from the fifth century BC. Censor was the officer who conducted the census, regulated the morals of the citizens, counted and classified them (see Swithinbank). Even with such an early definition of the censor's duties, it is clear how paramount morality was. In the history of censorship, next to statements regarded as hostile to the state and the religious establishment, morality is the most frequent reason for authorities' interventions in texts. In the Middle Ages, the most infamous attempt to silence women was undoubtedly the burning of the book *The Mirror of Simple Souls* and its

author, the beguine Marguerite Porete (?–1310) at the stake in 1310. Not just the content of Porete's book but also her status of beguine (i.e., the Christian lay-order without taking religious vows) were problematic for the Catholic Church. One of the taboos Porete had violated was writing the book in Old French rather than in Latin. She was ordered not to circulate her ideas or the book again. In spite of this, she continued to do so (Piron).

Book burning can be described as an extreme, repressive censorship, which occurs when the work is already in the public—it may circulate as a manuscript as in Porete's case or be printed or performed. However, the religious authorities also tried to act in advance and prevent any attempt to spread ideas considered dangerous, and in this way exercised preventive censorship.

The Catholic *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* is one of the forms of this particular type of censorship. It was first issued in 1559. The first woman to be placed on the list was Magdalena Haymairus (1535–1586) in 1569, who was listed for one of her children's books. Other women include Anne Askew (1521–1546), Olympia Fulvia Morata (1526–1555), Ursula of Munsterberg (1491, 1495, or 1499–1534), Veronica Franco (1546–1591), and Paola Antonia Negri (1508–1555) in the sixteenth century. In the nineteenth century we find Madame de Staël (1766–1817) with her novel *Corinne ou l'Italie* on the list and George Sand (1804–1876). Even if the *Index* has not been so important since the nineteenth century, the following authors and their works can be found on it in the twentieth century: Simone de Beauvoir's (1908–1986) *The Second Sex* (1949) and *The Mandarins* (1954) and Maria Valterra's (1897–1961) work about the life of Jesus Christ entitled *The Poem of the Man-God* (1959). From the year 1966 the *Index* does not have the force of ecclesiastical law with the associated censures but it keeps its moral force.

Book censorship was exercised not only by the Catholic Church, but also by secular authorities. For instance, in Austria, the strict regulation of state censorship coincides with the Age of Enlightenment. In 1751, Maria Theresa established a censorship commission. Book censorship lasted until the March Revolution, while theater pre-censorship lasted until the end of the monarchy. There is no doubt that the primary task of censorship was to protect the authorities (secular and ecclesiastical), but the area of morality was also very important for censors. In the spirit of the Enlightenment, censorship was supposed to push back ignorance and superstition, furthermore one of the tasks of censorship was to change old customs and practices that appeared

coarse and uncouth in the eyes of the enlightened people. In addition, censorship was to contribute to the development of modern, stricter morals and the refinement of manners (Bachleitner 50).

As for women writers, at the time of Maria Theresa (1751–1791) we find the works of Marianne-Agnès Falques (1720–1780), the author of romance novels, on the list of banned books. Later, in the first half of the nineteenth century, the following names appear: Marie-Adélaïde Barthélemy-Hadot (1763–1821), Sophie von Brentano (1766–1800), Anna Eliza Bray (1790–1883), and George Sand, the latter with 17 titles (Bachleitner 111, 328, 336, 347).

Why were Sand's novels so problematic for Austrian censors? Bachleitner examines *Consuelo* (1842–1843), a historical novel that refers unkindly to Austria and is set about half in Vienna. In *Consuelo*, Sand bluntly attacks the monarchy and its representatives. Her main charge is that absolute power corrupts character. The proximity to the Gothic novel provided an additional argument for the censors to put *Consuelo* on the list, since everything linked to superstitions was problematic for the Austrian censorship (Bachleitner 348–350).

George Sand's historical drama *Les Missisipiens* (1840) was also placed on the list of banned works. This play varies the theme that George Sand dealt with in numerous novels: failure of love and materialistic thinking against the background of financial speculation. Anti-Semitic tones are also struck in the text: Samuel Boursset is the despised "modern Shylock" who provides the upper classes with money or shares, but often ruins them financially. Such an image of the Jew was not appropriate, since Austrian society was also dependent on Jewish capital and the audience could find parallels with Salomon Rotschild, an important Austrian financier. The moral issues were problematic in this work as well. In *Missisipiens*, as in most of her texts, Sand presents marriage as a field of speculation in which young, unmarried girls are treated like stocks on the market (Bachleitner 378–380).

Further east, in Russia, which—next to Austria—historically had the strictest censorship in Europe, Evdokia Rostopchina (1811–1858) and her ballad "Nasil'nyi brak" ("The Forced marriage," 1845) were sharply criticized by censors. L. Schlosberg discusses the case of the 'Rostopchina ballad' which became a platform for social gossip about the marital hardships of the countess and her husband Andrei Fedorovich, allegedly addressed in the poem. Thus, the critic points out that the censorship initially targeted the subject matter: it was taboo due to public pressure exercised onto women writers who were expected to exclude personal matters from the act of writing. Moreover, Rostopchina fell

even further into disgrace and was banished from court when tsar Nicholas I apparently misinterpreted her poem as a political allusion to the forced ‘marriage’ of Poland with the Tsarist empire. Consequently, “around this time, the countess abandoned poetry in favor of writing prose, blank verse dramas, and stories” (Schlosberg 2064–2065).

The use of pseudonyms can also be seen as a form of dealing with censorship. Most often, women writers chose pseudonyms because they assumed that their writings would be more successful if they had a male name on the cover. Sometimes, as in the case of Zofka Kveder, the decision was not voluntary. At the time of her first publications, Zofka Kveder was employed in the office of Ivan Šušteršič, a lawyer who was also a politician advocating Catholic values and views on women’s role. He found unacceptable that his female employee would write literature and therefore he required her to write under a pseudonym.

Censorship interventions by family members, friends, and editors

It was fairly typical for women writers’ relatives or acquaintances to act as censors by burning their correspondence. We recall here the granddaughter of Madame de Sévigné who ordered her son-in-law to burn her grandmother’s letters after her death. Fortunately, he had the letters copied (Fleré 5–6). But even where letters were not burned, they were often manipulated, edited. Peter Sabor writes that in the first collected edition of Jane Austen’s letters, published in 1884, some passages or even whole pages were removed from the manuscripts. Occasionally, Victorian defenders of morality would completely remove from printed books the fragments dealing with anything connected to bodily humors or explicit language, as revealed in one of Jane Austen’s correspondence letters with her sister Casandra, one of the manuscripts that have reached us to-date. Visiting the premises of a school, she finds a study room “full of all the modern Elegancies—& if it had not been for some naked Cupids over the Mantelpiece, which must be a fine study for Girls, one should never have smelt Instruction” (Sabor 129–130).

Obviously, her publisher Richard Bentley³ also had to think of the financial aspect of releasing Austen’s letters. For the same reason, the

³ After Austen’s works had been out of print for 14 years, in 1832 Henry and Casandra Austen and T. Egerton sold the publishing rights of all six of Austen’s novels to publisher Richard Bentley.

editors of the French newspaper *Le Matin* censored Colette's texts. According to Jeanne A. Ojala, there has always been a conflict between the moral and economical components of the censorship process, which is how the economy-related censorship issue in Colette's case is explained. However sensitive they might have been to the bourgeois' public moral demands, excessive censorship was bound to trigger financial cutbacks. Consequently, the authors of potentially censored published material would never be prosecuted on moral grounds. These economic realities explain how *The Ripening Seed* (*Le Bli en herbe*, 1922) featuring a theme violating social norms of the time (an older woman seducing a teenager) was published by *Le Matin* in a series, at least to a point, long after some members of the public reacted to the theme. The economical factor could also explain another *Colette* series (in 1931), this time overtly hinting at homosexuality (of both genders). As Colette notes, the editor "cut my text *in the middle of a sentence*, and sent me a letter informing me that he was calling a halt to *Ces Plaisirs* ... because it was not to the taste of his mass readership" (Ojala 541–542).

Similarly, Radclyffe Hall's (1880–1943) lesbian novel *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) was banned. It all began with a note from James Douglas, editor of the *Sunday Express*: "I would rather give a healthy boy or a healthy girl a phial of prussic acid than this novel." (Douglas 38) The ensuing obscenity trial ended with the banning of a novel. Judge Biron concluded his judgement with the following words: "[...] I have no hesitation whatever in saying that it is an obscene libel, that it would tend to corrupt those into whose hands it should fall, and that the publication of this book is an offence against public decency, an obscene libel, and I shall order it to be destroyed." (Biron 49)

Any allusion to sexuality was problematic both in printed texts and in theater. Slovenian censor Fran Milčinski referred to women as he rejected a popular French comedy *Florette and Patapon* (1906) by Maurice Hennequin and Pierre Veber on the following grounds: "The play is not suitable for our moral audience, for the wives and daughters of our officials, and for our always very numerous student visitors. The actions and expressions of the play are too obscene!" (Milčinski)

This analysis highlights a crucial fact about moral instruction that is present in nineteenth-century Austrian censorship. As a result of the fact that its regulatory or disciplinary procedures are founded on gender relations and the patriarchal structure of society, bourgeois ideology's key objective of censoring women's sexual desire also collides with the censorship of the theater at this point. While the Enlightenment believed that it was important to educate the general populace and that

this aim included the study of sexuality, the focus of attention in the nineteenth and early twentieth century was on the bourgeoisie, particularly women. The (male) students were presumably not the target audience that the censor truly had in mind, given that the majority of them had already had sexual contact with domestic servants or in brothels during this time; instead, the wives and daughters of officials were to be given greater weight.

Another example of censorship of explicit sexual desire is Zofka Kveder's novella *Eve* (*Eva*, 1904). The story depicts sexual intercourse between a woman from a wealthy and respected Croatian peasant family and her servant. At some point, Eve gives in to her passion and becomes pregnant. She is overwhelmed with shame and sees the only way out in suicide; thus the novella ends with Eva stabbing herself to death. Kveder sent the novella to *Ljubljanski zvon* (a renowned Slovenian periodical). Her correspondence with the editor, Fran Zbašnik, reveals the editor's desire to have her alter or omit some passages from the original manuscript. Judging by her response, Kveder must have given in under financial pressure. She requested the manuscript from the editor so that she may publish it in German because her text was too daring for the Slovenian audience: "I know Ljubljana, unfortunately you are right.—For me a character like Eva is something grandiose. Her suicide is based on a true incident down in Croatia.—But I know—in Ljubljana people would sniffle." (Kveder)

Self-censorship practices and strategies

In order to avoid censorship, women writers tried to find alternative ways to publish their works. By exploring these strategies, we move from the traditional definition of censorship to the realm of the so-called new censorship, which "stresses the multiplicity of forms of censorship and the generative effect of censorship, an activity hitherto seen as purely repressive" (Bunn 25). New censorship theory offers a more complex understanding of the entire censorship phenomenon, and, consequently, is more open to different perspectives, such as feminist literary criticism.⁴ In Annette Kuhn's view, censorship is "not reducible to a circumscribed and predefined set of institutions and institutional activities, but is produced within an array of constantly shifting dis-

⁴ On new censorship theory, see Gilbert; Curry Jansen; Freshwater; and the articles in this thematic issue by Annell, Kärkla, and Eglāja-Kriststone.

courses, practices and apparatuses. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as either fixed or monolithic” (Kuhn 127).

The most common method of avoiding censorship was probably to use a pseudonym, particularly a male identity. As Becker-Cantarino points out, this wasn't typically the case prior to the romantic era. She argues that writers of the older generation “such as Sophie La Roche (1730–1807) or Anna Louisa Karsch (1722–1791), consciously presented themselves as professional authors after a first work received critical acclaim—though they remained well aware of their status as exceptions, if not anomalies, in literary culture” (Becker-Cantarino 89–90).

On the other hand, after 1800 women often published anonymously or under a masculine pen-name and had their work revised or even signed by men. Becker-Cantarino gives the example of Caroline Schlegel-Schelling, who published nothing under her own name, but reported about her writing in her letters. In one of them she writes: “On Thursday Schelling submitted an article that I ... [had] composed; I would not have wanted it under my name in any case ... Schelling did away with the epistolary form I had initially given it and incidentally teased me a lot because of my great affection for the play and everything connected with it that had been so obvious; I had to laugh myself realizing what a feminine appearance it had. With much joking we removed the traces of gentle hands one by one.” (Becker-Cantarino 87) As Becker-Cantarino argues, “[g]ender censorship’ led to repressions, omissions, concessions, and modifications in literary texts, especially in novels, which contemporaries read as representations of real life” (91).

To illustrate how ‘gender censorship’ worked via textual interventions, Becker-Cantarino brings forth the example of *The Seldorf Family* (*Die Familie Seldorf*, 1796–1797), a family saga by Therese Forster-Huber which was well received due to its apparent endorsement of patriarchal order. The topic of the wayward daughter who refuses marriage is no doubt masqueraded—yet another method of eluding censorship (Becker-Cantarino 91).

In a similar vein, according to Mulvey-Roberts, both family sagas and the Gothic novel “allowed women to overcome the censorship that barred female literature from tackling taboos such as incest and rape” (Mulvey-Roberts 2638). Yet not only novels were subject to gender censorship. Drama is equally productive in this sense, fostering the fragmentation of characters and dramatic. This fragmentation is at work in Caroline von Günderrode’s dramas with open ends, for instance in *Magie und Schicksal* and *Hildgund*, which is a re-writing

of Atilla's legend. In *Hildgund*, the woman playwright leaves an open ending: "Where a male hero would be able to stab away, this drama breaks off, because the desire of the heroine, formulated in a monologue, appears immoderate." (Hoff 106–108)

Virginia Woolf is a good demonstration of a writer who used self-censorship in the early twentieth century in the context of marketing tactics. As Vara Neverow notes, Woolf was aware that she was widely read by different audiences: "a mixed-gender public readership, a primarily female readership, and an intimate readership consisting mainly of family and friends." (Neverow 57) Consequently, for "the general readership Woolf avoided or downplayed topics likely to provoke disapproval—for example, Mrs. Dalloway is very covert with regard to Sapphic and male homoerotic desire. Directed mainly to a female audience, *A Room of One's Own* might be a bit more explicit about sexuality and gender hostilities" (58).

Woolf's counterpart in Central Europe, Zofka Kveder, also practiced self-censorship; however, she did not downplay topics, but a genre. In 1900, she published a collection of short stories (sketches) *Mystery of a Woman* (*Misterij žene*), which was rather praised by many progressive critics and readers. However, conservative critics were soon to react negatively. In 1902, Oton Župančič, one of the most prominent Slovenian poets of that time—and the occasional literary critic—published a survey of Slovenian short stories and wrote about Kveder's book in very harsh terms: "The mystery of a woman' by Zofka Kveder is not really literature, but cultural and social history. Those sketches are of bad literary taste, the visionary images are exaggerated, the symbolism is superficial. 'The mystery of a woman' belongs to the so-called veristic literature, with tendencies that smell too much of demagogy and have nothing to do with literature." (Župančič 25)

While Župančič wasn't the only one to have offered unfavorable criticism, other critics' points of emphasis were different. They had written about content, while Župančič addressed structural issues (the genre employed by Kveder in her writing, for instance). As a young feminist, Kveder was determined to write about women's subordination and domestic violence, and she continued to do so after publishing her *Mystery of a Woman*. However, following Župančič's criticism, she never published another collection of sketches as a self-censorship strategy.

Conclusion

From the point of view of gender, intimacy and morality, censorship proves to have always been a project that not only protects the political immutability of monarchical boundaries, the organization of the state apparatus, and the inviolability of the Church, but has intervened in the private sphere of individuals, especially women. In this review article, we aimed to structure a brief exploration of the historical entanglements between censorship, intimacy and women's writing. Having established the paramount importance of the cultural contract of intimacy at the societal level, we have pointed out how the establishment has become very sensitive to the reworkings of intimacy in women's writing, due to its high social modelling potential (Bandura). Soon, policing scenarios of intimacy become scenarios of censorship.

In this respect, we have argued that because the bourgeois society has created different codes of conduct for women and men, the reception of their works was also differently perceived—it became gendered. We have seen that women's works, usually describing the private lives of their female protagonists and dealing with themes of intimacy, love, friendship, and other relationships, are even more exposed to the critical interventions of editors. As a result, on the one hand we have provided examples of how the criteria for censoring or rejecting an author's work were tied together with the impact the work would have on the audience. On the other hand, in accordance with the "new censorship theory," we have provided several examples of how the gender restrictions have also been ingrained in the act of literary creation itself.

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Cenzura – vozlišče, ki povezuje intimnost in žensko literarno avtorstvo

Ključne besede: feministična literarna veda / literarno ustvarjanje / ženske / intimnost / cenzura / samocenzura / Kveder, Zofka

Povezava med zasebnim, ki pogosto velja za področje intimnega, in ženskim pisanjem že dolgo zaposluje feministično kritiko. Novejše študije v feministični kritiki so razkrile družbeni vpliv povezave med intimnostjo, ženskim literarnim avtorstvom in cenzuro oziroma samocenzuro. Ob tem se postavlja vprašanje, kako so literarne ustvarjalke ubesedovale tematike, povezane z intimnostjo, ki so bile neprimerne, da jih obravnava avtorica. Ali so obstajale kakšne strategije, kakšni mehanizmi spoprijemanja s tem? V preglednem znanstvenem članku najprej podajava kratek pregled, kako so se cenzura, spol in intimnost prepletali skozi zgodovino. Izhajajoč iz študije Sue Curry Jansen, ki cenzuro obravnava kot »vozlišče, ki povezuje znanje in moč«, trdiva, da bi lahko cenzuro obravnavali kot vozlišče, ki povezuje intimnost in žensko literarno avtorstvo. Svoje trditve podkrepiva s primeri iz odmevnih študij, ki se osredotočajo predvsem na zahodnoevropske književnosti, in dodajava primere srečanj z različnimi oblikami cenzure, kot jih je izkusila Zofka Kveder, pisateljica, ki je aktivno sodelovala v slovenskem, nemškem, češkem in hrvaškem literarnem sistemu.

1.02 Pregledni znanstveni članek / Review article

UDK 82.091:351.751.5

305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.01>

A Complicit Reading Strategy: Exposing Censored Themes of Intimacy in Swedish Alfhild Agrell's *Räddad*

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*This article proposes an ethical reading position by taking the author's socio-historic censorious situation into account and by adopting a complicit reading strategy in order to expose silenced themes of intimacy. It does so through textual references to the 1883 play *Räddad* (Saved) by the Swedish female playwright Alfhild Agrell. By taking the point of departure in Helen Freshwater's idea of an inclusive model of censorship, Judith Butler's theory of reiteration, and Toril Moi's claims of the political potential of a reading mode starting in the concerns of the text, I establish the theoretical basis for a complicit reading strategy. I then present the gendered period-specific censorious situation of the 1880s in Sweden, in which the aesthetics of idealism influenced censorship in the theatres and also regulated playwriting. I demonstrate a vacillation between self-censoring and exposing themes of intimacy in Agrell's play, proposing that this should be regarded as a specific rhetoric produced by an awareness of gendered censorship. Finally, by leaning on phenomenological and new materialist instruments of analysis, I present an embodied reading strategy for Agrell's play in response to its specific individual poetics and concerns, to expose its full gender/feminist potential.*

Keywords: feminist literary criticism / women's writing / Swedish drama / Agrell, Alfhild / intimacy / censorship / self-censorship

The Swedish playwright and author of prose fiction Alfhild Agrell, a contemporary of August Strindberg and Henrik Ibsen, was quite successful in Scandinavian theatres in the 1880s. Her breakthrough play *Räddad* (*Saved*) was first staged at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in 1882 and was published in 1883. Due to the gender critique of the play, it has been considered part of an early feminist movement in the

theatre in the wake of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879) (see Nordin Hennel, "En stjärnskådespelerska" 234–235; Wirmark 9–10). Agrell's success as a playwright did not last long, though, and by the early twentieth century her plays were deemed of low quality, recognized as simply constructed expressions of indignation with stereotyped roles (see Schück and Warburg 164, 173, 196; Tjäder 214–215). Ibsen's and Strindberg's ways of composing plays have set the standard for our historical understanding, structuring how we read and interpret realistic and naturalistic plays of the period in general and establishing a benchmark of quality. Consistent comparisons through history with Ibsen's plays have not only intensified the negative evaluation of Agrell's plays but also contributed to a position on the fringe of the canon, their inclusion conditioned by their feminist value. Although efforts have been made in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to clear the plays of accusations of being badly composed and to show their topicality,¹ they linger in what Gunilla Hermansson has referred to as the "outermost area" of the theatrical and academic canons, the area inhabited by authorships excluded from summarized national historical narratives or, on the contrary, highlighted to complement or challenge the traditional, usually male canon (Hermansson 193).² My stance is that the pejoratively judged features do not indicate poor dramaturgical skills but are gendered responses to censorship imposed by theatre managers and as institutional restrictions in the 1880s. Alternative reading strategies for Agrell's plays, and women's writing in history in general, that question established historical narratives and established interpretation patterns and instead acknowledge the gendered censorial situations of the authors, are needed to do their works justice, as those situations af-

¹ In the spring of 2007, a group of actors at the Royal Dramatic Theatre organized four readings of works by Swedish women playwrights found to have been frequently staged in Scandinavian theatres in the 1880s. The same theatrical season saw several new productions of plays by women playwrights of the "Modern Breakthrough," both in Stockholm theatres and elsewhere. These productions were the outcome of the projects by women actors, dramaturges, and directors at several theatres. The SPETS project, a collaboration between Östgötateatern (the regional theatre of Östgötland County) and Riksteatern (Sweden's national touring theatre), toured Swedish theatres with *Räddad*, among other plays, and *Modärna kvinnor* (*Modern women*), a collaboration between the Stockholm City Theatre and the National Gallery, received considerable attention in the newspapers and other media. Riksteatern received funding to digitize and publish plays from the nineteenth century. The project Dramawebben (The drama web) started with plays by women playwrights of the Modern Breakthrough.

² Gunilla Hermansson uses the Swedish term *randområde*, further describing this as a mobile, precarious, and conditioned area (193).

fected the presentation of morally sensitive themes of intimacy, such as feelings and emotions connected to marriage and family.

In this article, by taking the point of departure in Helen Freshwater's idea of an inclusive model of censorship, Judith Butler's theory of reiteration, and Toril Moi's claims of the political potential of a loving caring reading mode that starts in the concerns of the text, I first establish the theoretical basis for a complicit reading strategy. Using *Räddad* as an example, I then present its period-specific censorious situation and demonstrate a vacillation between hiding and exposing themes of intimacy in the work, suggesting that this should be regarded as a specific rhetoric produced by an awareness of gendered censorship. Finally, I claim that a complicit reading strategy must be individually designed in response to the specific rhetoric and concerns of the literary work in question, and by leaning on phenomenological and new materialist instruments of analysis, I present an embodied reading strategy for Agrell's play, to reveal its full gender-critical potential, exposing expressions of women's emotional reactions in relation to the deprivation of intimacy. Thereby, as a reader and scholar from my much more permissive and privileged twenty-first-century position concerning what can be written about intimacy compared with Agrell's censorious situation, I join forces with the late-nineteenth century playwright making myself complicit with her, against the gendered restrictions that she faced when composing the play, explicitly expressing what she could not.

A reading strategy from an ethical standpoint in complicity with the (self)-censored playwright

Instead of starting with a set definition of censorship, Helen Freshwater offers an inclusive model based on a responsiveness to censorship that reflects socio-historically specific instances of control, conditioning, or silencing and furthermore allows for and distinguishes between different manifestations of censorship (Freshwater 241). Consequently, different forms of censorship of varying severities and kinds—*i.e.*, regulatory interventions by political authorities, institutional impositions and restrictions, and structural control—may, in line with Judith Butler's ideas, appear simultaneously as a continuum, connected to one another but without negating differences or ruling out certain kinds of censorship (Butler, "Ruled Out" in Freshwater 242). However, time- and site-specific censorious events affect individuals differently and are thus experienced and responded to differently,

depending on the individual's specific social and cultural position. Pierre Bourdieu has proposed that how the individual author deals with normative codes and restrictions attaches her to a specific position in a cultural field (Bourdieu 235). Turning Bourdieu's proposition around, the individual's specific position in the literary and theatrical field and the larger social and cultural environment is decisive for how s/he can deal with institutional regulations. As feminist scholars have pointed out, the types of capital of a specific field (in the Bourdieusian sense) exist in the interrelationships among social positions carved out in the intersection of social structures such as gender, class, age, ethnicity, and sexuality. The intersection of these structures brings with it access to or limitations on what types of capital are available to certain positions (see Moi, "Appropriating Bourdieu"; Skeggs; Reay), affecting the individual's maneuvering room within the field and how s/he can relate to external regulations and, consequently, how s/he transforms them to internal regulations—in other words, self-censorship.

Michael G. Levine criticizes scholarship that restricts its analysis of (self)-censorship to the question of reprehensible content and how it is smuggled into the public sphere, as it fails to understand how self-censored writing also and above all gives voice to a complex network of internalized power structures (Levine 51). As Beate Müller points out, self-censorship is not necessarily a conscious process, as the internalization of regulating norms is not easily overcome (Müller 25). Consequently, the line between self-censorship and writing strategies is blurry, and complicit relationships between censoring agents and censored individuals cannot be ruled out. This also implies that external regulations such as critical exclusion and institutional interference are connected to self-censoring authorial strategies visible in the rhetoric of a literary text.

Freshwater underlines the temporal aspect of censorship, stating that a censorious event is not singular but part of a chain of events, including interactions with censorious agents. Repression, silencing, and control require reiteration in order to maintain their force (Freshwater 225). Although canonizing processes do not necessarily happen in sanctioned institutions, they are still regulating and silencing instruments,³ which is why they can be regarded as long-term historical censorious forces and the result of loyalties between censorious agents. Censorious agencies and silencing processes in canonization, layers of established historiographical narratives, and scholarly methods of literary

³ For a more extensive discussion of the canon and censorship, see Müller 12–14.

analysis need to be critically examined when dealing with women's writing in history and censorship.

Freshwater's heterogeneous view of censorship marks an ambition not to reinscribe an original act of exclusion just because a certain experience of being censored does not correspond to a predefined category (Freshwater 241). The same ethical stance must characterize a reading strategy that is loyal to the attempt to express censored themes by starting in the socio-historic situation of the author, making her experience or anticipation of being censored from a gendered position the node around which the literary text is structured. In a reading in complicity with the censored author, the anticipation or negotiation of censorship is regarded as the generator of a style that addresses censorious limitations both "as a debilitating impediment and ... as an impetus to stylistic innovation" (Levine 2). The two sides of reiteration are thus stressed: while needed for controlling regulations to maintain their impact, reiteration also creates latitude for a level of negotiation. As Judith Butler argues, each instance of reiteration represents an invitation to perform a specific speech act differently (Butler, *Excitable Speech* 1–41). Consequently, the limitations of censorship may be destabilized by the possibility of negotiating responses such as irony and silence, creating ambivalent meanings or an awareness of censorial exclusions in the reader or theatregoer.⁴

When tracing the style or rhetoric of the text, starting in a censorious situation means giving priority to the historical context and paying attention to how words and structures imposed by this situation are used, rather than taking the point of departure in theoretical concepts. Toril Moi, who has questioned the hegemonic position of the "hermeneutics of suspicion" in scholarly interpretations of literary works, points to the need to recognize situations in which a reading mode of loving care, giving priority to the concerns of the text by seeing word and meaning as a coherent whole rather than divided elements, is more politically effective and useful than the suspicious quest for "something else" (Moi, *Revolution* 175–177). The complicit reading strategy for the censored literary text, which I propose, responds to the text's concerns and ways of addressing its reading audience, focusing on the

⁴ Judith Butler has furthermore pointed out that censors are compelled to restage the utterances that they seek to banish from public life, conducting "a performative contradiction" (Butler, *Excitable Speech* 130). Freshwater notes another counterproductive reflexive effect of overt censorship: it may create an awareness of excluded material, generating complicit audiences who can perceive the dual structure of the censored text (Freshwater 234).

negotiation of normative regulating structures. In contrast, established narratives of literary history, set definitions, literary evaluations, and scholarly methods are viewed with skeptical suspicion, as products of long-term temporal chains of censorious events.

By viewing rhetorical traits, such as breaches of expectation and fissures found in literary texts, in relation to the norms and conventions of the theatrical institution as responses to censorious situations and by relating them to the concerns of the text, works may be opened to new modes of reception, thus breaking historiographic chains of silencing events. As concerns of literary works differ, complicit reading strategies must also do so. The reading strategy that I suggest, in solidarity with Agrell's censorious situation and with regard to the concern of her text, aims at recovering censored feelings and emotions connected to marriage and family. It demands an embodied reading strategy, creating an intimate bond between protagonist and reader. In the analysis, I lean on Sandra Lee Bartky's ideas of feminist solidarity between women in different positions with different experiences and on her notion of "feeling-with-another," which is a response to an observing position that does not mean a total emotional identification but allows a certain distance from the individual whose situation is observed (Bartky 73–81).⁵ Jay Rajiva notices that such a reading position orients the reader towards certain types of narrative structures, such as visceral elements, that may be mobilized without taking leave of context and interpretation (Rajiva 32). "Feeling-with" the protagonist of the play, I pay attention to the many descriptions of tactile sensations and also to melodramatic hyperbole addressing the reader's memory of emotional and bodily experiences.

Rajiva understands the literary text as a canvas on which "the Other" emerges as a figure of representation and on which a character or a marginalized subject position can be examined (Rajiva 10). Bronwyn Parry, who explores "distributed spaces of intimacy," suggests that intensely intimate relations without personal encounters can be achieved through interaction with shared objects through the deep sentiments these objects may embody or evoke (Parry 35–36, 43). By combining Rajiva's and Parry's reasoning, Agrell's *Räddad* is treated

⁵ See also LaCapra, whose notion of "emphatic unsettlement" resembles Bartky's position of "feeling-with-another." For LaCapra, emphatic unsettlement "resists full identification with, and appropriation of, the experience of the other" (LaCapra 41). The secondary witness (to traumatic experiences) puts him/herself "in the other's position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place" (78).

as an interface through which the subordinated subject position of a nineteenth-century, bourgeois, young Swedish woman can be examined from an emotional perspective, which creates the foundation for my conclusions regarding the political potential of the embodied reading strategy.

The specific socio-historic censorious situation and the suspicious reading of established historiography

The rhetoric of self-censoring and exposure in Agrell's plays responds to the moral and artistic restrictions and impositions of the aesthetics of idealism, acted out both as an authoritarian intervention by theatre managers and as an institutional regulation influencing playwrights' ways of composing plays. The moral content closely connected to an ideal dramaturgy was decisive in the censorious task of litterateurs and theatre managers when deciding what, and what not, to stage (Johansson Lindh 59).

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Scandinavia may be seen as characterized by a paradigm shift, as varieties of aesthetic anti-idealism, such as critical realism and naturalism, challenged the late nineteenth-century version of aesthetic idealism. Still, as in many European countries, the aesthetics of idealism occupied a hegemonic position in the prestigious Scandinavian theatres of the 1880s, extending until the mid-1920s when modernism had achieved hegemony (Moi, *Henrik Ibsen* 67–68).⁶ The moral backbone of the aesthetics of idealism essentially comprised conservative, Christian, patriarchal, bourgeois values, closely connected to artistic conventions demanding didactic uplifting qualities. In particular, these conventions defended matters of decency (see Molnár 145, 158; Johansson Lindh 62). The anticipation of authoritarian intervention as well as institutional regulation in the form of conventions shaping the audience address and the audience's expectations, and consequently success or failure, meant that all playwrights, male or female, were influenced by the aesthetics

⁶ In accordance with Toril Moi's use of the notion, aesthetic idealism refers to a set of "post-Kantian aesthetic principles that survived romanticism as a literary and artistic movement," which in an impoverished moralizing and didactic form (compared to romanticism proper) contributed to a more or less compulsory "master discourse" about literature and art well into the twentieth century (Moi, *Henrik Ibsen* 82). In line with Moi's observations the main distinction should not be made between romanticism and realism but between an ideal realism and a materialist critical realism.

of idealism and either consciously related to it, if they wanted their plays staged at a prestigious theatre, or unconsciously internalized the regulating norms as the benchmarks of good quality.

In the 1880s, realism without idealistic elevation was regarded as a more-or-less direct representation of reality, having the capacity to expose the naked non-mediated truth (Gedin 378, 387–391). Consequently, critical realistic depictions of marriage or family—the core of society—were considered dangerous. Aided by critical realistic and naturalistic narratives, indecency threatened to cross the line between the intimate and public spheres in both directions, bringing sensitive information about men’s sexual behavior into the family and exposing the secrets of family life in public (Gedin 387–391). Performances that criticized or clashed with the theatrical norms and conventions supporting decency, which included the prevailing gender norms and ideology of family and marriage, provoked strong emotional reactions in both reviewers and ordinary theatregoers.

Banishment from the theatrical stages was the primary consequence of failing to balance on the edge of indecency, but a secondary consequence was the less distinct exclusion from bourgeois circles by means of social shaming. Moreover, critical realistic and naturalistic literature was thought capable of posing such a severe threat to society that it could have legal consequences.⁷ David Gedin notes that it was more complicated and sensitive for a woman writer to appear in public than for a male writer, although a woman’s writings on the subjects of marriage, family, and sexuality did not run the same risk of being considered indecent as did the critical realism of radical male authors (Gedin 377, 390). The plays by Agrell and her contemporary Swedish female colleagues are more cautious, though, in their opposition to the aesthetics of idealism than are, for example, Ibsen’s and Strindberg’s realistic and naturalistic plays (see Lindh Estelle). Agrell risked transgressing boundaries both as a woman, expressing ideas in public, and as a dramatist, exposing differences between the public image of marriage and its reality from a power perspective and articulating women’s points of view. I claim that the uneven gender structure of the public space affected the author’s dramaturgical and stylistic choices, which played an important role in censorial judgements of decency. In a letter to a friend, Agrell’s colleague Anne Charlotte Leffler shows her

⁷ August Strindberg, for example, was prosecuted for blasphemy and risked being sentenced to jail for having questioned the Christian sacrament of communion in one of his short stories.

awareness of this. She finds Ibsen's *A Doll's House* immensely interesting but strange, and that it would have been rejected by the Royal Dramatic Theatre had she written it: "In order to defy the audience's taste like that, your name must be Ibsen." (Lauritzen 178) Leffler clearly found that the conditions of playwriting were different for her than for her male elder colleague and that she was acting from a more restricted position in the cultural field.

The "Modern Breakthrough" controversy over aesthetics at the *fin de siècle* still influences our modern understanding of artistic value. Literature and theatre are validated from the winning side of this fight, from within a discourse that the literary scholar Frederic Jameson has called the "ideology of modernism" (Jameson 3), which favors, for example, distance, reflection, abstraction, iconoclasm, and aesthetic purity. Moreover, the emergence of modernism and its literary ideals also meant the development of formalist literary theory, which still influences analysis in the academic discipline of contemporary literary studies. This has had radical consequences for the evaluation of women's plays of the Scandinavian Modern Breakthrough. Negotiation of the typical features of the aesthetics of idealism in Agrell's plays has been deemed to indicate inability or insecurity in playwriting (see Tjäder 214–215; Nordin Hennel, "Strid är sanning, frid är lögn" 520), instead of being connected to the gendered field of the arts and the centrality of morality, or considered in relation to the concerns and structure of her plays.

The rhetoric of self-censoring and exposure in *Räddad*

Breached expectations of a happy outcome for the female protagonist, defeats, and losses recur in the plays by Agrell and her female contemporaries, contributing to vacillation between cautiousness in their treatment of marriage, mothering, love, sexuality, and other motifs of intimacy and a strong urge to say it all—to reveal uncensored truths about women's situations in marriage and the family (Lindh Estelle). In *Räddad*, the promise of escape for the good-hearted, strong-willed female protagonist from her precarious situation in marriage is dashed.

In the last act of *Räddad*, the protagonist speaks her true mind about her marriage in a scene of revelation (Agrell 100–113). The usually quiet and subservient young wife Viola rants about her husband's treatment of her and fully reveals her suffering and frustration. What enables her outburst is a large sum of money given to her as a gift by

a friend of her mother's and the prospect of her husband Oscar being convicted of embezzlement. Viola's mother-in-law tries to persuade Viola to use the money to cover her husband's crime, but Viola refuses, realizing that her time has finally come. This scene recalls Nora's exit in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, but Viola escaping her unhappy marriage after having scolded her husband and mother-in-law, with her husband's conviction of a crime giving her custody of her son and with enough money to start a new independent life, strikes me as much more radical than Nora's exit without her children or any money. However, in a sudden twist of the plot, Viola's young son dies in a fit of croup (117). In the high-strung melodramatic final scene taking place late in the evening, Viola appears all dressed in black and with a black veil covering her face. After having signed over her gift of money to her husband, enabling him to conceal his crime, Viola leaves the house in despair with her dead son in her arms (125–130).

Traditionally, the revelation scene would have ended the play, giving the representative of virtue her due reward and either punishing the villains or converting them to the right moral track, resulting in the reconciliation of the family and confirming to the reader or theatregoer that upholding the conservative bourgeois moral values brings success and happiness (Molnár 145, 158). Viola, who is good-hearted, right-thinking, and in a subordinated position, certainly has the qualities of the virtuous heroine, and is thus formed for the audience to side with. Unlike the heroines of ideal realism, however, she is punished by losing her son, while her antagonists, the merciless mother-in-law and irresponsible heartless husband, win the battle when she signs over her money to Oscar. By the plot twist, ending the play in darkness and despair for the protagonist, Agrell thwarts the expectations built up in the revelation scene, renegotiating the conventions and the release of reader/spectator tension that the revelation scene was conventionally meant to produce. The dramaturgy shows the possibility of a radical ending with Viola happily escaping her marriage, which would break the moral regulations of the aesthetics of idealism, yet the actual ending presenting Viola's defeat keeps it on the accepted moral track. Viola can be interpreted as fairly punished for her unwomanly behavior and rebellion against her husband and mother-in-law, but at the same time the expectations of her escape and the awareness of the traditional use of the revelation scene call into question her punishment.

In the heated revelation scene, the other characters' actions contribute to the ambivalence towards Viola's behavior. Even Viola's supportive and loyal friend Uncle Milde is appalled at watching Viola's

scolding of her husband and mother-in-law and condemns it (Agrell 112). This enables an interpretation of Viola's merciless outburst as wrong and furthermore caused by meanness, particularly as Viola herself claims that "everything that was noble and good" in her has been suffocated by her marriage.⁸ Depicting Viola as doing wrong out of meanness, and letting even the characters who are her friends take a stand against her outspokenness, reduces the critical force of her fierce testimony about women's conditions in patriarchal marriage; at the same time, however, the scene critically illustrates the emotional destructiveness of a loveless marriage. This is underlined by Oscar's regrets and reproaches towards his mother, and by Viola's friends' worries about her when she has finally left the house. The ambivalence created by incorporating the criticism within established structures of the revelation scene, structures traditionally used for the didactic purpose of keeping women within the limits of conservative bourgeois decency, invites a dual response on the part of readers and theatregoers: it may produce a response in line with the conventions and morality of idealist realism as well as one in compliance with the subversive protest against it. This vacillation, exemplified by *Räddad*, between hiding and exposing the critique of marriage illustrates an urge to expose women's experiences of lack of intimacy in marriages of convenience while emphasizing the vulnerability of doing so.

In *Räddad*, censorship's "performative contradiction" (Butler, *Excitable Speech* 130) means demonstrating the debilitating impact of censorship itself. Rather than trusting awareness of silenced content (Freshwater 234), the possibility of an alternative order is explicitly exposed only to be destabilized, offering the possibility of an interpretation in accordance with the conservative, patriarchal, and bourgeois moral norms of the time, but also revealing thoughts and feelings that transgress the patriarchal norms of subservient femininity, addressing a complicit audience. In line with Michael G. Levine's reasoning about censorious control as a generator of styles (Levine 2), renegotiation of the didactic structures of ideal realism has produced a rhetoric of vacillation by which Agrell is able, in a sophisticated way, to communicate her critique of marriage and represent the experience of emotional deprivation, without explicitly opposing patriarchal bourgeois morals, as regulated by theatrical conventions. This strategy can, in Butler's terms, be described as taking advantage of censorship's need for reitera-

⁸ My translation of the following original: "Förqväft allt, som var ädelt och gott ..." (Agrell 105). All translations of quotations from here on are mine.

tion by treating playwrighting as an invitation to perform the theatrical conventions differently, thus destabilizing the impositions of censorship and simultaneously safeguarding the position in the theatrical field (see Butler, *Excitable Speech* 1–41).

“Feeling-with-another” and mobilizing a tactile memory in the reading of *Räddad*

The last step of reading *Räddad* in complicity with Agrell’s censorious situation entails exposing its subversive and political potential by responding to the concerns of the text. In the revelation scene, Viola asks her husband if he has “looked into the hearts of most wives” when he claims that he has not been worse than any other husband (Agrell 107).⁹ First, this question summarizes what Agrell lets the reader/theatre-goer do in *Räddad*, namely, look into the heart of a subordinated wife; second, it hints that the play represents suffering in an emotionally barren marriage as a collective experience shared by many bourgeois women. I claim that the stereotyped roles and melodramatic exaggeration, which has caused the play to be pejoratively labelled a mere piece of indignation, are perceived as instruments for representing a subordinated wife’s emotional distress—in other words, for focusing on the female protagonist and her emotions.

By referring to Roland Barthes’ notions of “hermeneutic code” and “proaretic code,” Margareth Cohen discusses the difference between the plots of sentimental versus realistic narratives (Cohen 61–62). In the classic realistic narrative, the proaretic code precedes the hermeneutic code, sending the reader on a quest for the “truth” of the narrative and, through the progress of this quest and its actions, the reader can finally interpret this “truth.” In the sentimental narrative, the two codes work in parallel: the “truth” of the narrative is established early in the plot and the actions then prove it (61–62). While the narrative of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, which has strongly affected the interpretations of *Räddad*, can be compared to the classical realistic narrative, the relationship between these two codes in Agrell’s play resembles the relationship in the sentimental narrative. In *Räddad*, a conflict between male supremacy and female subordination, causing women to suffer, is already established in the exposition of the play. The play’s action then illustrates the strength of this conflict, demonstrating that the initially

⁹ “Men har du sett ned i de hustrus hjertan, som äro förenade med dessa flesta?” (Agrell 107).

established truth about female suffering is valid. Rather than focusing on external actions, the function of the plot is to highlight Viola's mental suffering.

The focus on the protagonist and her situation is combined with establishing Viola as a representation of a kind-hearted and caring woman with moral integrity but in a subordinated and thus vulnerable position. This is also made clear to the readers/theatre-goers from the beginning of the play, prompting them to sympathize with Viola. They are invited to adopt a position of solidarity with the female protagonist, as if watching the events and her antagonists while standing by her side. Sandra Lee Bartky suggests that observing "the Other" from nearby still allows a certain distance, preventing total emotional identification and shaping a response of "feeling-with-another" (Bartky 73–81). Paraphrasing Bartky, the reader is invited to such a position of "feeling-with" the female protagonist. In the first act of *Räddad* when we are introduced to Viola and her situation, she appears quiet and troubled. Dressed in black, she sits close to the fireplace, staring into the fire, lost in thought (Agrell 5–6, 25–26). Oscar thinks that "marriage has had a reposeful effect" on her, a comment that ironically exposes Viola's silence and thoughtfulness and hints at her underlying emotions (6).¹⁰ Later, in the first and second scenes of the first act, Viola's lack of power and imprisonment in marriage become obvious: her task is to run the household, but she has to adapt to her mother-in-law's advice and the maids ignore her orders. Her husband forgets her birthday and, on top of this, she finds a picture of another woman, which has slipped out of Oscar's pocket (14–15, 18–20). The dialogue and actions show a representative of virtue in distress. Melodramatic hyperbole is used to depict the situation, making it transparently clear and deepening our sympathies for Viola. In combination with a stereotypical husband without any redeeming qualities, the reader/spectator is invited not to feel the same as Viola but to feel *with* her, to look at the events from her perspective and to get upset on her behalf, or—paraphrasing the critics' judgements—to become indignant.

Furthermore, direct references to sensations help create closeness to the protagonist. Oscar recalls Viola's behavior at the beginning of their marriage: when he came home early in the mornings after nights out with his friends, she used to sit at the window waiting for him, shivering with cold and her eyes red with crying (Agrell 8–9). Viola's emotionally barren marriage and her longing for intimacy and care are communicated through the descriptions of her coldness by the window

¹⁰ "På dig åtminstone har äktenskapet inverkat lugnande." (Agrell 6)

and the warmth of the fireplace. Rajiva draws on Derrida when proposing that, in the reader, the communication of sensations may form an “eidetic figure” from memory, generating a sense of recall and confirming an optical intuitionism (Rajiva 28). The connection between the sensations of cold and warmth, on one hand, and Viola’s suffering and longing, on the other, speaks to the reader’s eidetic memory, which has the potential to produce an embodied understanding of the experience of the miserable marriage. The tenderness and love Viola feels for her son are accompanied by tactile references to the velvet in the jacket that she has made for him, which similarly may produce eidetic images in readers (Agrell 15–16). Moreover, embodied responses are engendered through communicating the protagonist’s memory of the sensation of movements. The contrast of the freedom of Viola’s childhood years to the restrictions of marriage is communicated through her memory of the sensations of running and playing in the woods (55).

In the final scene, melodramatic hyperbole communicates extreme distress. Viola wears her black dress and veil, holding white flowers in her hand and carrying her dead son in her arms, wrapped in a black shawl. She says that she will leave for her mother’s grave, crying out in anguish and laughing hysterically. According to Peter Brooks, such melodramatic exaggerations ask for interpretations beyond the literal. They should be conceived of as the expressionistic dramatization of bodily experiences, extreme states of minds, and moral conflicts (Brooks 55). The dark colors with gothic tints convey Viola’s emotional distress at its strongest in the very moment of experiencing it, without any temporal or spatial distance. In the final scene of *Räddad*, the reader’s or audience’s embodied memory is addressed to activate the memory of sensing Viola’s wild despair over her dead son.

Parry suggests that intensely intimate relations without personal encounters can be achieved through works of literature, through the deep sentiments these may embody or evoke (Parry 35–36, 43). Through an embodied reading that evokes sensations and sentiments in the reader, the play becomes an interface, intimately connecting today’s readers and the late-nineteenth-century women whose emotional experiences are represented in *Räddad*. In accordance with Moi’s proposition that a reading mode of “admiration and loving care” starting in the concerns of the text might often be more politically effective than one in line with the hermeneutics of suspicion (Moi, *Revolution* 175–177), I suggest that an embodied intimate reading strategy realizes the full artistic and political potential of Agrell’s play.

Sharing intimate experiences over temporal and geographic distances through the interface of literary works

Regarding women's writing on intimacy, I have proposed a complicit reading strategy that acknowledges the censorious situation of the author. The style and rhetoric of the text are looked on as responses to such a situation. In the case of Alfhild Agrell's *Räddad*, I have shown that the authoritative and institutional restrictions and impositions of the aesthetics of idealism have produced a vacillation between censoring and exposing the female experience of an emotionally barren marriage. It has produced two ways of interpreting Viola and her situation, either subversively or in line with the aesthetics of idealism and its associated ideology. By first considering the censorious situation and then identifying the rhetoric it has produced, I have highlighted the mental suffering of a wife trapped in an emotionally barren marriage as the core of the gendered criticism of the play. Starting in skepticism towards established scholarly literary methods, set definitions, historiographical narratives, and evaluations, I suspected them of being links in a chain of censorious events. In contrast, I have privileged the concern of the play over theories and paid attention to how words and structures are used in relation to this concern. In Agrell's *Räddad*, this means applying an embodied reading mode. The sentimental narrative and idealized heroine in a precarious situation, which have been evaluated pejoratively in literary histories, help construct a dramaturgical position from which the emotional experience of an emotionally barren marriage can be represented, inviting the reader to "feel-with" the protagonist. Melodramatic hyperbole and references to sensations are perceived as activators of the reader's tactile and emotional memory, creating an embodied understanding of the text. In this embodied reading mode, the play works as an interface bridging the distance in time between the modern reader and the nineteenth-century women whose experiences are represented.

Complicit strategies for reading women writers' *fin-de-siècle* representations of intimacy on a large scale in different European regions, considering the censorious situation of the writing and liberating these works from canonized interpretative patterns to explore their specific rhetoric in relation to their concerns, could broadly reveal the impediments imposed by gendered censorship and the various strategies for overcoming and taking advantage of them, consequently highlighting innovative rhetoric and styles. The reading strategies must be heterogeneous, depending on the specific poetics of the works in question and

the differences in cultural site- and time-specific socio-censorious situations of production. Nevertheless, ideas of decency, the female body, and the gendered division of public space throughout Europe dictated what was appropriate for women to write about and in what form and style, as well as what parts of public space women could inhabit and on what terms. Due to such similarities shaping women's social and cultural positions throughout Europe, complicit reading strategies may also expose shared experiences of intimacy, bringing out the full gendered political force of women's writing on intimacy at the *fin de siècle*. Consequently, these women writers' large-scale literary legacy and contribution to modernization through their ideas on the democratization of intimate relationships would be made visible.

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Strategija zavezniškega branja: razkrivanje cenzuriranih tem intimnosti v švedski drami *Räddad* Alfhild Agrell

Ključne besede: feministična literarna veda / švedska dramatika / Agrell, Alfhild / intimnost / cenzura / samocenzura

Članek predlaga etično bralno stališče, ki upošteva specifično družbeno-zgodovinsko cenzurno situacijo avtorice in uporablja strategijo zavezniškega branja, da bi razkrilo zamolčane teme intimnosti. Pri tem se opira na besedilne reference v drami *Räddad* (*Rešena*) švedske dramatičarke Alfhild Agrell iz leta 1883. Teoretična podlaga za strategijo zavezniškega branja so koncept o inkluzivnem modelu cenzure Helen Freshwater, teorija ponavljanja Judith Butler in trditve Toril Moi o političnem potencialu načina branja, ki se začne v skrbi za besedilo. Nato so predstavljene spolno specifične cenzurne razmere v osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja na Švedskem, v katerih je estetika idealizma vplivala na cenzuro v gledališčih in oblikovala tudi dramsko pisanje. Prikazano je nihanje med samocenzuro in izpostavljanjem teme intimnosti v igri A. Agrell in izpostavljen predlog, da bi to obravnavali kot specifično retoriko, ki je nastala zaradi zavedanja spolno pogojene cenzure. Na koncu s fenomenološkimi in z novimi materialističnimi analitičnimi orodji predstavim strategijo utelešenega branja igre A. Agrell. Da bi izpostavila njen celostni spolni/feministični potencial, analiziram polemike o tem literarnem delu in posebnosti njegove poetike.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.113.6.09-2Agrell A.:351.751.5

305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.02>

Her Story Is Like a Weed: Censoring the Vulnerability in Women's Writing

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The aim of this article is to broaden feminist scholarship on women writers by exploring the relationship between women's writing, intimacy, vulnerability and censorship, and the rediscovering and canonization of women's writing in Latvian literary culture. In the early twentieth century, intimacy and motherhood as a source of vulnerability in women's writing was closely linked to censorship, which revealed enduring patriarchal attitudes. The disclosure of vulnerability associated with a woman's embodied experience was "a weed" which critics wanted to weed out. Focusing on the example of Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa (1877–1950), whose literary texts create experimental journeys into intimacy, exploring the inner states of female characters, family relationships and particular situations (death and grief that bring her characters into intimate contact with others and change the shape and experience of intimacies), the article examines the censoring attitude of literary criticism towards the openness with which women's experiences are discussed.

Keywords: feminist literary criticism / Latvian literature / Latvian women writers / nineteenth century / intimacy / motherhood / censorship / Rūmane-Ķeniņa, Anna

Over the past two decades, feminist scholars have recognized intimacy as an essential issue, and recent debates on the topic illustrate the broad scope of the term.¹ In addition to intimate friendships, family, and sexual relations, the focus has also been on non-familial intimacy, for example, with nature, artwork, or reading and writing as intimate activities. The exploration of intimacy is an important area of literature. Likewise, creative processes requiring openness and vulnerability

¹ The present research has been carried out as part of the projects "Embodied Geographies: History of Latvian Women's Writing" (No 1.1.1.2./VIAA/3/19/430) and "Narrative, Form and Voice: Embeddedness of literature in culture and society" (VPP-LETONIKA-2022/3-0003).

are seen as a place where the author reveals her/his intimate self—thus writing becomes an intimate act. Engaging in intimacy raises questions about the status of the subject, as well as “the creative and self-creative acts of writing and reading” (Cooke, “The Risks” 3). Intimacy studies (Berlant, “Intimacy”; *Cruel Optimism*; Cooke, “Making” 2013) have repeatedly explored and sometimes deliberately blurred the traditional boundary between public and private, which has been disrupted in many women writers’ works when they use their own lives as the material from which to create. As stated by Susan Gubar, “many women experience their bodies as the only available medium for their art, with the result that the distance between the woman artist and her art is often radically diminished” (Gubar 296). The fusion of the personal story, the literary text, and the marginalized position of women writers in the cultural field create a particular vulnerability. Kaye Mitchell, drawing attention to the particular gender vulnerability that arises in feminist traditions of self-centered writing and art, points to a cultural imagination in which women are often seen as emotional, irrational, or otherwise unsuited to public intellectual work. The purposeful exposure of vulnerability, investing herself, her personal experiences, and her feelings in her work can be a radical act of self-expression (Mitchell 196).

However, the disclosure of intimacy is a double-edged sword for women in patriarchal cultures: on the one side, it is connected to empowerment and emancipation, but on the other side, it also reflects increased vulnerability, exposure, or the possibility of backlash. The same pattern forms motherhood, which is not only part of respectable femininity and the foundations of nationhood, but also a vulnerable and delicate experience of the female body and emotions (Rye et al.; O’Reilly). Women’s writings are mainly subjected to this double bind. In the early twentieth century, the aspect of intimacy and motherhood as a source of vulnerability in women’s writing was intrinsically tied up with harsh censorship, both by the self and others to conform to constraints of gender, class, and decency. Often censoring interventions took place after the publication of work through literary criticism that was influenced by and revealed persistent patriarchal assumptions.

This article was inspired by a critical remark in a newspaper after the publication of the first of three sequels to the story *Mātes bēdas* (*Mother’s Sorrow*) (1912) by Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa (1877–1950) (she was also published under the names Anna Ķeniņa, Anna Rūmane, Aina Rasmer, and the abbreviation A.R.). A critic (writing under the first letters of his name and family name) claims that *Mother’s Sorrow* is a weed in the monthly literary magazine where it was published, *Druva* (the

title of the magazine translates as ‘cereal fields’). He continues: “This story is very clumsy and dilettantish. It is hard to believe that anyone will have the patience to read it to the end without being outraged.” (-be 1) The harsh criticism gives the impression the critic has made his argument based on the first part of a longer story, without exploring or even wanting to delve into the structure and themes of the whole text. It demonstrates a particularly hostile attitude towards the author as well.

Following the idea that vulnerability is “not just a condition that limits us but one that can enable us” (Gilson 310), we will reassess intimacies and motherhood in women’s writing through the lens of vulnerability. And drawing on the new censorship theory, which views censorship as a diverse, diffuse, and pervasive phenomenon in which multiple actors, including circumstances, act as effective censors (Freshwater 217; Bunn 27), we will examine literary critique as a form of censorship that affected women’s creative endeavors. There are two main questions for the discussion. First, how, and why did Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa “disappear” from the literary canon? Second, what role did censorship and criticism play in this disappearance? Using the example of Rūmane-Ķeniņa and tracing both the arguments in literary criticism and the strategies the author uses in conjunction with her most vulnerable characters to subvert the hegemonic restrictions imposed on women and women’s writing, it is possible to draw conclusions about Latvian women’s writing in general in the period in question.

The new generation of women writers

In nineteenth-century women’s writing, it became more pronounced that intersections of the personal story merged with the fictive representations of women, and from the *fin de siècle* and early twentieth century, this has also been fully applicable to Latvian women’s writing. This slight delay is due to several factors. While the foundations for Latvian literature were laid in the second half of the eighteenth century, the authors of these texts were Germans. The first generation of native-speaker Latvian intellectuals entered the literary scene around 1830, and during the national awakening of the mid-nineteenth century, Latvians established their literary independence. In the early days of Latvian literature, the intellectual activity of educated men, teachers, and students, was driven by the goal of creating Latvian high culture and “strengthening the self-confidence of the rising Latvian nation”

(Daija and Kalnačs 18). Women writers such as Marija Medinska-Valdemāre, Marija Pēkšēna, and others joined the movement during the 1870s with their literary works centered on national ideas. But unlike men's works, these texts also featured strong female characters who demanded equal educational opportunities for themselves. The entry of women into literature is closely linked to the fact that from the 1870s onwards, both in urban and rural areas it slowly became possible to provide a basic level of education for girls as well. Starting from the 1880s, more advanced gymnasium-level secondary education opportunities were available for wealthy young Latvian women, providing opportunities to become teachers, governesses or accountants. In contrast, until the foundation of the University of Latvia in 1919, higher education—available in France, Switzerland, Germany, or Russia—was, for the most part, a well-regarded opportunity for young men, but did not seem an attractive option in the eyes of the parents of young women, as it entailed several risks: daughters not returning home, staying unmarried, and career taking precedence over so-called women's natural tasks in life. Only a small number of the most determined women, or the daughters of ambitious and wealthy parents, went to university.

The presence of women in the Latvian literary canon began to take shape at the end of the nineteenth century. In the Latvian literary tradition, there were two canonized “great women writers”: Aspazija (1865–1943) and Anna Brigadere (1861–1933), who represented women's writing, meanwhile the names of other women fell into obscurity. As literary scholar Sandra Meškova points out, this was influenced by two factors: first, by the dominant liberal discourse which emphasized the social and political role of women. Second, gender was used as an instrument for shaping national identity, with the masculine symbolizing the national heroic spirit and the feminine as the child bearer of the nation and the preserver of its symbolic values. Although femininity was given an important place in the Latvian cultural tradition, it was actually “a glorification of the feminine as appropriated by the patriarchal discourse” (Meškova 241). At the beginning of the twentieth century, a new generation of women writers appeared on the scene of Latvian literature, choosing women's lives and female subjectivity as their main subject matter. Bringing into greater visibility certain hitherto silenced experiences such as female sexuality, the experiences of marriage and motherhood from a female point of view, they explored those themes more openly than Latvian writers before them. Often, texts written by women sought to change social perceptions, and to reveal and break the dissonance many women were experiencing in

their lives. Themes such as these in women's writing also faced fierce opposition from literary critics. The writer and literary critic Andrejs Upīts published a review *Mūsu jaunās rakstnieces* (*Our New Female Writers*, 1913), criticizing the depiction of female sexuality in women writers' works and women's confusion about how to reconcile motherhood with their aspirations for independence and emancipation. He criticized women writers as self-centered, diminishing their writing as shameless and dull (Upīts, "Sieviešu" 360; "Annas" 407).

Women's increased presence in literature was also discussed by the literary critic Antons Birkerts. He observed the rapid changes in women's lives caused by emancipation, noting that recent literature raised issues everyone had to deal with but were of particular concern for women: love, family, children, parents, and so-called higher aspirations (Birkerts, "Sieviete" 1). The two most important topics were pointed out as: women and love and women and children. This division is organically linked to what is defined as the vulnerability of women, namely sexuality and motherhood, because "the experience of maternity and the experience of sexuality have both been channeled to serve male interests" (Rich 24).

Birkerts also highlighted the literary achievements of women. Giving a reasonably comprehensive overview of women writers who had published up until 1912, he mentioned Rūmane-Ķeniņa's literary oeuvre together with Aspazija and Brigadere, the two canonized women writers: "So it turns out that out of some thirty women who are active in our literature, only a few have brought something more valuable and lasting to it: Aspazija, Anna Brigadere and Aina Rasmer [pseudonym of Rūmane-Ķeniņa]." (Birkerts, "Latviešu" 3) Although in 1912, after the publication of the short story *Mother's Sorrow*, Rūmane-Ķeniņa appeared alongside the canonized authors because of the quality of her writing, her name later disappeared from the history of literature, while Aspazija and Brigadere have remained important authors in the canon to this day. One of the reasons for Rūmane-Ķeniņa's disappearance from the canon is her short literary career and her relatively few literary works, as well as the phenomenon of leaving outside the official canon one particular generation of Latvian women writers. Yet another is the frankness with which Rūmane-Ķeniņa's work discusses women's emotional and physical experiences.

We have chosen Rūmane-Ķeniņa, one of the most striking and controversial examples of the so-called third generation (Kusiņa 90) in the history of Latvian women's writing and activism, as a case study that allows us to ask questions about the construction of the literary canon

and the role of literary criticism taking on the role of censorship in the construction of the canon. Giving a brief insight into Rūmane-Ķeniņa's biography, which also explains the inspiration and themes of her works, we will analyze the features of intimacy and motherhood in particular texts, focusing on her story *A Mother's Sorrow*. We will conclude with a discussion which will continue to highlight the patriarchal constructions of the time, and the conditions of self-determination and creative freedom for women through the example of Rūmane-Ķeniņa.

Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa: writer and public figure

Anna Rūmane-Ķeniņa was born to an affluent family in Jelgava. She received a good education at the Jelgava Girls' Gymnasium, where only a few Latvian girls got to study among the daughters of German nobility and senior Russian officials. Lessons were conducted in German, French, and Russian. After graduating from the gymnasium, Anna married the teacher and poet Atis Ķēniņš (1874–1961), with whom she had six children in the following years, while at the same time devoting herself to intensive pedagogical work. In 1900 Rūmane-Ķeniņa opened a girls' school in Riga, which over the next few years was transformed into a girls' gymnasium, also offering teacher training as a part of professional education, something the press of the time reflected on as an essential contribution (-ks 5).

Rūmane-Ķeniņa also publicly reflected on the upbringing and education of girls, putting forward progressive views (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, "Par meiteņu" 1).² Her main argument was that women's education, with its emphasis on the study of languages, literature and music, was lacking practical and vocational skills: "So she is not usefully prepared for life, she must stay in the house as a refuge, and her husband must provide for her." (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, "Par meiteņu" 1) She also referred to the ideas of Swedish feminist Ellen Key and German writer Malwida von Meysenbug, especially her book *Individualitäten* (*Individualities*, 1901). From the latter, Rūmane-Ķeniņa added her voice to the demand that women should have equal rights with men in the family and society.

² Rūmane-Ķeniņa comments on a popular book by German doctor Oskar Kluge *Männliches und weibliches Denken: ein Beitrag zur Frauen und Erziehungsfrage* (*Male and Female Thinking: A Contribution to the Question of Women and Education*, 1902). Kluge sees statistics and filing documents as the only fields of work for a woman. Rūmane-Ķeniņa argues that girls' mental power does not disappear after school exams, and their intellectual gifts should be put to use in all spheres.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the Ķeniņš residence became a literature and art salon, characterized by lively creative meetings and discussions (Ikstena 11). This period also coincided with Rūmane-Ķeniņa's literary activity³ and with her first literary works she became part of the literary current of her time which was strongly influenced by the works of Nietzsche, Maeterlinck, Verlaine, and others. At the same time, her writing also belonged to the female literary tradition, foregrounding the search for female identity at the center of her texts.

In the autumn of 1913, Rūmane-Ķeniņa went to Geneva to study at the Institute Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1913–1916), recognized for its innovative educational methods. Her aspiration was to establish an educational institute aligned with the most up-to-date pedagogical findings. This intention was disrupted by World War I, during which Rūmane-Ķeniņa began her diplomatic activity, starting propaganda work for an independent state of Latvia. Belonging to a generation that through their studies and travels in Western countries naturally converged with the educated middle class in the West, Rūmane-Ķeniņa found common ground with European intellectuals (Ikstena 26; Gueslin 55). One of her most outstanding initiatives was an anonymous article she sent to the *Journal de Geneve* in response to the pacifist manifesto *Au-dessus de la mêlée* (*Above the Battle*) by the writer Romain Rolland. Her article captured the dilemma the Latvian people faced, trapped between Germany and Russia. Her Latvian propaganda articles appeared in Swiss newspapers, followed by public appearances, speeches, and the creation of diverse networks of influence.

From 1917 to 1919, Rūmane-Ķeniņa served as an official representative of Baltic affairs at the Press Department of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs; she also represented Latvia at the Bureau of Oppressed Peoples in Paris, and participated in the founding of the magazine *Revue Baltique*, etc. Later she became fully engaged in public activism and journalism. During this phase in her life, she also published articles on women's artistic and spiritual achievements, based on the insight that women and men are equal in their intellectual capacities.

In August 1944, during the Second World War, she fled to Berlin, Germany, where she worked for the Russian occupation administration and translated Russian literary classics into German. After

³ Her first significant work was devoted to French literature *Druskas iz franču literatūras* (*Scraps of French Literature*, 1898) and was one of the first reviews of nineteenth century French literature in Latvian.

contracting an incurable tumor, which rapidly spread, Rūmane-Ķeniņa returned from Berlin to Riga on a hospital train. She died in Riga on 9 November 1950.

The life stories and literary careers of the so-called third-generation of Latvian women writers who entered Latvian literature in the first decades of the twentieth century, and to which Rūmane-Ķeniņa belonged, share many similarities. They all came from families that were wealthy and progressive enough to educate their daughters. They married and started family life relatively early; often their marriages were internally disharmonious, and the choice and resolution of themes in their works were primarily determined by their personal experiences (Kusiņa 91). They made their debut in writing as commentators on cultural processes, the alternation between journalism and literature allowed them to develop wide-ranging intellectual interests, and their contributions to journalism were an essential part of their literary oeuvre. Moreover, this generation of women writers seems to have perceived literary activity as only one facet of their personality, which is why many of them produced relatively few literary works.

In the next two sections of this article, we will examine Rūmane-Ķeniņa's literary oeuvre. The early texts: the cycle *Iz Dienvidiem* (*From the South*) and pieces of short prose published in periodicals between 1902 and 1904 are characterized by a common mood and the inclusion of the personal and the private. They also show the writer's ability to employ literary techniques that create intimacy and, by evoking emotional reactions, involve readers intimately in the text. Thus, her early texts prepare for a more overt engagement with the private in her later works. Next, turning to the concept of motherhood and linking it to intimacy and vulnerability, we will consider Rūmane-Ķeniņa's drama *Melnais ērglis* (*The Black Eagle*, 1908) and her short story *Mother's Sorrow* (1912), both of which were also fiercely attacked by literary critics.

Intimate writing and textual intimacies

The beginning of Rūmane-Ķeniņa's literary career was characterized by short fiction texts written during a European journey in 1902, while staying in a resort in Ospedaletto, Italy. In her autobiography she writes: "In 1901, I felt so tired that I decided to go abroad for a few months. The management of the school was left to Mr. Ķeniņš, the two small children in the care of my parents, while I, with a small

bag in my hand and a little money in my pocket, wandered through Vienna, Switzerland, Northern Italy ...” (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Par sevi” 58) While in Ospedaletto she wrote lyrical travel impressions permeated by a strong emotional mood which also included a self-examination of the female subject.

The cycle *From the South* (1903–1904), consisting of 7 sketches, was later published in *Pēterburgas Avīzes*, and critics recognized the author for having “undoubted abilities, intelligent taste, and already a well-practiced hand” (Goba 255). The fertility of southern nature contrasted with the motif of the premature death of young people, a theme her stay in a tuberculosis health resort invited to explore. However, the writer’s personal involvement in the text skewed the narrative to a certain angle, revealing a thinly veiled version of the author herself (Kārkla 111). The seemingly sentimental motifs and imagery of the surroundings that recur, sunsets, walks in the cemetery, the apparent silence of the night when all the senses are heightened, allow access to the fragility and vulnerability of the narrator’s life. The biographical and literary maps of Latvian women writers often overlap, and this is also the case of Rūmane-Keniņa (Kārkla and Eglāja-Kristšone 123). Discovering the specific geographical place—Ospedaletto—through personal and sensual perceptions, she demonstrated how the short text “is able to capture the specificity of a particular moment or encounter” (Cooke, “Making” 12), transmitting the intimacy of the moment to readers.

After returning to her daily routine of schoolwork and family responsibilities, Rūmane-Ķeniņa was able to devote herself to writing only during late evening hours. Reflecting on this period, she attributed the concise form of her literary works to her busy schedule. Echoing Virginia Woolf’s observation that the writer’s physical conditions are important and will influence her work: “The book has somehow to be adapted to the body” (Woolf 78), Rūmane-Ķeniņa writes:

When I returned [from the journey], I continued my schoolwork with double energy. There was a lot to do: conducting lessons, running the school, talking to teachers, pupils, and their parents, 10 girls in the boarding house, 2 small children, and the household. Of course, Mr. Ķeniņš also took his share of these worries, but his *Youth Literature*, poetry, etc., were very close to his heart. Now and then, after 11 o’clock, when the house was quiet, I, too, would write a sketch, these were fashionable at the time, but I did not know how or could not get down to any major work. (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Manas”)

Characterized by the physical, intimate proximity to place, which is often “a room of one’s own,” and nature, through which self-exploration

of the female subject occurs, Rūmane-Ķeniņa in her short fiction continued to explore the themes started in her series of lyrical travel notes.

Stressing the importance of spatiality, both in the experience of intimacy and in its representation in literature, Jennifer Cooke points out that intimacy in literature is often facilitated by physical spaces (Cooke, “Making” 6). In comparison with the cycle *From the South*, where the narrator is mostly an observer, reflecting on travel impressions which are intimately, but often also indirectly connected to her feelings, her later texts explore the first-person female narrator’s intimate feelings of despair, loneliness, sadness, and loss of hope more openly. One of the recurring feelings in these texts is the female subject’s absence of belief in herself, particularly vividly expressed in the text *Nakstjūtas* (*Night Feelings*, 1903, published in the magazine *Austrums*):

I look into darkness again, I want to see the darkness, in order to understand it, to get used to it, to live in it ... But I see nothing. And the darkness takes hold of me; I sink closer and closer to her black, unfathomable breast; I feel as if I am plunging into darkness’s embrace and completely sinking into her invisibility and unfathomability. I no longer feel myself ... I close the window and throw myself onto the bed, pressing my head into the pillow so that I don’t feel anything. So that I wouldn’t feel that I am so insignificant and shriveled, oblivious that I am so lost and tossed about and swept along by all kinds of winds ... (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Nakstjūtas” 47–48)

Her early literary work, distinguished by the unique emotional and intimate perception of a female narrator, received well-deserved, albeit ambiguous, recognition. Literary critic Alfrēds Goba, overall responding positively to Rūmane-Ķeniņa’s lyrical pieces, nevertheless pointed out that her prose lacked the “social undertones” found in similar texts by men (Goba 225). Her short prose was published in the anthologies *Rīta Skaņas* (*Morning Sounds*) and *Jauna Raža* (*New Harvest*) in 1903 and 1904. The titles of the works already reveal their mood: *Par puķēm* (*On Flowers*); *Mana rudens puķe* (*My Autumn Flower*); *Dienvidus sirds* (*Heart of the South*); *Pavasara ilgās* (*Longing for Spring*); *Kā pavasaris nāca* (*How Spring Came*); *Nāves domās* (*Dwelling on Thoughts of Death*). Public exposure of female anxiety, self-doubt, and states of depression was something that Rūmane-Ķeniņa did not want to identify with at the time of publication. Her surviving letters to Teodors Zeiferts, literary critic and editor of the anthology *Jauna Raža* (*New Harvest*) indicates a strong preference for publishing these works under the pseudonym Aina Rasmer. On 13 July 1902, she wrote: “Only please publish them under the name Aina Rasmer—in places there are things that

I'm not keen on signing my name to the way I feel today." (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, "Vēstule") In March 1904, when Zeiferts prepared for publication the next volume of the anthology *New Harvest*, she sent him a letter with the same request.

Writing under a pseudonym was one of the liberating mechanisms for women authors, and by choosing a female *nom de plume*, as Jenny Coleman puts it, women writers "simultaneously embraced their identities as women while challenging the socially constructed and prescribed nature of what it meant to be a woman" (Coleman 1). Rūmane-Ķeniņa's play *The Black Eagle*, which will be discussed in the next section, was also published under the pseudonym Aina Rasmer. In contrast, her story *Mother's Sorrow*, the most autobiographical of her texts, was published under her real name. Considering Rūmane-Ķeniņa's independent way of thinking, it is possible that by abandoning the pseudonym she wanted to resist the prevailing anonymity of motherhood and its consequences, giving a voice to a mother through herself, personal and autobiographical.

Motherhood and mothering

As is already evident in her presentation of the theme of intimacy, Rūmane-Ķeniņa puts the complexities of female emotions under the microscope. She also demystifies the mysteries of life, death, love, and motherhood in her fiction. Referring to the critical difference between the institution of motherhood and women's experiences of mothering, Adrienne Rich offers two meanings of motherhood (Rich 13), further elaborated upon by Andrea O'Reilly: "The term 'motherhood' refers to the patriarchal institution, which is male-defined and controlled and is deeply oppressive to women, whereas the word 'mothering' refers to women's experiences of mothering and is female-defined and potentially empowering to women." (O'Reilly 2) While motherhood, as an institution, is a male-defined site of oppression, women's experiences of mothering can nonetheless be a source of power. These differences are apparent in the two literary pieces by Rūmane-Ķeniņa, and the critical responses the works received. Both *The Black Eagle* and, more explicitly, *Mother's Sorrow* deal with mothering as an autobiographical experience. Institutionalized settings and patriarchal stereotypes of motherhood, in turn, enter through the opinions and critiques devoted to these works.

In addition to being a manifesto of the modern woman who craves freedom and creative fulfilment, *The Black Eagle* highlights the problem

of motherhood. It explores new ideas, mainly through the three female characters at the center of the drama. Margrieta embodies the ardent passion and the pleasure of the magic of the moment that is characteristic of modernity. Venta is an intellectual recluse, a blind and intelligent writer, who has long since given up on love and has not started a family. But endless devotion and the cult of motherhood are embodied in the image of a young and fragile Ieva. On the one hand, Ieva is terrified of mothering because her child is weak and unhealthy. On the other hand, her marriage is symbolized in this child. In her view, the conception and birth of a child are the highest forms of intimacy between a man and a woman, which no power can oppose. Ieva's maternal suffering foregrounds the contradictory demands made on women by the equation of true womanhood with maternal feeling. Ieva is a woman and a mother who loves, in a sense, too much. Like other aspects of her emotional life, her maternal feelings are characterized by excess. She is consistently represented and defined as a sacrificing, suffering and grieving mother. Once she begins to entertain jealous doubts about her husband Laimonis and Margrieta, she channels all her feminine emotions into her child, the only socially sanctioned outlet for female desire, apart from heterosexual love within marriage. Rūmane-Ķeniņa gives symbolic meaning to every detail, and Ieva's child, who never takes part in the action but whom everyone talks about because of his importance, which escalates with his death, symbolizes the fragile foundations of love, marriage, and mothering.

Another work in which the author addresses the theme of mothering is her autobiographical story *Mother's Sorrow*, which reflects on the death of Rūmane-Ķeniņa's two-year-old daughter Maija, who died after contracting scarlet fever in the spring of 1905. The story is not an immediate reflection of a tragedy in time. She wrote this deeply emotional testimony, describing in detail the course of Maija's illness and death, the farewell to her dead daughter and the despair of sorrow and mourning more than five years later during her stay in Paris in 1911 (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, "Manas"). Rūmane-Ķeniņa emotionally depicts a mother's experience of losing a child in an intimate and poetic style. The story includes such personal genres as letters to the narrator's husband and deceased daughter. She also strives to achieve intimacy with the reader, e.g., by describing the dramatic feelings in the first hour after the child's death: "I lean over Maija—no, no, she cannot be warmed up again. Her body is stiffening. There is nothing I can do. Omnipotent free will—how absurd, how utterly ridiculous! A human being is but a mite, a speck of

dust!” (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Mātes” 55) She later reflected: “[...] it is a story that, through the reality of the experience, usually makes every woman weep.” (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Manas”) The same assumption was made by the literary critic Goba, who warned that “people of a more emotionally unstable nature will not be able to read it without being moved to tears” (Goba 256).

The story boldly aims to portray the “mother-as-subject” with her own needs, desires, anger and struggles behind the traditional image of the reconciling and self-sacrificing Madonna, the same as Ieva in *The Black Eagle*. Rūmane-Ķeniņa does not shy away from portraying powerlessness, anger, and pain, manifested in self-destructive tendencies and indifferent reactions to the world around the grieving mother:

There is a pond beyond the garden. Let us go Maija, let us go together into the Celestial City. They hold me tight. They lock all the doors. All three are against me and they are stronger than I am. I fall to the floor. I am aware of falling—I want to fall! I scream. I am aware of screaming—I want to scream! They try to lift me up. Get away! Leave me! Let me fall, let me scream, let me smash everything to pieces! (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Mātes” 63)

She acknowledges that sorrow makes life unbearable and “despair is difficult to control in the dark” (65), emphasizing the power of darkness, a motif also found in her early prose. At the graveyard, the mother has a strong emotional and bodily experience which she characterizes as “the good fortune on this occasion to see my child not only in a dream but when I am wide awake, and to feel her so intensely with all my alert nerves” (69). But her husband calls this experience a “visual illusion and a result of my nervous exhaustion” (69). In Rich’s words, motherhood is an experience of “powerless responsibility,” which is most evident in such extreme situations as Rūmane-Ķeniņa’s story presents.

Although the whole story is an intimate act of vulnerability in the imagined letters to her husband and deceased daughter, writing about her own deepest wounds is an especially painful but also productive, even healing, personal exercise:

Don’t call me naive, or confused or arrogant—I am as I am, it is good and honest to be so. You know that I trust my emotions more than my reason, for my emotions have never misled me, while I have often been led astray by my reason. You must know that as I am writing this letter to you, now and again a moist sheen glistens in my eyes. The same sheen that appears each evening when I finish writing a letter to Maija. (Rūmane-Ķeniņa, “Mātes” 73)

Ķeniņa explores her relationship to mothering as a position that is structurally vulnerable in body, identity, and institution, as well as exploring how motherhood demands vulnerability.

Returning to the title and introduction of this article, we should note that this story had already earned the unflattering description “like a weed” after its first part was published. Further criticism of the story was mixed: on the one hand, Rūmane-Ķeniņa’s literary language and style were praised, and the convincing and powerful depiction of the mother’s tragedy was welcomed, noting that *Mother’s Sorrow* “is a document of the female soul, a self-observation” (Birkerts, “Sieviete” 1). On the other hand, the extended depiction of the intimacy of family life and the emotional states of motherhood were not acceptable to male critics. Goba, who praised the portrayal of the child’s death as powerful, also stressed that there were “a lot of unnecessary details in the story that distract, especially at the beginning and the end,” and criticized the author who “unashamedly talks about her own family life” (Goba 256). Upīts, in his mocking review, especially attacked the story’s autobiographical details. Representing a male interest in controlling women, particularly in the realms of family life and motherhood, Upīts at the same time disparaged the theme of mothering as not befitting a literary work, criticizing the story as “extravagantly banal and aesthetically repulsive” (Upīts, “Annas” 407). Later, when comparing Rūmane-Ķeniņa’s story with writings of male authors, he concluded that there were too many intimate details, and “a man would be embarrassed to display his children to strangers who, in any case, find their children just as sweet, cute, and gifted. The middle-class woman writer knows no such shyness” (Upīts, “Sieviešu” 360).

Writer Matīss Kaudzīte, the author of the first Latvian novel *Mērnieku laiki* (*Surveyors’ Times*, 1879) expressed his astonishment at the degree to which the heart of a loving mother can rise and how it is depicted in *Mother’s Sorrow*, but he also deemed it regrettable that the mother in Rūmane-Ķeniņa’s story had nowhere to look for hope and reassurance (“R.L.B.” 2). Kaudzīte raised the question of the power of religion, assuming that the most apparent problem preventing the heroine of *Mother’s Sorrow* from recovering from her mourning was the absence of a belief in God. Kaudzīte’s reflections on Rūmane-Ķeniņa’s story and his vision of transforming mourning into faith through God and religion as a solution for *Mother’s Sorrow* seem significant in the context of his own novel where a mother’s tragedy was used to create a religious monster, a self-righteous woman.

Rūmane-Ķeniņa's literary works seek not only to represent intimacy through different angles, including the experience of mothering, but also to influence, challenge and change the perceptions of it. By inscribing maternal vulnerability into the story, Rūmane-Ķeniņa follows Judith Butler's argument to refuse a reading of vulnerability that associates vulnerability with passivity, and excludes the possibility of agency for vulnerable people and groups. Vulnerability, Butler asserts, can be instead seen as a necessary basis for solidarity, offering new ways of resisting and opening creative ways of protesting (Butler 1). Rūmane-Ķeniņa's short story *Mother's Sorrows*, her last published and most criticized literary work, is a unique autobiographical narrative of motherhood in Latvian literature. It also symbolizes a turning point in Latvian women's writing, using mothering as a vulnerable central axis, albeit one still restricted under patriarchy. She proved that despite, with reference to Rich, motherhood being an institution was a male-defined site of oppression (Rich 14), women's own mothering experiences might be a source of power and narrative subject.

Censorship, canonization, and exclusion

Literary criticism—typical male sphere at the turn of centuries—was a strong weapon to silence and eliminate women's literary efforts, especially those that viewed femininity and women's experiences differently from the conventionally accepted angles. Rūmane-Ķeniņa's case, analyzed through the criticism of Andrejs Upīts, Antons Birkerts, Alfrēds Goba and others, confirms the statement of Mary Eagleton that the “problem is not the women's inadequacy but a criticism which is patronizing, scathing, or anxiously self-protective” (Eagleton 7). Upīts is the most prolific and misogynistic critic in the history of Latvian literature. His statements such as, “Women's literature can depict the drying of wet nappies, the shelling of peas, and the making of herring dauphinois with the same sincerity as depictions of sexual intercourse,” are typical examples, marking a dismissive attitude towards so-called women's issues. He sarcastically underlines women's down-to-earth outlook on life as “living in cages or shells as snails” (Upīts, “Latviešu” 144).

The general public sentiment regarding the contribution of women writers is a survey conducted by the periodical *Druva* in 1914. It asked readers to name what they liked and disliked about literature, as had been published in the periodical. The novel *Der Amerika-Johann. Ein*

Bauernroman aus Schweden (John of America) in Latvian translation⁴ won the poll, while Rūmane-Keniņa's *Mother's Sorrows* came last. While the readers particularly liked works based on real events, relevant to their own lives, they found the subtle nuances of emotions and feeling less appealing (Druvas redakcija 197). Perhaps this last consideration is the reason for the exclusion of Rūmane-Keņiņa from the memory of readers.

The judgmental attitude of literary criticism is only one of the reasons why Latvian women writers who started to publish in the first decades of the twentieth century produced few works, wrote for a relatively short period and later “disappeared” from the literary scene and history of literature. Other forms of censorship also played a role, such as economic censorship and the restrictions of social taboos and customs which hindered women's self-expression and were better disguised than the more overt operations of cultural control that were largely associated with censorship. As one of the causes for the low number of finished literary works, Rūmane-Keņiņa mentions her volatile nature and lack of ambition in the literary field. She also expresses regret for not being able to complete literary works in progress, nor to gather her published literary works in a book: “I have worked a lot, yet here I stand empty-handed and do not have a single book.” (Rūmane-Keņiņa, “Par sevi” 58) While it is generally assumed that censorship interventions take place after the act of expression, Helen Freshwater, referring to the complexity of censorship, notes that censorship is not just a series of actions carried out by a single or isolated institution, but “a process, realized through the relationships between censorious agents” (Freshwater 217). Such a definition includes socially constructed prohibitions that prevent the dissemination of specific ideas. In the case of women's writing discussed above, certain topics were harshly criticized and publicly ridiculed.

Alongside the harsh and often scornful attitude of critics towards women's writing and the non-acceptance of feminine difference, the presence or absence of private space and the lack of time they could devote to writing also influenced the productivity of women writers. In Rūmane-Keņiņa's case, part of her published literary texts was created abroad, away from home and with daily duties and other tasks at a distance.⁵ Antons Birkerts has discussed the “interruptions” in women's

⁴ See Moeschlin. Translated into Latvian by Teodors Lejas-Krūmiņš.

⁵ In Ospedaletti, Italy—the cycle *Iz Dienvidiem*—and in Paris, France—*Vēstules iz Parīzes (Letters from Paris, 1912)*; *Mātes bēdas; Vēstule Jaunam gadam nākot (A Letter for the Coming New Year, 1914)*.

literary careers, arguing that women were more vulnerable to a variety of obstacles, the main reason for the low representation of women writers in Latvian literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He points to women's daily responsibilities and insufficient support in practical life that prevent women from writing, remarking that: "Only exceptionally gifted women writers can rise above this grey everyday life, and then not easily, but with a lot of bitterness, many storms, and setbacks." (Birkerts, "Latviešu" 3)

Rūmane-Ķeniņa's prose, most notably her short story *Mother's Sorrow*, reveals the vulnerability of a writer who invests herself, her personal experience and her feelings into her literary work. Her work constitutes experimental journeys in intimate writing, claiming the value and power of vulnerability. It is possible to argue that *Mother's Sorrow* also changes ideas about the interrelationships among love, mourning and motherhood. In the eyes of the critics, however, Rūmane-Ķeniņa "pollutes" the text with too many personal details and feelings. Current cultural and social discourse not only abounds in questions about vulnerability but also impels a writer to discover and work with their own vulnerability. However, more than a century ago, when Rūmane-Ķeniņa was published, such self-expression, especially in women's writing, was misunderstood and ridiculed. The disclosure of vulnerability associated with a woman's embodied experience in a literary text was "a weed" which male critics wanted to weed out. Their efforts had some success, as Rūmane-Ķeniņa's name was erased from the history of literature. Besides, her entire archive of documents, including correspondence with European intellectuals and literary works in progress, was burned by the gardener of the summer house where it had been stored when she fled the country in 1944 (Ķeniņš 49). Rereading her work from today's viewpoint and contemplating it in relation to the biographical aspects, often from the very aspects that critics previously disparaged, it is possible to see the value of her work, placing Rūmane-Ķeniņa's contribution within the female literary tradition. Unlike critics of the early twentieth century, our advantage is seeing it from a different, affirming perspective in order to broaden negotiations of socially stigmatized female agency and vulnerability.

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Njena zgodba je kot plevel: cenzuriranje ranljivosti v ženskem pisanju

Ključne besede: feministična literarna veda / latvijska književnost / latvijske pisateljice / 19. stoletje / intimnost / materinstvo / cenzura / Rūmane-Ķeniņa, Anna

Namen razprave je razširiti feministično preučevanje pisateljic z raziskovanjem razmerja med ženskim pisanjem, intimnostjo, ranljivostjo in cenzuro ter ponovnim odkrivanjem in kanonizacijo ženskega pisanja v latvijski literarni kulturi. Na začetku 20. stoletja sta bila intimnost in materinstvo kot vir ranljivosti v ženskem pisanju tesno povezana s cenzuro, ki je razkrivala, kako globoko so zakoreninjeni patriarhalni odnosi. Razkrivanje ranljivosti, kakor jo je doživljala ženska, je bilo »plevel«, ki so ga kritiki želeli izkoreniniti. Članek se osredinja na primer latvijske pisateljice Anne Rūmane-Ķeniņa (1877–1950). Njena literarna besedila ustvarjajo eksperimentalna potovanja v intimnost, raziskujejo notranja stanja ženskih likov, družinske odnose in posebne situacije (smrt in žalovanje), preko katerih njeni liki vstopajo v intimen stik z drugimi ter spremenijo obliko in doživljanje intimnosti. Članek preučuje tudi cenzurni odnos literarne kritike do odprtosti, s katero se razpravlja o ženskih izkušnjah.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.174.09:305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.03>

Becoming a (Slovenian) Poet at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century: Male Censorship of Vida Jeraj's Poetry

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This article analyses the gendered censorship of male writers towards the poetics and writing of Vida Jeraj (1875–1932), the most prominent Slovenian female lyrical poet of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and a member of the new wave of Slovenian women writers associated with the Trieste-based publication Slovenka. This case study demonstrates the immense difficulty, if not impossibility, for a woman from a small, conservative patriarchal society on the outskirts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to become a poet and introduce new poetics and new imagination. This was due not only to patriarchal society in general, but also to the gendered censorship of Jeraj's male colleagues and friends. We aim to analyse the gendered discourse with its misogynistic characteristics evident in the correspondence between the poet and male authors during her early period of writing, which had a profound impact on her poetic strategies. Two male critics in particular had a great influence on her style and shaped her poetic career: her friend Josip Murn-Aleksandrov (1879–1901), the impressionist poet of the Slovenian “moderna” literary movement; and Anton Aškerc (1856–1912), the most important and celebrated Slovenian poet of the older generation and the editor of the Slovenian newspaper Ljubljanski zvon. This male censorship also meant that the young poet was forced to self-censor, as her writer's identity was very fragile. This was one of the reasons why her voice eventually fell silent.

Keywords: feminist literary criticism / Slovenian poetry / Slovenian women writers / Jeraj, Vida / censorship / self-censorship

The twenty-first century has seen censorship become a very real phenomenon; however, in terms of theory, there is no clear consensus on what the term actually signifies.¹ Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Pierre Bourdieu, and Judith Butler have offered useful theories on this subject. Helene Freshwater proposed an inclusive definition that takes into account the diverse experiences of censorship and its socio-historical specificity. This definition acknowledges that censorship is a process realized through the relationships between censorious agents, rather than a series of actions carried out by a single authority. Furthermore, to reflect the ethical complexity of speaking for the silenced, this definition of censorship is based on the inclusive logic of “both/and,” rather than the censorious modality of “either/or” (Freshwater 217). This theoretical concept can also be applied to the Slovenian context.

Gendered censorship in the Slovenian context

Intellectuals and writers from Slovenian culture, which was a part of the Habsburg monarchy, experienced very tough political censorship throughout the nineteenth century, from the era of Romanticism to the end of the century. During this period in particular, there were numerous political agents who promoted different types of ideological systems in the small, provincial Slovenian land as part of the larger monarchical state. The writers had to contend with three main sources of power: the political ideology of the monarchy, the ideology of the Catholic Church, and later the ideology of the Slovenian nation. Marijan Dovič and Luka Vidmar established that from 1790 to 1848 the monarchical censorship in Slovenian culture was primarily characterized by a centralized and comprehensive pre-publication censorship, which was further intensified by restrictiveness (a system of granting concessions), economic constraints (i.e., taxes and deposits), and severe penalties (Dovič and Vidmar 36, 37). They also highlighted the existence of retroactive censorship after 1848, which lasted until the beginning of the First World War (37–41).

Nevertheless, at the turn of the nineteenth century, gendered censorship was also present in Slovenian culture as an implicit form of

¹ The author acknowledges financial support from the Slovenian-Czech research project Transformations of Intimacy in the Literary Discourse of the Slovenian “Moderna” (GAČR project 21-47320L and ARRS J6-3134). The work was also supported by the Cooperatio program, Research area Literature/Medievalistics (Charles University, Czech Republic).

ensorship; this was connected to the emergence of the second wave of women writers.² Judith Butler has highlighted that implicit and powerful forms of censorship suggest that the power of censorship is not exhausted by explicit state policy or regulation. She emphasized that such implicit forms of censorship may, in fact, be more effective than explicit forms in enforcing a limit on speakability (Butler 130).

The socio-political climate in Slovenian culture during this period reflected a divided, polarized society with considerable tension in gender relations, and the suppression of women in the cultural sphere. Slovenian society and public spaces at that time were clearly divided; the main writers, critics, and editors of major literary and cultural publications were all male.

The entry of women into the public sphere in Slovenian culture occurred in tandem with the growth of the national movement and feminism, which was typical of the contemporaneous processes across Europe (Verginella & Selišnik 1–17). The public activities of young intellectuals took place within the framework of the multi-ethnic and multinational empire of Austria-Hungary, which was destabilized in the nineteenth century by numerous nationalist movements, seeking to consolidate their national identities.

Along the author's journey, there were numerous challenges for the young female poet to advance her career and have her works published in Slovenian newspapers. As Slovenia was part of the conservative monarchy, women's roles were greatly restricted. Within the framework of the patriarchal power and the existing discourse, women did not have many opportunities to voice their opinions. According to Greene and Kahn, "the oppression of women was both a material reality, originating in material conditions, and a psychological phenomenon, a function of the way women and men perceive one another and themselves" (Greene and Kahn 3).

As with all European *fin-de-siècle* writers, Slovenian writers sought to explore new literary styles. They introduced impressionism, symbolism, and decadence into literature. According to Felski, since they were

² In the nineteenth century, only some female writers appeared in Slovenian culture, but they were isolated and had no predecessors. They were also connected to the national appraisal: in their writing, they supported national ideas. The first Slovenian female poet was Fanny Haussman (1818–1853), who published her first poem in October 1848, "Vojakov izhod" ("Soldier's entrance"). In the second half of the nineteenth century, two distinguished poets, also prose writers, tried to pursue careers: Pavlina Pajk (1854–1901) and Luiza Pesjak (1828–1898). The poetic expressions of L. Pesjak were often interwoven with patriotic feelings, but nevertheless in her poetry we also find intimate themes and modern descriptions of nature, landscapes, and changing time periods.

“caught between the still-powerful evolutionary and historical models of the nineteenth century and the emergent crisis of language and subjectivity which would shape the experimental art of the twentieth, the turn of the century provides a rich textual field for tracking the ambiguities of the modern” (Felski 30).

During this period, a big generation clash occurred in Slovenian literary culture, which paved the way for writers to embrace modernity in the culture. It was a time of great transformation; *fin-de-siècle* writers approached writing with a newfound nervousness. In their works, they delved into subjectivity by employing new psychological and philosophical approaches to the question of existence.³ Imaginative writing was predominant in literature, as evidenced by the symbolist and decadent works, which depicted discordant emotions, as well as themes of anguish and anxiety.⁴

The young generation of Slovenian writers, the circle of “moderna,” tended to encounter difficulties in terms of the reception of their initial literary works within the inflexible cultural milieu of the past, wherein realistic standards had been the norm and the readership of the narrow Slovenian society had become accustomed to them.⁵

The emancipation of women in the Slovenian territory led to increased equality in rights and opportunities. At the turn of the twentieth century, Slovenian female writers tried to transition their careers from the private to the public sphere. This was reflected in the establishment of the first women’s journal, *Slovenka* (*Slovenian Woman*), in 1897 in Trieste, and the emergence of a group of young women writers, of which Vida Jeraj was a member.⁶ The journal was founded before the organized Slovenian feminist movement in 1901. Among them, Jeraj was considered to be the most talented female poet.⁷

³ Franc Zadavec declared in the texts of Slovenian “moderna” the turn to subjectivism (Zadavec 15).

⁴ Literary historians also deliberately named this period “New Romanticism.”

⁵ The first texts of the Slovenian “moderna” originally received negative public reception. In their critical reflections, the critics of the major newspapers repeatedly used moralistic criteria, ideological norms, and prejudices. They also reviewed literary texts with the criterion of mimesis (see Jensterle Doležal, *Avtor* 151–167).

⁶ Among the poets were: Zorana Trojanšek-Franica Tomiškova (1867–1935), Vida Jeraj (1875–1932), Kristina Šuler (1866–1959), Ljudmila Poljanec (1874–1948), Marica Strnad (1872–1953), and Ljudmila Prunk (1878–1947).

⁷ Jeraj, in the view of Slovenian literary historians, was recognised as the most original and talented (Jensterle Doležal, *Ključni* 74–77). Joža Mahnič wrote that Jeraj’s original and free lyrics is, among the female poets of that time, the most prominent (Mahnič 207).

At the end of the nineteenth century, the topic of intimacy was prevalent in Slovenian literature. The beginning of Slovenian modernism (the so-called “moderna”) was marked by the emergence of erotic poetry, with the dialogue of love between the sexes being the primary focus of male poets, and female poets following suit. This “moderna” generation began in 1899 when two anthologies, O. Župančič’s *Čaša opojnosti* (*The Goblet of Inebriation*) and Ivan Cankar’s *Erotika* (*Erotics*), were published.⁸

On 5 January 1901, the prominent Slovenian impressionist poet, Josip Murn-Aleksandrov, wrote to his female colleague and friend, Vida Jeraj: “Being a writer is not so easy, especially for a woman. In ourselves, a certain distrust a priori exists for those inherited by nature.” (Murn 174)⁹ This paper aims to analyze the gendered censorship that was visible in the correspondence between Vida Jeraj (1875–1932), the main Slovenian female poet of intimacy at the turn of the twentieth century, and her male colleagues, who were also writers. This had a great impact on the poetic strategies of the young and promising poet. Gendered censorship in this case was a problem of discourse and language.¹⁰ The study of Jeraj’s ego documents demonstrates how gendered prejudices formed the poetic career of this talented young writer with promising impressionist poetics, who was recognized by Slovenian public organs, such as newspapers and revues, at the beginning of the century (see also Jensterle Doležal, *Ključni* 35–107).

This case study of Vida Jeraj will show that for Slovenian women it was almost impossible to break through and to persuade the literary audience of that time that their work was worthy and valuable. Jeraj was nomadic and cosmopolitan, with a bilingual identity: Slovenian and German, like all the other members of Slovenian “moderna.”¹¹ As part of the “moderna” group, she wrote in Slovenian. As she was establishing

⁸ The most prominent male authors of the Slovenian “moderna” were: Ivan Cankar (1876–1918), Oton Župančič (1876–1946), Dragotin Kette (1879–1899), and Josip Murn Aleksandrov (1879–1901).

⁹ “Pisatelj biti ni tako lahko, zlasti pa še za ženske ne, do katerih nam je že a priori od narave vcepljeno neko nezaupanje.” All translations from Slovenian into English are by the author.

¹⁰ This correspondence is, for researchers, the most visible form of communication between them. There were also other forms: things they said and did also expressed performative acts and showed patriarchal power, and unwritten norms of behavior in the society. The other expressions of male power in communication also merged the intimate and public spheres of writers.

¹¹ She was partly educated in Vienna (1887–1891), where she lived with her uncle. From 1901 to 1910 she lived in Vienna with her family.

her poetics, she had to justify her place in the Slovenian literary system. This was a shared difficulty amongst the modern generation of writers at the turn of the century, but for the first real Slovenian generation of female writers, it was almost impossible.¹² Furthermore, the topics of intimacy that were featured in the lyrical confessions of female poets were also subject to censorship.

She wrote and published her poems in the shadow of great historical and political changes in Central Europe: the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy, the First World War, and the emergence of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians (later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), of which Slovenia was a part after the end of the war.

Ambitious and unconventional poet ... Willing to respect the authorities?

Vida Jeraj broke through into the public arena at the end of the 1890s. She published primarily in *Slovenka*, yet she was also able to publish some of her poems in the major literary journal, *Ljubljanski zvon*. We are particularly interested in the initial period of her career, when she resided in Zasip, near Bled (1897–1901), striving to establish her career in the Slovenian public arena as an independent teacher and unconventional writer. When we analyze her correspondence with her contemporaries, we find a surprising fact. It was difficult for Vida Jeraj, as a female poet, to make her mark in the Slovenian literary milieu, not only due to the numerous gendered prejudices in society and its misogynistic critics, but also due to the “soft” gendered censorship of her close male colleagues and friends.

In her formative writing period, two writers had a profound influence on her style and the trajectory of her poetic career: her friend Josip Murn-Aleksandrov (1879–1901) and the renowned poet Anton Aškerc (1856–1912), a leading figure in Slovenian poetry of the time, a mentor to all young Slovenian poets, and the editor of *Ljubljanski zvon*.

¹² Jeraj was a friend and fellow writer of the “moderna” circle, connected to the leading figures (Josip Murn-Aleksandrov and Ivan Cankar), living in Slovenia (Zasip, Bled) and Vienna. At the beginning of her career as a teacher in a small village near worldly, famous Bled, she was a self-supported, independent intellectual, which would have a major impact on her patriarchal position later: being only the wife of a celebrated musician (Karel Jeraj) and a mother of four children in Viennese bourgeois society.

From the time when Jeraj was almost unknown to the public, there exist five letters from May to September 1897 that Anton Aškerc,¹³ an epic poet, wrote to the young, talented female poet. Aškerc had an impressive facility for storytelling and preferred realistic poetics and traditional forms of expression, often incorporating social motifs into his poetry, and favoring epic themes. His realistic poetics merged with post-romanticism. His most renowned anthology, *Balade in Romance* (*Ballads and Romances*) from 1890, featured themes drawn from history, folklore, and contemporary life, and his poetry conveyed patriotism, religious criticism, and a critical view of society. Furthermore, his poetry demonstrated both great imagination and knowledge of other cultures.

Throughout their correspondence, Jeraj was a novice, publishing her first love poem in *Slovenka* on 16 January 1897 (Jeraj, “Slutnje” 1). It is a brief, intimate love poem. An autobiographical confession is composed in a straightforward traditional style and a love dialogue is depicted between the first person of the lyrical subject and the love object (you). The subject expresses intense emotions, is haunted by dreams and longs for a great future realization.

Tisoč sladkih slutenj / Dušo mi objame, / Če oko se tvoje / Z ókom mojim
vjame // V blaženosti svoji / Zrem zaupno na-te, / O življenja sreči / Sanjam
dneve zlate. (Vida Jeraj “Slutnje” 2)

A thousand sweet premonitions / candles my soul / when your eyes / meet
mine // Blessed and happy / I look at you / and I dream about the never-
ending happiness in life / and about the golden days. (Transl. by the author)

Even in subsequent intimate poems, the autobiographical lyrical subject with modern sensibility uses lyrical confessions to express modern feelings. Subjectivity was articulated in brief, evocative poems with symbolic implications. The confession of the lyrical subject generally stops in time to look for a sense of purpose.

It was already evident in his letter that Aškerc read her first poetry in *Slovenka*. Jeraj’s lyrical poetry at this time was a great mosaic of modern

¹³ Aškerc was a Catholic priest who at that time lived in a small town near Velenje (1894–1898). He was the main Slovenian poet at the end of the nineteenth century, the most respected in literary circles. From 1895, in *Ljubljanski zvon*, he was responsible for young talents: the main editor Viktor Bežek entrusted him with editing the literary portion of the newspaper. He remained an editor of *Ljubljanski zvon* until 1902. After 1899, he was a co-editor of *Ljubljanski zvon* with Anton Mikuš, and from 1900 until 1902, the main editor.

emotions; it was in some ways rather ethereal and subjective. Aškerc did not approve of this; instead he suggested she change her writing style and focus on “prose or short stories” that were more grounded in reality. He asked her directly: “Are you not interested in social issues?” His primary recommendation was to “stick to the solid ground of reality” (Aškerc 48).¹⁴

She held his advice in high esteem and sent three poems in an epic style to Aškerc in his capacity as an editor of the newspaper *Ljubljanski zvon*: “V stolici” (“In the capital”), “Stava” (“A bet”), and “Rojenice” (“Witches”).¹⁵ In the third letter, he advised her to submit the two last romances with social commentary to *Slovenka* rather than to “his” *Ljubljanski zvon*.

Aškerc was the principal Slovenian professional “poeticus arbiter.” Therefore, in his second letter (8 June 1897) he proposed to her some novel poetic solutions. He emphasized the significance of poetic imagery and metaphors in poetry: “To say as much as possible with images—this is one of those secret solutions that make up a poetic style.” (Aškerc 49)¹⁶ He also advised her to use a more varied and relaxed verse by alternating between masculine and feminine rhymes. He additionally advised her not to incorporate fantastical elements into her poetry and to shift towards realism.

He expressed his fear that he may have been too authoritative in his initial letter to the young poet, thus recommending that she should compose with the principles of her own subjectivity; that is, she should discover her own style and language with sincerity of emotions.

He also sought to demonstrate an appreciation and empathy for gender issues; he wrote about the lamentable position of women in Slovenian society, which, in his view, could be ameliorated through education and civil rights. At the same time, he also expressed patriarchal opinions and prejudices about that problem: “Considering myself, if you will allow me one remark, I was until now very skeptical about the poetical texts and poems of the female writers.” (Aškerc 50)¹⁷

He felt superior to the other sex from the standpoint of male authority; eventually, he proclaimed that he favored beautiful women over a beautiful poem. Consequently, in the third letter (13 October 1897),

¹⁴ “Držite se trdnih tal resničnega življenja!”

¹⁵ She didn’t include them in the anthology in 1908.

¹⁶ “Povedati, koliko se največ dá v podobah – to spada med tiste tajne momente, ki činijo poetični slog.”

¹⁷ “Kar se meni tiče – dovolite mi še to opazko – bil sem dozdej sila skeptičen glede poetičnih spisov in pesmij izpod ženskih peres.”

he praised the image of the attractive woman (Jeraj had sent him a photograph, which frequently occurred in communications during this period), and his conclusion was that she was so beautiful that she did not need to write poetry.¹⁸

In the last two letters, he encouraged her to write. At the end of 1897, however, they stopped writing to each other. One potential explanation for this could be Jeraj's declared lyrical poetics; she had established herself as a lyrical poet, and her writing tended towards subjectivity, intimate expressions, and emotional confessions, which was far removed from Aškerc's poetic discourse and poetics.¹⁹ His "censorship" could also be interpreted as a productive force: Jeraj eventually discovered that epic poetry was not her style. Nevertheless, it was only for a brief period that the great poet tried to persuade her to change her lyrical poetics. Aškerc's advice hindered Jeraj's creativity, yet later it also helped her articulate issues related to intimacy.

Jeraj was not the only female poet whom Aškerc tried to shape in terms of poetic style.²⁰ Seven years later, he revealed his misogynistic views about female poets in a letter to another Slovenian female poet, Ljudmila Poljanec.²¹

Women can't write poetry? The power of written words and prejudices ...

Vida Jeraj met Josip Murn-Aleksandrov (1879–1901), who was five years her junior and at that point still unknown to the greater Slovenian public, though his colleagues recognized him as a promising figure of his generation.²² From February 1900 until his death in May 1901, Murn wrote Jeraj nineteen letters (unfortunately, Jeraj's replies to him

¹⁸ "Ta podoba kaže, da Vam ne bilo treba baš pisati poezije. (This photograph shows that you don't really need to write poetry.)" (Aškerc 52)

¹⁹ That silence could have concrete reasons: Aškerc in 1898 had great problems with the Catholic institutions.

²⁰ The younger generation later turned his back on him—that happened after his arbitrary editorial work on the poems by Dragotin Kette (1876–1899), published after his death in 1900.

²¹ See Aškerc's letter to Ljudmila Poljanec, 5 October 1904: "Proti ženski poeziji imam, kakor sem Vam menda že povedal, hude predsodke. (I have terrible prejudices about female poetry, I think I have told you that already.)" (Aškerc 215)

²² At that time, Murn lived in Ljubljana—it was already after his stay in Vienna. He occasionally visited Bled and Vipava because he wanted to cure himself from tuberculosis.

have been lost). They also met in Bled, Ljubljana, and Kamnik (where another female poet, Zorana²³—Jeraj’s cousin—resided). During this period, she was one of his best friends. In his letters, he detailed his life and work, his travels, and he also wrote about their mutual acquaintances, cultural events, and books; however, surprisingly, he did not discuss poetry much. As such, we can presume that he was quite indifferent to her poetry, despite knowing that she was striving to become a poet.²⁴

In his letter from 17 December 1900, Murn was critical of Jeraj’s poetry, claiming that her poems were not personal or emotional enough. He implored her to “go inside of herself,” to discover what she wanted to write and then attempt it. Thinking about her poetry, he expressed his prejudiced views about “unreliable” women: “You women have a big heart; it’s just erratic, and it’s so fickle and so blurry that a man can’t know what’s inside.” (Murn 171)²⁵ For the first time, he also advised her to write only for children.²⁶ He confessed that he would be disappointed with her writing if he would not read her poems for children, which he considered the most beautiful thing that “could be created from a woman’s hurt” (Murn 171).²⁷ He continued by expressing his idealistic concepts of an artist’s integrity, writing about the “clearness” of the poet’s mind and his abilities and skills. According to Murn, the artist must be in a “clearly defined mood” and his art must be highly ethical. Through his words, Vida Jeraj could infer that it was not possible for a female writer to reach the high standards he suggested for the artist’s personality.

We can presume that he did not believe in her poetry, even though she had been one of his closest friends. Women, in his view, were incapable of writing poetry. He gave her the only real advice about poetics in his letter dated 9 January 1901. He again advised her to write poetry specifically for children. He suggested changes for the children’s tale in verse “Orjaki na Ajdni. Gorenjska pravljica” (“The Monsters from Ajdna: The Tale from Gorenjska”)—which she later included as the last poem in her anthology. He believed that the last

²³ Her real name was Franja Trojanšek Tominšek (1867–1935).

²⁴ Perhaps she was also afraid or not confident enough to show him some of her poems.

²⁵ “Ve ženske imate sicer veliko srce, samo nestalno in tako motno je, da človek ne more vedeti, kaj je v njem.”

²⁶ On 6. 12. 1900, Murn wrote to the poet Oton Župančič about the high quality of Jeraj’s poems for children (Murn 145).

²⁷ “Tudi bi izgubil o tebi že zdavnaj vse veselje, da nisem bral tvojih otročjih pesmi, ki se mi zdijo nekaj najlepšega, kar sploh zamore ustvariti žensko srce!!”

verses were overly constructed in a Germanic style (Murn 175).²⁸ He encouraged her to add three new verses at the end of the poem, so that it would sound more poetic and musical. She respected his poetic authority, so she changed those parts of the poem before publishing it in her anthology in 1908.

However, Murn did not make any reference to either her impressionist poems for adults or her subtle love poetry.²⁹ On the other side, we have letters containing detailed “instructions” about poetry and poetic solutions that Josip Murn-Aleksandrov wrote to an unknown poet, Janko Polak.

Murn’s sudden death in the spring of 1901 was a great shock to Jeraj, a kind of “epistemological wound.” On this occasion, she wrote a cycle of poems “Mrtvemu pesniku Aleksandrovu” (“To the Dead Poet Aleksandrov”) in which she mourns the death of one of the most eminent poets of the generation. She then published the cycle in the renowned *Ljubljanski zvon*.³⁰ The year 1901 also saw Jeraj experience a personal crisis, and she gave up her independent life, opting to marry and relocate from a small village to the bustling metropolis of Vienna.

Reception of Jeraj’s anthology (1908)

Jeraj published just one anthology of poems *Pesmi (Poems, 1908)*³¹ at the main Slovenian publishing house, Schwenter.³² It was not well received in literary society, and the critics applied misogynistic criteria when evaluating her poetical world (Jensterle Doležal, *Ključni* 70–74). They denied the merit of her poetry, her ambition for the poetical language, her concentration on searching for right words in verse and her disciplined effort for formal arrangement. They wrote more about her as a woman than about her poetry. They were ironic, cynical, and

²⁸ It reveals the socio-historical context: Slovenian writers during this period were bilingual, as German culture and language was still influential (Jensterle Doležal, *Avtor* 69).

²⁹ Perhaps she also didn’t persuade him with her poetry, because she published many lyrical poems after his death.

³⁰ That was the decision of Anton Aškerc.

³¹ That was her success in the broader sense. Next to Ljudmila Poljanec, she was the only female poet from *Slovenka* who at the beginning of twentieth century succeeded in publishing a book (Poljanec in 1906, Jeraj in 1908).

³² Her second book, *Izbrane pesmi (Selected Poems)*, was published after her death in 1935 (the editor was Marja Boršnik).

paternalistic in their attitude towards her personality. They ironically referred to the young writer as “a beautiful female gardener” and “a cute fairy on the Slovenian Parnassus.” They wrote almost nothing about her poetry, but more about women in general as second-class citizens, who were in their opinion on the same level as children. The words of the critic Pam Morris, who analyzed Robert Lowell’s comments on Sylvia Plath’s poetry fifty years later can be applied here: “Comments continually blur Plath’s person with her poetry, this (con)fused identity is persistently described in gender stereotypes.” (Morris 45) In their view, a woman could not be a true writer because she was not an adult personality. For example, critics of Jeraj’s poetry wrote that “she was just skimming the surface, not going deep.” Her poetry was for them “a dwarf who possesses women in the years when they are neither a woman nor a child anymore” (Jensterle Doležal, *Ključci* 72).³³

The reception was a great source of disappointment for her. She bitterly expressed her frustration to her Viennese friend Steffi Löffler,³⁴ stating: “My husband sent me one review of my poems [*Zvon*] ... Not a single useful sentence! Just phrases and nonsense! But that doesn’t bother me!” (Jeraj, Vida. “Letter to Steffi Löffler, 2 September 1908”)³⁵

That was one of the reasons why she stopped writing poetry for adults and started writing only for children. Her answer to the misogynist critics of her first book was silence. Following the negative reception of her only anthology in 1908, she broadly followed Murn’s advice and began to write children’s poetry. The “soft,” implicit censorship of Murn-Aleksandrov had a great impact on her writing.³⁶ From 1909 onward, she wrote very few works for adults, and her poetry became less personal, with a greater focus on social and war themes.

In 1922, she published her last poem in *Ljubljanski zvon* (“Sappho”), which could be understood as a symbolical gesture with a “message” for Slovenian society. The poem represented a great contrast to her first love

³³ According to Rita Felski in the late nineteenth century, “to demonstrate women’s lower position on the evolutionary chain [...] they [the women] are being invariably compared to [...] children or savages” (Felski 40).

³⁴ Steffi Löffler was at that time the fiancée of Ivan Cankar and Jeraj’s friend and therefore part of the same Viennese circle of Slovenians as Vida Jeraj.

³⁵ “Mein Mann samte mir eine Kritik über meine Gedichte (“Zvon”) ... Nur eine einziger, vermischter Satze! Nichts als Phrasen und Gewischt! Aber das macht mir nichts!” She wrote about the critique of their view by the respected philologist Josip Tominšek (1872–1954) in the prominent *Ljubljanski zvon* (Jensterle Doležal, *Ključci* 71).

³⁶ She published her second book, *Iz Ljubljane čez poljane* (*From Ljubljana through the Fields*), in 1921.

poem in *Slovenka*: “Slutnje” (“Premonitions”), published in 1897, and demonstrated a shift in her themes. One of her first public poems was a celebration of the joy and love wishes—the apotheosis of intimacy—whereas her last published poem, more than twenty-five years later, was a lament of life’s defeats. It expressed the tragic position of the female poet in Slovenian society, who experienced a great disparity between herself as a poet and an inhumane, indifferent, misogynist society.

She also used a completely different form for that confession (the poem “Sappho” is written in free verse, and Jeraj in some way disregarded the traditional forms of strophes and verses she had used before). In this poem, she also incorporated the myth of the first poetess, Sappho, to express her tragical fate without any personal or professional success:

Šla je v množice ljudi, v bakhantski pijanosti je segla v strune zlate lire in vezala je v girlande besed krasoto ženske duše.
Postala je živ akord njegovega imena.
Za krohot in za aplavz je razprodajala svoje srce.
Pesmi so bile izgovorjene. Ona sama se je žrtvovala neusmiljenim bogovom sredi praznega svetišča. (Jeraj, “Sappho” 220–221).

She went into crowds of people. In bacchanalian drunkenness, she reached for the strings of the golden lyre and embroidered them with the beauty of a woman’s soul in a garland of words.
She became a living manifestation of his name.
She was selling her heart for applause and cheers.
The poems were spoken. She sacrificed herself to merciless gods in the midst of an empty sanctuary. (Transl. by the author)

The poem conveys the problem of expressing intimacy in her early poetry—the problem of her lyrical poems, which were met with disapproval from society due to its gendered view.

By the end of the twentieth century, Jeraj was completely forgotten in Slovenian literary society. After all of the negative experiences on her path to becoming a writer and a poet within the gendered world of the Slovenian literature, Jeraj bitterly and sardonically concluded in an epigram in 1926 that a Slovenian woman at that time had no chance of entering the literary world (Jeraj, *Izbrano delo* 142–145).³⁷ In 1932, she ultimately took her own life.

³⁷ She wrote this epigram after the occasion in 1926 when the Slovenian Pen Club was founded: “Tu so vrata v Pen-klub, stoj! Ženska, n a š a vrhu tega!?! Moški tu smo med seboj in še to le radi tega, da slavimo svoj obstoj! Ženska, tu je Pen-klub: stoj!

In 1929, in England, Virginia Woolf wrote about an imaginary sister of Shakespeare—a highly talented poet who, due to the restrictions of her time, was never given the opportunity to pursue her craft and was thus forgotten by history, but her afterlife will come when gendered relations are no longer necessary for human existence: “We go alone and that our relation is to the world of reality and not only to the world of men and women, then the opportunity will come and the dead poet who was Shakespeare’s sister will put on the body which she has so often laid down.” (Woolf 95)

Conclusion: Silenced voices

Implicit gendered censorship was a destructive form of male dominance in relation to Jeraj’s writerly identity and authorship. Also, in that case the formation of the subject “has everything to do with the regulation of speech” (Butler 133)—and also, we might add, of poetic speech. As Judith Butler has noted, censorship as the “performative with the agents of power also means psychological injury, which affects the bodily ‘doxa’, that lived and corporeally registered set of beliefs that constitute social reality” (159). Censorship is, in her words, crucial for the subject and his position in the society. According to Butler, this social performance is “a crucial part not only for the formation of the subject, but also of the ongoing political contestation and reformulation of the subject” (160). Gendered censorship, in the case of Vida Jeraj, caused a reorganization of her subjectivity and a decline in her writing, leading to her eventual silence.

In their correspondence, Jeraj’s colleagues and male friends provided her with advice on poetics, as well as what was deemed appropriate for a female poet to write. Behind all their gendered prejudices, Aškerc and Murn-Aleksandrov believed that a woman could not become a poet. They also tried to persuade Jeraj that she could not write poetry due to her gender. Male censorship of the young female poet signified the beginning of self-censorship, as her authorship was fragile at the outset of her career.

It was a significant challenge for a female writer from a small, narrow-minded, patriarchal, and deeply Catholic nation on the periphery

(Here is the entrance to the Pen—club, stop! A woman, even more: our woman!?! Here just we men can stay and we are here to celebrate our existence! O woman, here is the Pen Club—stop!)”

of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Central Europe at that time to become a poet and to break through with new poetics. There are many similar stories of female writers in Central Europe at that time, most of which—as in the case of Jeraj—ended tragically.³⁸ For a woman to become a poet in small Slavic culture of that “monarchical” time was a great sacrifice and a struggle akin to Don Quixote’s battle against the windmills. Examining her life, we can appreciate Jeraj’s courage, her determination and creative power, her quest for words, and her experimentation with language: writing poetry in an environment that was not conducive to her efforts. The obstacle was not only the poor reception of her work; in the process of writing, she was subordinated by male authorities and ultimately silenced.³⁹ The female poet found herself neglected by her close colleagues, who did not encourage her work enough because of her gender.

Vida Jeraj was a highly promising poet and a cosmopolitan—a nomadic person who traversed between different cultures. Unfortunately, her status as a woman worked against her and she was nearly excluded from literary history and Slovenian literature, of which she had so desperately wanted to be a part. Nevertheless, her legacy is not forgotten: after one hundred years, her poetry is finally becoming part of the Slovenian canon.

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³⁸ If we look at Slavic literatures in the period of the “moderna,” the exclusion of women from the poetry was common for a long time also in other “Habsburgian” nations. Here it is possible to mention the Czech decadent and impressionist writer of prose and poetry, Luisa Ziková (1874–1896), who after her tragic death from tuberculosis was not well received nor mentioned in the history of Czech literature like her male colleagues were (see Topor). In the history of the Croatian “moderna” from 1978, not a single female poet is mentioned (Šicel 268–305).

³⁹ According to Judith Butler: “Silence is the performative effect of a certain kind of speech, where that speech is an address that has as its object the deauthorization of the speech of the one to whom the speech act is addressed. [...] Power is exerted by a subject on a subject; its exertion culminates in a deprivation of speech.” (Butler 137)

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Postati (slovenska) pesnica na koncu 19. stoletja: moška cenzura poezije Vide Jeraj

Ključne besede: feministična literarna veda / slovenska poezija / slovenske pisateljice / Jeraj, Vida / cenzura / avtocenzura

Razprava se osredotoča na vpliv »moške« cenzure na poetiko in pisanje Vide Jeraj (1875–1932), glavne lirične pesnice med slovenskimi pesnicami, povezanimi s tržaško revijo *Slovenka* (1897–1902). Primer Vide Jeraj razkriva, kako težko je bilo postati pesnica v omejeni, strogo razdeljeni patriarhalni slovenski kulturi kot delu konservativnega monarhičnega prostora tega obdobja. Niso je omejevala samo jasno dana patriarhalna pravila družbe, ki so korigirala njen prodor v javni prostor. Ravno tako je kasneje ni zaustavila samo mizogina negativna recepcija njene prve in edine zbirke pesmi leta 1908, nanjo je pritiskala tudi »moška« cenzura kolegov in prijateljev pesnikov. Zanimalo nas bo njeno prvo obdobje ustvarjanja, ko je še iskala svojo poetiko in se uspešno uveljavljala v slovenskem javnem prostoru. Omejili se bomo na analizo korespondence z njenim dobrim prijateljem Josipom Murnom-Aleksandrovom (1879–1901), tedaj mladim obetajočim impresionističnim pesnikom, ter z Antonom Aškercem (1856–1912), urednikom *Ljubljanskega zvona* in v tem obdobju glavnim arbitrom za pesniška vprašanja pri generaciji moderne. Prikrita cenzura moških kolegov je za mlado avtorico pomenila tudi avtocenzuro, saj sta se njena pesniška identiteta in samozavest šele oblikovali. Diskurz moči pesniških kolegov, ki je poudarjal politiko spola, je bil usoden za nadaljnjo pesniško kariero nadarjene pesnice. Tovrstna spolska cenzura, skupaj s kasnejšimi pritiski, je povzročila umik pesniškega glasu v tišino.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.163.6.09Jeraj V.:305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.04>

On Becoming “Princesse Bibesco”: The Intimacy of Modern Identity, Between the Self and the World

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With the exception of Eva Behring who does not regard Martha Bibescu (1886–1973) as an “exile writer,” the few dictionaries and lexicons tackling Romanian exile writers only mention this turn-of-the-century Romanian-French woman writer’s name with modest assertiveness. This narrative of her censorship is probably the story of any exile woman writer, yet with a few entanglements created by her special social status (she became a “Princess” by marriage), by her outstanding political allegiances, and by her Bovaric spirit: malicious critics commented that her epitaph is a composition of four personae, none of them authentic. In this article, we present reasons and contexts of/for Martha Bibescu’s exclusion from the Romanian national literary canon. Moreover, assuming “a new geographical consciousness” that might bring to the fore the transnational routes of emancipation, our specific aim in the present article is to move away from the enduring narrative of censorship in Martha Bibescu’s case and to propose her as a candidate figure for a transnational literary canon, forging a specific, modern, intimate écriture. Our stance is that shaping a complex intimacy, in-between the ways of the Self and the ways of the world, represents these women writers’ major contribution to modernity and should be counted as one of the characteristics of modernism.

Keywords: Romanian literature / Romanian women writers / Bibescu, Martha / literary canon / censorship / intimacy

Introduction: The dynamics of in-betweenness

The following remarks are grounded on the assumption that, at the turn of the twentieth century, women writers took an active role in constructing and deconstructing national modernisms at the fringes of Europe, which meant, most of the times, placing themselves in a problematic position of “in-betweenness” that challenged the classical core vs. periphery. Our stance is that shaping a multi-layered intimacy, in-between the ways of the Self and the ways of the world, is indicative of and represents these women writers’ major contribution to modernity and should be counted as one of the key characteristics of modernism. Coined by Homi K. Bhabha’s “Culture’s In-Between,” the concept of “*in-between*”-ness reflects a hybrid and dialogic positioning that involves exceeding the traditional divides between the public and the private, but also assuming the incompleteness of any cultural agency (53–61).

In line with Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz’s idea on the temporal, spatial, and vertical expansion of the concept of “modernism” (Mao and Walkowitz 1–19), we are claiming that modernization, modernity and even modernism (Călinescu 24–87) were shaped, not just from core to periphery, but also backward, from multiple European peripheries and semi-peripheries to multiple European centers. Moreover, it has been argued that an

interesting twist in the thinking about modernism is offered by the view that while modernity was born in the West (even if authors differ on whether it is a universal or an entirely western phenomenon), modernism was the product of the periphery.... Some authors even posit that modernism is not in the core, but always in the periphery, and they speak of the modernism of underdevelopment, where culture is one form through which one can belong if one is excluded from modernity. This is certainly, very relevant to Eastern Europe, the first and closest periphery to the core of modernity. (Todorova 5–6)

Accordingly, in the present article we do not use the term “national modernism” with an ideological acceptance—thus modernism is not a “national allegory” (Osborne 61)—but in order to enhance *the variety* of aesthetic affiliations, political solidarities and socio-economic transactions across national spaces instead.

Though in our analysis, we make mention of the spearhead notions of the World-systems theory (that is, “center” and “periphery”), and thus amend its monistic and over-deterministic frame (Worseley 305; Chirot and Hall 97–99) by introducing a view on the transnational

routes of emancipation, that were charted by both carefree itinerants and tragic exiles. From this perspective, the intellectual conversation between “fringe” women intellectuals and their environment does not function as “an ambient universe of denationalized, deracialized forms of discourse” (Ramazani 350); on the contrary, this kind of conversation enhances the profound experience of in-betweenness and “gathers,” as Homi Bhabha explains in his chapter on “DissemiNation,” various “forms-of-life” *on the edge* (Bhabha, *The Location* 139–171)—on the edge of cultures, languages, countries, nations, cities, social classes and genders.

Taking on board Bhabha’s hybridization and third space theories, Florin Manolescu regards the Romanian exile writers as in-between figures moving in a “non-Euclidean” universe because they are bi/multi-lingual, multi-citizens (Manolescu 17–18; Ifrim 182–186). This state, or, more specifically, dynamics of in-betweenness *in situ* between two or more cultures, civilizations, and sets of mentalities—triggers a specific imagery in the writer’s works, but it is also reflected in the reactions that the home and, respectively, the adoption cultures generate in this kind of borderline positionings. Furthermore, Florin Manolescu asserts that there are certain advantages and disadvantages in being an in-between writer: first and foremost, because of the existence of, a pervasive identity complex, which is the friable bedrock of exile writers’ literary achievements. As noticed above, it is equally important to trace what has been kept from these writers’ original mentality in the adoption culture and language: for instance, Emil Cioran and Eugène Ionesco’s Romanian works, written before their emigration in the 1940s, provided a genuine ground for further thought on their activity as international intellectuals.

A narrative of exclusion?

With the exception of Eva Behring, who does not regard Martha Bibescu as an “exile writer,” the few dictionaries and lexicons tackling Romanian diaspora mention her name with modest assertiveness (Manolescu 80–86; Simion et al. 813–816). Assuming “a new geographical consciousness” (Sorensen 1) that might bring to the fore the transnational routes of emancipation, our specific aim in the present article is to move away from the enduring narrative of exclusion in Martha Bibescu’s case and to propose her as a candidate figure for a transnational literary canon. The narrative of her exclusion is probably

the story of any exile woman writer, yet with a few entanglements created by her special social status (she became a “Princess” by marriage with Prince George Valentin Bibescu), by her outstanding political allegiances, and by her Bovaric spirit: malicious critics commented that her epitaph is a composition of four *personae*, none of them authentic (*Princesse Bibesco—Ecrivain Français*). Thus, holding that “what is relegated to the margins is often... right at the centre of thought itself” (Ahmet 4), we will present reasons and contexts of/for Martha Bibescu’s exclusion from the Romanian national literary canon.

Born in 1886, Martha Bibescu had a prodigious literary activity spanning from 1908 (*Les Huit Paradis [The Eight Paradises]*) to 1972 (*Échanges avec Paul Claudel [Conversations with Paul Claudel]*), her last volume being published one year before her death. Possessing a charismatic and impressive personality—as much by her intelligence and social skills as by her beauty—Martha Lahovary, future “Princesse Bibesco,” proudly claimed to belong to two cultures, declaring herself French at heart and Romanian in her origins. Also known as “The Princess (of) Europe” (Pavelescu 11–25), she was one of the most distinguished European personalities of the twentieth century and a celebrated writer, politician and hostess of lavish gatherings at her Mogosoia Palace, on the outskirts of Bucharest. Her outstanding personality charmed Marcel Proust, Saint-Exupéry, W. Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, Alfonso XIII of Spain and many others. In 1954, the French Academy awards her with the Great Prize for Literature for her entire lifelong literary oeuvre. A year later, she is elected member of the Belgian Royal Academy of Language and Literature. In 1962 she receives the Legion of Honour. Her itinerant, cosmopolitan and carefree spirit was forced into exile by the dire circumstances of the Bolshevik regime in Romania. In spite of her public fame during the first decades of the twentieth century (Simion et al. 813), her writings have been constantly put in between brackets and today are quasi-unknown to Romanian readership, the only trace she has left in the collective memory being her tumultuous love life or the mysterious aura of the Romanian Mata Hari that her competitors, Elena Văcărescu, and Anna de Noailles, spread around.

The narrative of exclusion and its milder version, the narrative of omission, concerning exile literature in general, and Martha Bibescu in particular, come to the fore when we examine how the mainstream Romanian literary criticism reacted to her hybrid formula before and after the fall of the Communist regime. In order to show that Princesse Bibescu’s literature springs from the experience of in-betweenness, we

chose to face off fiction and biography: on the one hand, with her most praised novel *Isvor, le pays des saules* (*Isvor, Country of Willows*, 1923; translated into Romanian only fifteen years after), on the other, her most cherished life-writing *Le Destin de lord Thomson of Cardington, suivi de Smaranda* (*The Destiny of Lord Thomson of Cardington, followed by Smaranda*, 1932), both of them pitch and toss of a constructed and censored intimacy, both of them sharing strategies of hiding and showing the Self.

Martha Bibescu’s early debut (at the turn of the twentieth century) should be put in the template of the Romanian Francophonie, which was then already in its second wave. Programmatically following the model of French civilization, the young Romanian intellectuals—some of them “transnational figures belonging with the European aristocracy” (Manolescu 80)—experienced a certain cultural fluidity between Bucharest, Paris, and other places of the world (see, for instance, Matila Ghyka’s memoirs *The World Mine Oyster*, 1955); this sense of continuity was enhanced by bilingualism or by the exclusive use of French for political influence, for cultural diplomacy and for easier integration into the European milieu. In spite of these transnational intellectuals’ impact abroad, the Romanians’ most prominent interbellum critics gave them the cold shoulder.

If truth be told, except for a few circumstantial praises that stressed on a gentle lady’s noble delights, Martha Bibescu’s publications did not have a friendly reception in the interbellum Romania either. While in France she was appreciated by Albert Thibaudet, Robert Kemp or Paul Souday, and praised without reserve by Proust, Rilke and Valery, in her home country, everybody criticized Bibescu’s snobbery in choosing French as her main language and in dubbing herself “Princesse Bibesco.” E. Lovinescu, one of the few male Romanian critics who promoted female literature during the interbellum period,¹ recommended his daughter to read the princess-writer’s books (Lovinescu 191). This is not however an instance of public appreciation; along with Musset and an obscure Romanian memorialist, this kind of literature becomes a part of Monica Lovinescu’s familial pedagogy. In spite of his acknowledged opening toward modernity, toward experiment with hybrid literary forms and toward female and ethnic minorities’ literature, Lovinescu did not chose to include Martha Bibescu in his historiographical

¹ E. Lovinescu prefaced enthusiastically the first anthology of Romanian female literature entitled *Evoluția scrisului feminin în România* (*The Evolution of Female Writing in Romania*).

syntheses. The reason is not for her books' lack of aesthetic value, but for *Zeitgeist* reasoning according to which ethnic creativity is represented only by works written in the national language (Romanian).

In fact, this theory is the main framework of G. Călinescu's monumental and canonic history, where Martha Bibescu's name only appears, ironically, in the last footnote (930). Needless to say, this snapshot of the princess-writer's works serves as a kind of "fringe" contextualization to the consistent chapter entitled *The New Generation. Moment 1933*, which comments on other international intellectuals' works (Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran). Nevertheless, Călinescu's attitude is more complex than it seems because it epitomizes the Romanian readership's reactivity to Bibescu's literary endeavors: immediately after the publication of Bibescu's self-translated versions of *Le Destin de Lord Thomson of Cardington, suivi de Smaranda* (*The Destiny of Lord Thomson of Cardington, followed by Smaranda*) and *Quatre portraits d'hommes: Ferdinand de Roumanie. Herbert Henry Asquith. Anatole France. Jean Lahovary* (*Four Portraits of Men: Ferdinand de Roumanie. Herbert Henry Asquith. Anatole France. Jean Lahovary*), the Romanian critic is on the brink of "counting her among the national writers": more precisely, the princess-writer's talent for portrait takes after "Plutarch's model" and renders "hieratic and symbolic art," "poetically pathetic," "gracious and fine in describing moral and physical movements" (Călinescu 300–304). In 1939, somehow annoyed by the princess's experiments with genre fiction—the popular novel *Katja*, for instance—Călinescu acknowledges Bibescu's "writing skill, as being very nice for a mondain lady, but unsatisfying as a writer" (Călinescu 2007). Obviously, the famous critic was not ready to accept the princess-writer's defying attitude to write in French rather than Romanian: even though, by translating two of her biographic pieces, Bibescu had proved, with honors, her phenomenal talent in writing, in Romanian too.

Within this context, we contend that Camil Petrescu's intervention made a difference. Speaking from the position of the most appreciated modernist writer and with the authority of the philosopher, Camil Petrescu acts as an influencer for Martha Bibescu's postbellum reception. One of his articles on Bibescu was selected for publication in his synthetic volume *Teze și antiteze* (*Thesis and Anti-thesis*), which shows that his interest in the princess's personality is neither trivial nor circumstantial. Even if the text reads as a *pro domo sua* plea, the celebrated philosopher and novelist attacks his contemporaries' lack of interest of exceptional personalities. In a nutshell, despite the language she chose, Martha Bibescu expresses the ethnic substance in a very modern manner

because she is able to grasp the universal values: “She is an elevated flower of our [Romanian] race, a remarkable achievement of our national genius after so many strays and suspicions.” (Petrescu 143) Moreover, the princess-writer illustrated one of Camil Petrescu’s theses on authenticity, built upon Marcel Proust’s narrative innovations. But the appreciation could not have been complete without the genuine admiration for Martha Bibescu’s stylish femininity, which probably served as a real-life model for Camil Petrescu’s fascinating female character, Doamna T (Lady T) from the much-acclaimed novel *Patul lui Procrust* (*The Procrustean bed*) published in 1933.

The narrative of exclusion turned into censorship during the fifty years of Communism (1945–1989).² It is “cosmopolitanism” that becomes a taboo, allegedly threatening to replace all things national. Consequently, exile authors, their occurrences and their translations abruptly disappear from the Romanian literary field: for instance, *Dicționarul scriitorilor români* (*The Dictionary of Romanian Writers*, 1983) completely eradicated any exile writers from its pages. Starting with the Romanian translation of *Au bal avec Marcel Proust* (*Marcel Proust at the Ball*, 1976), Bibescu’s name surfaces again: in 1979, a few fragments from the “political” diary are compiled and published, and in 1983 the first monograph appears, aimed at reintegrating her in the Romanian literary tradition. It is interesting that the critics of the Communist period avoided commenting on Bibescu’s literature, some of them recycling Camil Petrescu’s suggestions about aristocratic posture which was supposed to work as *universalia* beyond any racial or linguistic determinations (Cioculescu 395–398; Paleologu 274–282), and others claiming that the princess was a declared enemy of the Romanian Royal House. With these exceptions, the most authoritative voices of Romanian criticism—Nicolae Manolescu, Eugen Simion, Lucian Raicu, Mircea Martin, etc.—did not reconsider her. Being perceived as a figure of the Romanian diaspora, Martha Bibescu becomes the specialty of other diaspora writers who, under the same sign of misfortunate reception, engage in a love-hate relationship (Lovinescu 75–78). The only notable recovery belongs to Elena Zaharia Filipaș, who analyzes *Isvor, pays des saules* (*Isvor, Country of Willows*) in the context of ethnic cultural movements such as Sămănătorism and Poporanism (localized versions of “*Narodnic-ism*”), and emphasizes Bibescu’s originality in catching the ingenuity of the Romanian people.

² Martha Bibescu was not only the victim of Communist censorship, but also of the legionares’ censorship before them, who confiscated her personal archive from Mogoșoaia in the forties—among these documents there was the draft of her *Nymph Europa*.

Nearing the 89' Revolution, the princess-writer's life and works become a rich topic for historians, some of them being interested in rediscovering the pre-communist aristocratic environment, others more committed to digging up secrets from the political police's archives (Pavelescu; Majuru; Bulei; Hîncu). After that, things seemed to clear up in literary studies with regard to the exiled authors. A series of monographs and articles exploring the Romanian-French co-influences provides solid ground to claim that Bibescu's work belongs to the Franco-Romanian cultural heritage, and thus to an in-between, hybrid area where cultural agency is always assumed as potential, and thus incomplete (Rujan).

In the revised editions of the above-mentioned dictionary, exile writers are an integral part of the Romanian literary history (Zaciu et al.; Simion et al.). However, at odds with this recent integration, the narrative of exclusion regarding exile writers persisted with certain literary critics, and this has now become a more recent trend of narrative of omission. On the other hand, as explained at the beginning of this chapter, many male writers of the exile such as Emil Cioran, Eugen Ionesco, Mircea Eliade have been retrieved by Romanian culture, translated and even introduced in school books after the Romanian Anti-Communist Revolution in 1989, despite the fact that both Cioran and Ionesco repeatedly insisted on their voluntary divorce from their Romanian identity. But some other exile writers took much longer to be rehabilitated, and some have not been rehabilitated at all, especially women writers. Moreover, scholarly interest in the period has labelled the rise and founding of the Romanian modern identity, as well as national models for constructing it, as generally being a male concern. By correlating reception fluctuations with the major political changes in twentieth century Romania, we assert that this narrative of exclusion continues to be political—be it the politics of nation or the politics of gender.

Despite Martha Bibescu's outstanding cultural heritage, Romanian scholars have consistently "edited" her occurrence in the national literary canon both before and after the Communist regime, claiming that her literary achievements should not be taken into account because of her linguistic "inaccessibility." While it is true that more recently Martha Bibescu has broadly been acknowledged as an exile Romanian author, and her life has been the subject of extensive research and even of tabloid columns (see for instance Stelian Tănase's "Bucharest, Top Secret"), one cannot omit or deny the fact that to-date there has been no major comparative work solely devoted to her output in the

Romanian literary canon, or even her contribution to Romanian literary modernism, for that matter.

As we can see, dealing with exile women writers is an intricate business of cultures belonging to the former Communist bloc, especially from a gender perspective. This is particularly problematic because although these authors originate from Romanian culture, they are transnational and trans-lingual figures, not belonging unequivocally to any national tradition. While we accept trans-nationality as an aesthetic value, the biographical, social or ideological circumstantial aspects (exile, social status, gender) should be given less prominence. Most certainly, in Martha Bibescu’s case, she was a transnational writer even before the Communist party took over in Romania and her values and literary strategies did not suffer any interference or alteration due to her forced exile. Effectively we are confronted with a lack of theoretical fundament, lagging behind, so to speak, the realities concerning the special categories of writers who do not fit in the mainstream canon of the Romanian literature, such as exile, bilingual women, for example. In what follows, we endeavor to discuss Martha Bibescu’s strategies of rendering intimacy as a social construct or, *mutatis mutandis*, to point where it makes “the realms of privacy” not a static and impermeable sphere, but an agential and relational device (Mitroiu 135). As in other cases—Carmen Sylva, for instance—the concept of “collective intimacy” could be used to describe a mechanism of self-censorship and postural composition: it is about dismantling and adjusting the Self so as to make it look like the person the others name “Princesse,” which boils down to experiencing in-betweenness and fluidity between what is real and what is ideal (Parry; Patraș and Pascariu).

Intimacy and in-betweenness: Modern writing practices and strategies

This article builds on Anthony Giddens’s *The Transformation of Intimacy* as well as on further developments in the field (see Berlant; Donovan and Moss; Parry), whereby intimacy is regarded as a cultural construct, a product of social and spatial relations, a medium for conveying modern affects and mentalities, a form of shaping a modern self-reflexive identity. This perspective may reveal, for example, how exile women writers thrived in the overlapping of private intimate spaces with public ones, such as in the theatre or salon. They used salons as spaces of in-betweenness, as members of French and Romanian high society were

grouped in Martha Bibescu and Anna de Noailles' salons, frequented by the most famous writers of the time. Also, this perspective on collective intimacy may enable us to explore how these women writers travelled and experienced exile as an in-between space, as an escape from the limiting and oppressive environment "at home," which was perceived as the static (thus, negative) side of intimacy; or, how they felt lost and alienated when spending time or living abroad, longing for the lost intimacy of the home and/or language they left behind.³

As shown above, sharing an in-between position enables exile women writers to have a deep knowledge of both cultures leading to a circulation of ideas as well as influences flowing both ways. For instance, before Marcel Proust became "Proust," his tremendous influence on the Romanian cultural milieu was channeled by Bibescu's agency: a much less known fact is that she and her cousin (and literary rival) Anna de Noailles are documented as having impressed the French writer to the extent that he even consulted the two Romanian ladies about important stylistic and thematic choices (Sturdza 450–535). Naturally, Proust's influence on Martha Bibescu (and her circle) is just as, as considerable, chiefly in her way of reworking life writing genres such as autobiography or biography. More specifically, the princess's sense of "collective intimacy" fashions the autobiographic discourse and generates (literary) strategies of elusion and auto-elision: to write a biography of an ex-lover (Lord Thomson of Cardington) is a way of disguising the frankness of the diary notes; to depict an exotic landscape and to frame it in an intimate letter is also a way of saying that the narrative of a love story is not only about discovering the foreign Other but also about returning to the fountain of one's true origins. It is probably worth mentioning that the princess's cultural circle at the Mogoșoaia Palace—restored in the spirit of the genuine style of the former Wallachian prince Constantin Brâncoveanu—was as cosmopolitan and prestigious as her salon in Paris. In fact, some of her guests wrote interesting travelogues about the wild and fascinating "country of willows," which should all be considered subtle intertexts to Bibescu's *Isvor*, echoing her literary manner marked by stylization, density and economy of tropes (Sitwell).

Our perspective about cultural in-betweenness also raises awareness about these non-normative texts and para-literary writing practices which have been repeatedly disparaged and undertheorized, proposing instead a more viable and flexible direction. Exile women writers are

³ More on intimacy, women's writing and spatiality in Estelle, Dușu, and Parente-Čapková.

often consumed with an identity complex which becomes the bedrock of their literary achievements. They write on topics such as intimacy and diverse cultural identity, strange loves, new gender roles etc. and adopt hybrid genres, bordering autobiography and fiction, recycling obsolete forms such as the letter or the moralist’s portrait (Principesa Bibescu). As we will see further, the thematization of intimacy plays a crucial role in constructing the modern self.

Martha Bibescu used the tropes of intimacy as a way of obliterating the limits between the self and the landscape, as well as the limits between the Self and the Other. We chose her novel *Isvor, Le pays des saules* (*Isvor, Country of Willows*, 1923)⁴ and her biography *Lord Thomson of Cardington: A Memoir and Some Letters* (1932) as case studies in order to foreground her contribution to the (trans)national literary canon. The two works should be considered landmarks of her literary career, albeit for very different reasons: while the first one is probably the most praised of her books, the second one is the only one in which she secretly weaved both French and Romanian voices, by translating the original text *manu propria*, which is actually a notable exception of the princess’s artistic behavior. The complexity of the biographic account is enhanced by the fact that Christopher Birdwood (Lord Thomson of Cardington), Martha’s lover during his service as a British diplomat in the Kingdom of Romania, published, in his turn, a fictionalized memoir of his Romanian experience whose center of attention is a character called “Lady Smaranda,” the romantic chatelaine with emerald eyes ruling over a place allegorically named “The Still Waters.” As a sort of boomerang effect, the princess-writer’s biography reverberates the secret Arthurian tones of her own myth as “Lady of the Lake”: by writing his life, she actually writes about herself too.

Isvor begins on the brink of autobiographical writing and fiction. Marked by in-betweenness and generic fluidity, neither entirely autobiographical, nor entirely a novel, the text could be integrated to the category of “the autobiographical novel”: the first person-narrative is the most adequate to illustrate the tension of a style oscillating between the key concept of distance (or relational identity, gap, otherness) and the need to express oneself, to narrate the Self and to give agentive force to the privacy of the self. This is not the first person of confessions, but a voice that hints at objectivity: “I learn to read between the lines of what I write, and I laugh all alone at my discoveries. Blessed

⁴ The present article makes reference to the edition *Isvor, le pays des saules*. Paris: Bartillat, 1994. The translations from French into English also belong to the authors of this article.

mania of recording everything and then rereading what I record.” (Bibescu, *Isvor* 167)

The same generic hybridity marks the biographical discourse in the biography of Lord Thomson of Cardington, which is also written in the first person in order to suggest not only the temporal contemporaneity, but also a kind of impersonation, a way of writing a beloved life from inside: “If I could write his life with musical notes, I’d be pleased.” (14)

A letter at the beginning of *Isvor* introduces a fictional persona and sets forth the story line. A Romanian princess is confronted with an existential challenge: a law in her country does not allow foreigners to own land. Since she is about to marry her French fiancé, Émilien, before committing her life to him she decides to visit her Romanian estate for the last time. She takes her time, though: she allows herself a year before making the choice between the love of her fiancé (symbol of the Other) and the love of her country. Consequently, Marie (the main character) immerses herself in a universe that offers her another way of life, far from civilization. The narrator writes about the Romanian peasants on her estate, people whose spiritual richness inspires the princess to compose a veritable fresco of peasant life at the beginning of the twentieth century. The testimonial is organized as a collection of diverse ethnographic material (legends, myths or tales, translation of popular songs or various refrains etc.). In the end, the reader (who is left in suspense as to Marie’s final choice throughout the story), is provided with the answer via a letter in the afterword: Marie will not return to Paris. Her integration is complete; the character remains in the realm she came from to regain. The fictional pact is therefore based solely on the attestation of the two letters framing the story itself. The first-person narrative exposes the reader to what could be defined as a real travelogue. Due to detailed and suggestive descriptions, the reader should have no trouble at all finding the Romanian countryside, with its traditions and oral culture.

In effect, the rural (or, better yet, primordial) realm recalls the writer’s beloved residence at Mogoșoaia to which she devoted seventeen years of her life. The Still Waters, fashionable and cosmopolitan residence of artists, diplomats, politicians and aristocracy from the entire world, provides a place to suggestively illustrate the East-West relationship and the complexity of any such rapprochement process with the other. A fragment that opens the chapter “Their sad songs” is also restyled in the biography of Lord Thomas of Cardington as well as in Cardington’s ficto-memoir *Smaranda*. The travelling passage catches a dialogue between the princess and Pitts, the English governess who

“understands nothing of the people of the country of the willows” (Bibescu, *Isvor* 37) and who criticizes the sad tone and the nasal voice of the traditional folk songs. Although the reflections of this bewildered spectator are accurate, her words sound unjustly contemptuous and the narrator resorts to an intertextual reference—most probably to Sei Shōnagon’s *Pillow Book* (2006)—so as to balance the verdict of “poor Pitts”:

I have however copied and translated into French the preludes of their songs, and my notebooks look like herbariums in preparation, for there is no flower on a stem that is not named there. I know many of these floral preludes; I like them and I collect them. In their succinct form, they remind me of certain Japanese poems which have only one verse, a cry thrown into the night when our senses are asleep. What force of restrained love, what science of observation, this supposed brevity in oneself and in others! (137)

Author of *La Nymphe Europe* (1960), an epic of the European civilization told through narrative genealogies, Bibescu pleads for the common origins of all civilizations: French and Romanian, but also, by resounding the echoes of Arthurian legends of the British. The return to the Orient, as represented by the journey of the Parisian princess to her native country, thus symbolizes the return to a lost Eden, to an intimate universe where original harmony is still possible. What makes *Isvor* and *Thomson of Cardington* so special is their interrogative and secretly intimate substance. The narrator plays with the in-between perspective: there is the freshness of the gaze which discovers a new realm but, at the same time shares an intimate familiarity with the cultural background.

For the peasants on the Mogoșoia Estate and for her foreign lover, she is the “exotic princess” because she comes from far away, from another world, even. This intrinsic ambivalent position of the subject relativizes the perspective. Dialogue can only take place within the framework of a relationship of trust and familiarity because, for the Other to reveal his/her knowledge, a universal language is needed which can only be that of intimacy. In *Fictions in Autobiography*, Paul John Eakin insists on the dynamics that the Self undergoes through the autobiographic narrative: “Autobiographical truth is not a fixed but an evolving content in an intricate process of self-discovery and self-creation, and [...] the self that is the centre of all autobiographical narrative is necessarily a fictive structure.” (Eakin 3) Employing intimacy also involves the desire to charge writing with an existential, ontological value. The Self becomes the mediator of an experience that

never ceases to aim for transcendence, for fusing death, life and writing in the same discourse:

Whiteness is nothingness... For the written page, the snow first replaces a blank page. But as soon as it has stopped falling, all the guests of *Isvor*, men and beasts, come to be inscribed legibly on this paper. My walks have become a kind of reading in the open air: I decipher, I do a kind of mental solfeggio and census, police investigation too. (Bibescu, *Isvor* 269)

Conclusion

The history of modern Romania and the abroad cultural agency of Romanian intellectuals represent an inspiring foundation for discussions related to the dynamics between language and culture, between the national and the transnational, between the intimate and the public. The in-betweenness status of exile women writers sometimes triggered an incontestable melancholy of displacement. They adopted different coping strategies to deal with this existential melancholy: some, negated their Romanian cultural and ethnic identity altogether, such as Anna de Noailles; others, such as Martha Bibescu, took an active role in creating a new European literary and cultural perspective. But both categories mediated indirectly or directly a cultural dialogue between French models and the local, Romanian forms of modernism, going both ways, in a continuum.

Martha Bibescu falls into the category of active agents of change, programmatically developing a European supra-identity and becoming a keen advocate for Romanian national emancipation and national identity, preoccupied with the remapping of European culture. In the present article we have argued that, the reconsideration of Martha Bibescu needs to be reassessed from a fringe perspective (relying on concepts such as “in-betweenness,” “fluidity,” “collective intimacy”) and placed into the context of her efforts to link her birthplace and her place of residence, to link her public personae and the core of her Self. Her work is heavily reliant on the personal trajectory imposed by her family and social status to build a life between the two cultures, Romanian and French. The issue at heart in her writings is how the narrator/the author constructs her identity within a space that is imbued with intimacy, in which the Self moves incessantly towards others.

In the case studies briefly commented, the narrator of *Isvor* and the voice of the biographer from *The Destiny of Lord Thomson of Cardington* move towards the profound Self, whose profile emerges either from

Romanian origins (the native country of willows) or from the perfect, almost musical, communion with the beloved one (Christopher Birdwood, Lord Thomson of Cardington). To conclude, although the French myth, the dialogue of the Romanian-French culture was already a well-established fact during Martha Bibescu’s time, to-date the contribution of this woman writer to this continuum is still not included in the Romanian canon. We have referred in particular here to the specificity of her writing, approached themes, negotiation with the literature of the time, the characters, the world vision, stylistic particularities etc. This article advocates for the repositioning of her writing within the national literary canon by regarding her, alongside other women writers of the exile, as an active mediator among Europe’s national literatures (after all “the nymph Europe” is a political trope of solidarity), as well as a perfect example of the trans-national European culture. Her writings serve as a reflection of that invisible bridge, not only among cultures, but also between historical and political processes, which generated a two-way influence, beyond the apparent incongruences.

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Kako postati »princesa Bibesco«: intimnost sodobne identitete med jazom in svetom

Ključne besede: romunska književnost / romunske pisateljice / Bibescu, Martha / literarni kanon / cenzura / intimnost

Z izjemo Eve Behring, ki Marthe Bibescu (1886–1973) ne obravnava kot »izgnanske pisateljice«, je v redkih slovarjih in leksikonih, ki obravnavajo romunske izgnanske pisatelje, ime te romunsko-francoske pisateljice s preloma stoletja omenjeno le s skromno samozavestjo. Ta pripoved o njenem cenzuriranju je verjetno zgodba katere koli izseljenske pisateljice, vendar z nekaj zapleti, ki so jih ustvarili njen poseben družbeni status (s poroko je postala »princesa«), njena izjemna politična lojalnost in »bovarijevski« duh: zlonamerni kritiki so komentirali, da je njen epitaf sestavljen iz štirih oseb, od katerih nobena ni pristna. V tem članku predstavimo razloge in kontekste za izključitev Marthe Bibescu iz romunskega nacionalnega literarnega kanona. Še več, ob predpostavki »nove geografske zavesti«, ki bi lahko v ospredje postavila transnacionalne poti emancipacije, je naš posebni cilj, odmakniti se od trajne pripovedi o cenzuri v primeru Marthe Bibescu in jo predlagati kot kandidatko za transnacionalni literarni kanon, ki oblikuje specifično, sodobno, intimno pisavo. Naše stališče je, da je oblikovanje kompleksne intimnosti med načinom sebe in načinom sveta glavni prispevek teh pisateljic k modernosti in bi ga bilo treba šteti za eno od značilnosti modernizma.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.135.1.09Bibescu M.:305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.05>

Unspeakable Desire: Norm Breaking Strategies by Swedish Women Authors of the 1880s

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In this article, I argue that the dichotomy of the virtuous and the sinful woman functioned as a strongly censoring factor for nineteenth century women authors in their writing about intimacy, desire, and sexuality. This dichotomy was the foundation of the double standard morality, holding different moral codes for men and women and for women of different social classes, which was a social norm that had to be followed in literature as well, in order to gain acceptance and authority as a woman writer. I identify and explore textual strategies that two Swedish women authors of the 1880s devised for dealing with censorship and self-censorship when writing about intimacy and sexuality. First, in “Pyrrhic Victories” (“Pyrrhussegrar”) 1886, Stella Kleve depicts a desire that the woman experiences but does not give in to. Secondly, in “Aurore Bunge” 1883 and Womanhood and Eroticism I-II (Kvinnlighet och erotik I-II), 1883 and 1890 respectively, Anne Charlotte Leffler describes a moral woman with sexual desire. The strategies are analyzed with the help of new censorship theory, which has been developed in recent decades based on Foucault’s theories of power. Drawing on Judith Butler’s theory of performativity, I show how speech acts, when repeated, can take on a skewed relationship to the norm and thus function as strategies of opposition.

Keywords: Swedish literature / Swedish women writers / intimacy / sexuality / censorship / Kleve, Stella / Leffler, Anne Charlotte

The 1880s in Sweden and Scandinavia were a politically progressive period: young intellectuals turned against the church and the conservative establishment in order to criticize bourgeois society.¹ The program for the Modern Breakthrough movement followed the rallying cry of

¹ I would like to thank Åke Wiberg’s Foundation for their research grant which enabled me to write this article.

Danish critic Georg Brandes, who declared in 1872 that the task of literature was to debate problems. Those problems could include poverty, class antagonisms and gender-related issues. Scientific ideas were often used as the basis of the arguments and reasoning that the authors of the Modern Breakthrough put forward.

The most pressing question was the so-called woman question, and the issue of sexual morality was the focus of lively debate during the 1880s, which was largely conducted via works of fiction. Both male and female radical writers expressed criticism of prevailing gender norms and the hypocrisy of the morality surrounding marriage and family life.

This article deals with two Swedish female writers of the 1880s: Stella Kleve (pseudonym for Mathilda Kruse, 1864–1942) and Anne Charlotte Leffler (1849–1892). Stella Kleve's short story "Pyrrhic Victories" was the spark that ignited the morality debate in Scandinavia. Published in autumn 1886 in the journal *Framåt*, it was followed by a fierce debate about free love and sexual morality that led to the journal's closure in the wake of boycotts by advertisers as well as readers (Hjordt-Vetlesen 339). A critic in *Dagny*, the journal of the liberal women's movement, compared Kleve to the misogynist Swedish writer August Strindberg and found that the novel was "of the most degrading kind," and that both Kleve and her protagonist gave expression to "moral ruin and unbridled and depraved imagination" (Review 1). The liberal women's movement strongly distanced itself from the radical and scientifically grounded idea of free love expressed in "Pyrrhic Victories" because its adherents believed that women were at risk of falling victim to deceitful if they became pregnant. The liberal women's movement was also founded on Christian ideals that were incompatible with new scientific ideas (Manns 86–92).

In March 1887, Danish feminist Elisabeth Grundtvig declared in a speech that now was the time not only for equality in the family and in the state but also moral equality. Until now society had demanded that unmarried women be chaste and married woman faithful while requiring neither of men. Grundtvig suggested that there were two alternatives, either women could behave like men, that is, like libertines; or men could behave like women, and stay chaste. Advocates of free love like Georg Brandes and August Strindberg found the idea that women could be like men or men like women both impossible and absurd (Alfort 86, 96–98). For Brandes, the idea was clearly beyond discussion.

Anne Charlotte Leffler also took a stand in the debate. She argued that the risks involved in free relationships were far higher for women

than for men, since a pregnancy outside marriage would lead to personal catastrophe. On the other hand, she described premarital relations in fictional works such as “Aurore Bunge” and *Womanhood and Eroticism II*. In her novel draft *Utomkring äktenskapet (Outside of Marriage)*, Leffler even imagines a young gymnastics teacher who wants to have a child whom she will be both mother and father to and support on her own (Alfort 91–92).

“Aurore Bunge” and *Womanhood and Eroticism II* caused an uproar when they were published. Many critics reacted negatively to the depictions of sexuality in *Womanhood and Eroticism II*. Swedish critic Hellen Lindgren wrote in *Dagny* that the love depicted by Leffler was “foul, even gross, and [...] repellent to the reader” (Review 2; Lindén, “Afterword” 283–285). In the afterword to the Danish translation, which appeared in autumn 1890, Leffler noted that the book, as she had foreseen, was her most criticized work: “Much read, much talked about, much criticized by almost all the newspaper critics, and enthusiastically praised by a few, who have neither seat nor vote in the parliament of public opinion.” (Leffler, *Kvinnlighet* 267)

At the time, Leffler lived in Italy where she married the Italian mathematician and marquis Pasquale del Pezzo in 1890. *Womanhood and Eroticism II* was Leffler’s last book, as she died tragically in 1892, four months after she had her first child (see Lauritzen). Kleve, for her part, had published two novels, *Berta Funcke* (1885) and *Alice Brandt* (1888), both of which caused scandal and outrage reviews. In 1890 she married Peter Malling, a Danish merchant, and thereafter began publishing country house romances using her own first name and new surname, Mathilda Malling (Ney).

During the 1880s, Leffler and Strindberg, who were both born in 1849, were founding figures in the Modern Breakthrough movement in Sweden (Lauritzen 319–322). Sometimes, it is called the Women’s Modern Breakthrough, since many female writers published their works during the period, such as Alfhild Agrell, Victoria Benedictsson, Amanda Kerfstedt and Hilma Strandberg.² In the late 1880s, reaction to the success of the women writers resulted in Leffler, like many of her peers, being pigeonholed as a woman’s writer on the grounds that they were writing “tendentious literature” or even “indignant literature,” as opposed to fiction displaying high aesthetic value. This process by

² Many of the female writers of the Modern Breakthrough also wrote plays, such as Alfhild Agrell, Victoria Benedictsson and Anne Charlotte Leffler. Their plays were translated into several European languages and some of them were staged, for example in London, Hamburg, and Frankfurt-am-Main (Lindh Estelle 78).

which male authors both devalued and relegated women's writing has been described in detail by the Swedish literary scholar David Gedin (Gedin 173–214). For female writers, their male pales, no matter how radical their moral views, thus became as much an obstacle as their bourgeois critics (Lindén, "Afterword" 291–293).

The process of devaluating women writers continued during the 1890s, helping to form the literary canon that excludes or accords only marginal place to women authors in twentieth-century literary histories. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, female writers of the 1880s were rediscovered and re-established as significant authors by feminist literary historians and critics. A literary history of Nordic women writers, from the eleventh century to the present, was published in five volumes between 1993 and 1996, following which numerous dissertations, monographs, and biographies on women writers have been published in Scandinavia.

The dichotomy of the virtuous versus the sinful woman

In the nineteenth century, many epithets were used to describe women who had sexual relations with men outside of marriage: immoral, depraved, fallen, ruined. Such women were in breach of the first commandment of the prevailing bourgeois ideology: no sex before marriage. The dichotomy of virtuous versus sinful woman underpinned a double standard that held women to a different moral code from men. This was a social norm that women writers were also required to follow in literature if they were to achieve authority and acceptance.

The double standard rested on notions of class as well as gender. While bourgeois women who had premarital sex were condemned, society tacitly condoned their male counterparts having sexual relations with working-class women and prostitutes. This double standard thus also sanctioned prostitution. Writers could criticize the moral hypocrisy, as the Finnish Swedish author Gerda von Mickwitz does in her short story "Measles" (published in *Framåt* in 1886). The plot concerns a man whose premarital relations lead to his wife becoming ill with syphilis, a calamity that is concealed as measles. To describe a virtuous woman who has sexual desires was more difficult. And yet it happened: *Eppur si muove*.

In this article, I argue that the dichotomous notion of virtuous or sinful, or moral or immoral, functioned as a strongly censoring factor for nineteenth-century women writers in their treatment of intimacy,

desire, and sexuality. I examine the strategies that two Swedish women writers of the 1880s devised for dealing with censorship and self-censorship in writing about intimacy and sexuality—in effect, a kind of counter-hegemonic practice. How did these writers find ways to circumvent norms that were imbued with patriarchal perceptions of women? How did they devise strategies to express female desire even though it was considered inappropriate or even impossible and unthinkable on the grounds that women were widely held not to have a sexuality of their own? Can these issues be elucidated in a fruitful way with the help of the “new censorship theory”?

Censorship and new censorship theory

Censorship conventionally refers to a state agency preventing something from being disseminated to the public by requiring that it be approved in advance. During the nineteenth century, this practice gradually disappeared in Europe. Sweden was an early pioneer and passed the Freedom of the Press Act in 1809. However, there were several exceptions. For example, it was forbidden to criticize the church. When August Strindberg published his short story “The Reward of Virtue” (“Dygdens lön,” 1884) he was charged with blasphemy, though later acquitted. This was thus a case of post-publication censorship. Both these forms of censorship are *repressive* in being imposed upon the author or the work from outside. A third form of repressive censorship takes the form of financial constraints or inducements (Bunn 31).

Censorship, however, can also be seen as *productive* and active in various types of social and cultural discourses. Such is the claim made by advocates of new censorship theory, a critical movement that has emerged in recent decades and that is largely based on Foucault’s theories of power:

New Censorship Theory sees censorship as a diffuse, ubiquitous phenomenon in which a host of actors (including impersonal, structural conditions) function as effective censors. These “structural” forms of censorship may be based upon the effects of the market, ingrained cultural languages and grammars, and other forms of impersonal boundaries on acceptable (and indeed intelligible) speech. (Bunn 27)

Although there is freedom of speech and freedom of the press, speech is thus always limited: by market demands, by social and cultural norms and ideals that are internalized by speakers. According to Judith Butler,

productive censorship creates the very conditions for the production of an intelligible and thus acceptable speech by making the speaker follow explicit and implicit norms. If you violate these norms, you risk being thrown into the domains of the unspeakable, which are variously labeled as madness or impossibility (Butler, *Excitable Speech* 128–141). I would say that the notion of a moral woman having sexual desire was unspeakable, in Butler's sense, for a nineteenth-century female writer. According to the prevailing ideology of femininity of the late-nineteenth century, a moral woman does not have sexual desire, or at least does not express them. Virtue or virtuousness functions as a bar that simultaneously creates immorality while protecting against it: staying on the right side of the boundary thus makes a woman respectable and enables her to be published.

How is it then possible to violate the discursive norms that make the violation itself unspeakable? How are change and emancipation possible? What practices of opposition were possible in the nineteenth century?

According to Butler, the possibility of changing the gender order lies in the repetition of the speech acts with which we are continually performing gender. In these performative acts, the norms for gender and heterosexuality are confirmed but space is also allocated for displacements of and deviations from the norm. By responding incorrectly to appeals or ideological interpellations, or by performing gender wrongly or in a skewed relationship to the norm, the repetition of an original subordination can be given another meaning, one whose future is open. Butler designates the fact that a speech act can acquire new meanings when repeated as *a strategy of opposition* (see Butler, *Gender Trouble; Excitable Speech* 37–41).

In this article I will address the following strategies of opposition:

– Describing a desire that the woman experiences but does not give in to: Stella Kleve “Pyrrhic Victories” (“Pyrrhusegrar”) 1886.

– Describing a moral woman with sexual desire: Anne Charlotte Leffler, “Aurore Bunge” 1883 and *Womanhood and Eroticism* I–II (*Kvinnlighet och erotik* I–II) 1883 and 1890 respectively.

Women and sexuality

During large parts of the nineteenth century, women were not considered to have a sexuality of their own (see Foucault). However, Darwin's revelations about the evolutionary origins of human beings in *On the Origin of the Species* (1859) led to a veritable revolution in how sexuality

was conceptualized. Darwin's view of human beings as a species of animal among other animals challenged the Christian worldview, particularly its dualistic view of the human subject as divided into body and soul, with only the latter being capable of salvation. Quite simply, it became possible to talk about the body in a new way—a reevaluation from sinful to natural (Annell, “Feminism” 94–100; Lindén, *Om kärlek* 206–214).

In the wake of Darwinism, the theory of evolution became a trans-cultural point of reference for feminists across the Western world. Science could be used to reinforce notions of women's subordination—the view that women occupied a lower stage of development than men—but it could also be used for emancipatory ends. Feminists invoked evolutionary theory in support of emancipatory ideas about sexuality as well as their critiques of marriage as an institution and the sexual double standard (Annell, “Feminism” 94–100). In her study of nineteenth-century American feminist advocates of free love, Wendy Hayden has shown that the language of science provided an opportunity to discuss sexuality in more powerful ways than had been possible using the rhetoric of the Enlightenment:

First, science provided the language to discuss sexuality, more powerful than the language of Enlightenment rhetorics [sic] of natural law and individual sovereignty favored by male free-love advocates. Second, science changed the rhetorical situation of discussions of sexuality: rather than discussing sex as within the bonds of the marriage institution, free-love feminists discussed it as a key element of human evolution. (Hayden 7–8)

The idea that women have a sexuality of their own was beginning to spread in the middle of the nineteenth century. In his book *The Elements of Social Science, or Physical, Sexual and Natural, Religion* (1854/1876),³ English doctor George Drysdale (1824–1904) claimed that both male and female sexual organs, like the rest of the body, need to be kept in “healthy exercise” in order not to wither. Neither men nor women were exempt from this “physiological law.” Drysdale's book was an expression of the new scientific ideas. In bourgeois Christian ideology, love had been idealized and disembodied, but for Drysdale it was about pure drive, a pent-up energy in both men and women that required a natural outlet.

³ *Physical, Sexual and Natural Religion* was published anonymously in 1854 and is more known by the title of its second edition, *The Elements of Social Science* (1876). The book was translated to many languages, and into Swedish in 1878.

Strategy 1: Describing a desire that the woman feels but does not give in to

In the short story “Pyrrhic Victories” (1886) by Stella Kleve,⁴ the twenty-four-year-old protagonist Märta Ulfklo goes to Montreux in order to cure herself by “breathing alpine air, drinking grape juice and bathing in sunlight” (Kleve 140). She is terminally ill.

At the beginning of the story, Kleve establishes a strong opposition between the sensual and living on the one hand and the dead on the other. She describes the lively and changing activity of nature: the sun, the storm, the rain, the thunderstorm. Flowers are in full bloom, fruit is ripening, and the steamers hoot, bringing people of various nationalities with their valises. But Märta sits indoors with dark circles under her eyes and doesn't see the colorful life going on out there. She only stares sullenly into the distance. She is, as it were, frozen and petrified, unable to perceive the world.

According to Märta's doctor, the disease is caused by her “hereditary disposition, aggravated by an excessively impetuous blood” (141). This is made clear in the following conversation between Märta and the doctor:

– Every prom night, Miss Märta, every dance has been fuel for the fire. And all the erotic fantasies--

– That I suffocated. She could hear the rawness in her own voice.

– Very true—that you “suffocated.” That's the crazy thing, that. Those have been dangerous victories, Miss—downright devastating for such a constitution.

Dangerous, expensive victories—Pyrrhic victories! She could count them on her fingers, mention them by name, these “erotic fantasies,” which she ably suppressed, but in a struggle that cost her all her strength and vitality. And not even now did they leave her in peace—into death they pursued her.

For all those nights when, still with the fever of the dance in her limbs, incited by the wine and the men's glances, in burning sleepless anguish, hour by hour, she tossed and turned in her bed. [...] It was this wretched prudence, which she now hated as her misfortune—this ambiguous surrogate for virtue, which society forces woman to plaster over all her feelings and interests, until she becomes a colorless, dependent wretch, who never dares take a single step, without fumbling with antennae—and always withdraws. (142–143)

The short story describes several situations in which Märta sees and meets men. She remembers their bodies and glances and how they

⁴ The short story was published in the journal *Framåt* in 1886. I here refer to the version in the anthology *Synd: noveller av det moderna genombrottets kvinnor*.

arouse her desire: a sailor's gaze, a flirtatious game with a beautiful Bavarian Don Juan type. She always withdraws. She has lived according to the standard of femininity that deforms women and keeps them in a condition reminiscent of what Darwin describes as a "lower stage of development."

When Märta hears someone singing outside the window, she momentarily comes alive. But soon she collapses again, blood mixed with froth at her mouth. She realizes that it is too late:

At last, it has become clear to her that she has nothing to hope for from life and the future—that it is only for the disease, this all-degrading, ravaging disease, that she has saved her beautiful body. And while the memories still press upon her [...] each erotic episode, each repressed and thwarted temptation, and present it as an indictment of her wasted life, she now—*saved by death from the judgment of men*—in defiant despair mocks her own cowardice, she bitterly regrets every opportunity she herself wasted. (150–151; emphasis mine)

Here, Märta realizes that she has become ill from living in the way that a woman is expected to live. Only the proximity of death means that she can now break the unstated prohibition against women talking about their sexual desire. Earlier in life, Märta internalized the mechanisms of censorship and held back her desire. Now, under the protection of death, she dares to express that this was wrong, that it is actually this imposed restraint that has made her ill.

As we saw earlier, the doctor believes that Märta's illness is caused by suppressed erotic fantasies. Here we recognize Drysdale's line of thinking. Perhaps the doctor is even a Drysdale adept, but whatever the case he serves to pathologize her condition by saying that restraint has been injurious "to such a constitution" and that a hereditary disposition has been aggravated by her "excessively impetuous blood." In so doing, he indicates his adherence to the pre-Freudian, medical discourse of the late nineteenth century. This hegemonic discourse was characterized by an interest in pathological deviations in woman's sexuality, which were explained by means of prevailing theories of women's biology, heredity, impetuous blood, and so forth (Annell, *Begärets* 62–66; Johannisson 25–39, 68). In Drysdale's eyes, the pathology lies not in the woman's body but in the norms that she is expected to follow.

In any case, the message of the short story is that a woman can become sick and even die if she suppresses and denies her erotic feelings, that is, if she follows the rules of how a woman should behave. The novel's logic can thus be seen as inspired by George Drysdale's ideas.

Strategy 2: Describing a moral woman with sexual desire

“Aurore Bunge”

The protagonist Aurore Bunge in the 1883 short story of the same name by Anne Charlotte Leffler (1849–1892) is approaching her thirties and “no longer at the height of her beauty” (Leffler, “Aurore Bunge” 50)—the latter a vital asset in the marriage market of the 1880s—but she is still “in great demand as a marriage match” (51). During the last ball of the spring season, Aurore receives two proposals, one from the rich Count Hans Kagg and one from Baron Gripenfeldt. Count Kagg is an insecure and reclusive man who feels she is superior to him, while Gripenfeldt is a self-confident military man who, having lived a debauched life and squandered his fortune, is looking for a wealthy bride. Gripenfeldt is immediately dismissed by Aurore, who asks Count Kagg to give her the summer to consider his proposal. Aurore envisions a bleak future as Countess Kagg, a life that will continue to be filled with empty conversations. She longs for something that goes beyond the social laws of convention, “something bigger, stronger, more soul-exciting, more worth living for than these petty triumphs, which no longer even flattered her vanity” (51).

During the summer, Aurore travels with her mother, the baroness, to their isolated summer retreat in the archipelago. Aurore explores the surroundings and adapts to rural life; she throws away her corset and cuts off the heels of her French shoes. She carries out nature experiments with frogs, and makes excursions on the island, fishing, and swimming. She is happy and feels “the fullness of life roaring and rejoicing within her” (65). One day, she asks the fisherman to take her to the lighthouse, where the keeper lives alone. A storm causes her to remain at the lighthouse and she has a passionate three-day affair with the keeper.

Here, Leffler contrasts the goodness of nature with the artificiality of culture, a contrast that is important for the course of events in the short story, and emphasizes the attractiveness of the lighthouse keeper, whom she places on the side of the natural.

The stay at the lighthouse results in Aurore becoming pregnant. Her mother prevents a scandal by arranging a marriage with Baron Gripenfeldt, realizing that her daughter’s honor can only be saved by marriage to a person willing to cover up the scandal for the purposes of financial gain. Accordingly, the short story ends with a grand wedding.

Kleve’s tale bears witness to the fatal consequences for women of the sexual morality prevailing at that time. But what particularly interests

me is the portrayal of Aurore's desire. At her first sight of the lighthouse keeper, she is seized with vertigo, and she realizes that she now "would begin to live" (69). At stake here is not a frivolous desire, but Aurore's sense "that she was facing something decisive," a feeling that connects to her earlier longing for something bigger and more meaningful. Her craving becomes strong because the desire is linked to a sense of making something meaningful out of one's life, beyond the empty forms of convention. It is connected to what the Swedish writer Ellen Key calls "life growth"—a desire to live life to the fullest and not leave one's "life destiny unfulfilled." In coining the term "life growth," Key joins Darwin's evolution theory with Nietzsche's "will to power" (Lindén, *Om kärlek* 363).

Aurore wonders why the lighthouse keeper makes such a strong impression on her. She speculates that it is because he is big and strong and radiates security with his "faithful, brown eyes" (Leffler, "Aurore Bunge" 70). He reminds her of a Newfoundland dog that is humbly devoted to its owner but also prepared to protect her from possible dangers. She simply trusts him. She wants to put her hand in his and say: "I'll follow you wherever you want." (72)

The storm forces Aurore to stay on the island. When she goes out later in the evening, she is unable to get back into the lighthouse because the door is held shut by the wind. The lighthouse keeper comes to her rescue and clasps her, in order to save her from falling into the foaming sea. His passionate gaze makes her associate it with a painting that she "viewed with a certain pleasure" (77) during her childhood. The memory upsets her and she throws herself off the cliff. Aurore wants to die not because she is afraid of him, but because she is afraid of her own desire. Yet the keeper rescues her and carries her back into the house: "There was something of secure, undisputed ownership in the way he carried her; but it was also the way one carries one's most precious possession." (79)

As in "Pyrrhic Victories," death here appears to be a way to escape the judgment of society. Aurore has internalized the social condemnation of female desire to the point that she would rather die than follow her desire. However, it is the sense of security, the trust she feels in the lighthouse keeper, that wins out and allows her to initiate the relationship. This is not described in more detail but evoked euphemistically in the laconic phrase: "The storm lasted three days." (79)

Journeying back to the mainland in the fisherman's boat, Aurore is gripped by anxiety at the thought that her life will once again relapse into long, hopeless tedium. When she gets home, Baron Gripenfeldt,

who happens to be visiting, sees that something has happened to Aurore: “Something peculiarly animated had come into her whole expression.” (85) Scornfully, he asks her about the lighthouse keeper. Although she replies that she took no notice of the keeper, Gripenfeldt’s suspicion “tainted her and branded her as an ordinary adventuress” (86). It is extremely important to Aurore that her moral respectability is maintained in the eyes of the outside world.

After returning to town in October, Aurore makes a full confession to her mother, who has already made “certain observations” (88). Her mother does not judge Aurore very harshly—she herself has had illicit relationships in her youth—and is happy to let her have her acquaintances. In a simple sentence, Leffler indicates that among the upper classes, women can have extramarital relations.

In “Aurore Bunge,” the love affair is hampered by the rules of convention: Aurore is forced into marriage with the hateful baron Gripenfeldt to prevent a scandal. However, in another work, *Womanhood and Eroticism II*, Leffler more fully develops her view of love.

Womanhood and Eroticism I-II

The short story “Womanhood and Eroticism” was published in 1883, while the novel *Womanhood and Eroticism II* was published in 1890.⁵ In the short story, a budding relationship between Rikard and Alie is depicted. They have known each other for a while and both have a feeling that they should get married, but she doubts his love and her own ability to make him happy. When he finally proposes, she declines. Rikard, deeply hurt and bitter, travels to a seaside resort in Norway. There he meets a girl he wants to marry, Aagot, something he communicates to his mother in a letter. His mother reads the letter together with Alie, who comments on its contents. Thus, Rikard philosophizes about the essence of love:

One could well think that love should primarily arise between those who understand each other best, who can live a complete and full soul life together. But it is not so; these developed women, who understand us completely, we

⁵ The short story “Womanhood and Eroticism” is included in the collection *Ur lifvet 3* (*From Life 3*, 1883) and *Womanhood and Eroticism II* was printed in *Ur lifvet 5* (*From Life 5*, 1890). Page references in this article refer to the new edition of both texts, *Kvinnligheten och erotik I-II* (*Womanhood and Eroticism I-II*) with an afterword by Claudia Lindén.

want them as friends—as such they are invaluable, we admire them, we gain a lot from exchanging thoughts with them, we find them highly interesting, but—we do not love them. (Leffler, *Kvinnlighet* 36)

Here we get the “Old” man’s view of the New, “developed” woman. And from Alie’s comments—she compares his love for Aagot to a sneeze—we understand that he is incapable of loving in a way that would be interesting to her because he divides women into two categories: the developed; and those whom it is possible to love.

Later in the letter Rikard writes:

Yes, you would only see my Aagot, mother, and you would understand better than if you read dozens of treatises on this subject [love] what I mean. You would see her with those open blue child’s eyes, which look so wondrously and innocently upon the great, unknown world— (37)

When Alie hears this, she exclaims: “Oh, that’s pretty! Never have I known that Rikard loved children.” (37) Then she announces that she will go in and “ponder over the big problem of love.” She wants to write a thesis, which she will call “Womanhood and Eroticism” (38).

In this passage, Leffler’s comical tone can be considered a strategy of opposition. With sharp irony, she shows the absurdity of the fact that women are expected to look like children. I also want to point out the metafictional element: Alie wants to write a thesis called “Womanhood and Eroticism”—the title both of the short story itself that we hold in our hand as well as the title of the novel that Leffler will publish a few years later.

In *Womanhood and Eroticism* II, Rikard and Aagot have entered into a marriage that, for Rikard, is characterized by a calm indifference. When Aagot begins to suffer from long-term lung catarrh, the doctor advises her to spend some time in a warmer environment. She travels to Italy with Alie as a companion. In Nervi, on the Italian Riviera, Alie meets the Marquis Andrea Serra. The novel is a long and winding story about how their relationship develops.

Serra first imagines a light-hearted adventure with Alie—he is planning to marry a woman whose money he needs to be able to maintain his palace and his position. Alie’s interest in him makes him believe that she has had previous romantic experiences, but when he asks about it, she becomes upset:

You cannot understand that for me love can only come as a whole, as something all-consuming, all-encompassing and for the whole of life! All the rest,

calculation, wisdom, prudence, I despise—oh, so deeply—he who cannot stake all on his love, lose all on it, rather be unhappy for life on it, than happy in any other way—he cannot love, and he shall not come and speak of love. (119)

Her speech resonates strongly within him and strengthens his feelings for her. After overcoming several obstacles and misunderstandings, Alie manages to get Serra to embrace her view of love: that it can legitimize their relationship even if they are not married. Leffler describes free love as more moral than marriage, because it is based on the feelings of the lovers, as Claudia Lindén has noted in the afterword to her edition of the novel (Lindén, “Afterword” 284).

The story’s long and winding nature emphasizes precisely that time is passing, that there are many opportunities for new discussions, new responses to appeals, new performative acts, to speak with Butler. It results in a mutual understanding, with Rikard coming to understand her view of love.

In the novel’s dramatic resolution, Alie and Rikard end up doubting each other’s love. His impulse to kill her breaks the deadlock. When she offers to die for her love of him, he recognizes her seriousness and feels cured of his skepticism: they may as well get married, he says, because she has now given him the strength he lacked.

The death thematized here is not the same as that of “Pyrrhic Victories” and “Aurore Bunge.” In these two stories, the desire for death was based on fear of the judgment of society, whereas here it appears as a final escape from the grief that arises from the loss of a beloved, just as it did for Dido when she climbed onto the pyre after losing Aeneas.

The novel ends with the union of Alie and Serra. But it is not a happy ending in the traditional sense of “they lived happily ever after.” No, Leffler writes that Alie is aware that happiness may not last: “She knew well that she was in this moment consecrating herself to a life of continuous struggle, and there was anxiety and trembling in the happiness with which she faced the future. She knew that perfect happiness only exists for a moment and that it is always bought at a high price.” (Leffler, *Kvinnlighet* 263)

Leffler is describing how time is an important factor for the realization of New Love. It is the feeling of love and trust in the moment that motivates Alie and Serra’s union. However, the future will involve “a life of continuous struggle” if they are to maintain their love and their faith in each other’s love, regardless of whether they marry. What

Leffler is describing is that the difficulty in their relationship lies in the maintaining of trust in the other's love.

Leffler depicts love as intimately intertwined with physical desire. Already early in Alie and Serra's relationship, love arises as a physical desire. During a swim that ends with a kiss in a cave, Leffler describes in a breathless, analytical sentence how desire is awakened in both of them:

It was one of those moments when a hidden passion, unknown to both, can suddenly seize two beings as irresistibly as vertigo, and when the lightest touch becomes a caress, the look becomes a possession and an irresistible giving, the words are muted or fade away empty and meaningless, the whole outer world, the past, the future, all disappear in the breathless intoxication of the moment. (92)

The novel is imbued with desire—there are embraces and hot kisses and even a description of intercourse, what Leffler delicately formulates as Alie's "devotion without limits" (161). *Womanhood and Eroticism II* provoked sharply negative reactions because of "its red-hot eroticism," as Leffler writes in the afterword to the Danish edition (270).

Physical desire is difficult to separate from powerful feelings of love or desire for a meaningful life. In this way, Leffler shows how the sinful/virtuous dichotomy is impossible to maintain. Love—which includes both body and soul—is stronger than the censorious rules and norms governing marriage and relationships. A free relationship is possible to realize on the condition that the two lovers trust in each other's love. In *Womanhood and Eroticism II*, it takes many pages to build up the trust between the two lovers, while in "Aurore Bunge" it is summed up in the lighthouse keeper's likeness to a Newfoundland dog.

Conclusion

In the 1880s, gender norms and hypocrisy surrounding marriage customs and family life were the focus of fierce debate in Scandinavia, particularly in literature. At the heart of the debate, as I have argued, lay the dichotomy of the virtuous and the sinful woman, which also served as the basis of the sexual morality of the prevailing bourgeois ideology.

That bourgeois ideology was based on Christian principles, which separated the body and the soul and conferred upon the latter. It was disrupted by the emerging Darwinian discourse, which argued that human beings were merely one species of animal among others and, in the process, created new avenues for discussing sexuality.

With the help of new censorship theory, I have investigated how women authors were able to depict female desire without ending up in the immoral, sinful position, thus being able to publish their works in defiance of the censorship mechanisms that permeated society and the book market, and that were even internalized by women themselves. Drawing on Butler's theory of performativity, I have shown how speech acts, when repeated, can take on a skewed relationship to the norm and thus function as strategies of opposition.

I have identified and analyzed two strategies that the Swedish writers Stella Kleve and Anne Charlotte Leffler devised in order to express female desire: describing a desire that the woman experiences but does not give in to and describing a moral woman with sexual desire. Both Kleve's and Leffler's texts have radical messages. They transcend the dual notion of the good and the bad woman. Kleve describes how a woman becomes fatally ill from holding back her desire, that is to say, from conforming to how a woman is expected to live. The message is that it is harmful, even fatal, for a woman to deny such urges in the spirit of George Drysdale. Leffler's "Aurore Bunge" and *Womanhood and eroticism II* both describe premarital relationships based on love and trust in the other. In "Aurore Bunge," the relationship is considered a misstep and to avoid scandal a wedding is arranged between Aurore and the hateful Baron Gripenfeldt. In *Womanhood and Eroticism II*, the feminine view of eroticism is unfolded and here it is shown how a woman can enter a premarital relationship without considering herself "fallen," because the relationship is legitimized by love.

The second strategy—"Describing a moral woman with sexual desires"—is of course the boldest in that it seemingly abolishes the dichotomy of woman as either pure or sinful. I have shown that this is possible because Leffler describes sexual desire as united with strong love, mutual trust, and a deep sense of life, a "life growth" that makes the dichotomy show its ugly face: its truth is revealed as patriarchal ideology.

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Neizrekljiva želja? Strategije kršenja norm pri švedskih pisateljicah v osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja

Ključne besede: švedska književnost / švedske pisateljice / intimnost / spolnost / cenzura / Kleve, Stella / Leffler, Anne Charlotte

V članku pokažem, da je dihotomija krepostne in grešne ženske delovala kot močan cenzurni dejavnik za avtorice devetnajstega stoletja pri njihovem pisanju o intimnosti, želji in spolnosti. Ta dihotomija je bila temelj morale dvojnih meril, ki je imela različne moralne kodekse za moške in ženske ter za ženske različnih družbenih razredov, kar je bila družbena norma, ki ji je bilo treba slediti tudi v literaturi, da bi kot pisateljica pridobila priznanje in avtoriteto. Ugotavljam in raziskujem besedilne strategije, ki sta jih dve švedski pisateljici v osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja iznašli za spopadanje s cenzuro in samocenzuro pri pisanju o intimnosti in spolnosti. Stella Kleve v »Pirovih zmagah« (»Pyrhussegrar«, 1886) prikazuje željo, ki jo ženska čuti, vendar se ji ne prepusti. Anne Charlotte Leffler pa v delih »Aurore Bunge« (1883) in *Ženska in erotika I–II (Kvinnlighet och erotik I–II, 1883 oziroma 1890)*, opisuje moralno žensko s spolno željo. Strategije so analizirane s pomočjo nove teorije cenzure, ki se je v zadnjih desetletjih razvila izhajajoč iz Foucaultovih teorij moči. Na podlagi teorije performativnosti Judith Butler pokažem, kako lahko govorna dejanja ob ponavljanju zavzamejo izkrivljeno razmerje do norme in tako delujejo kot strategije nasprotovanja.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article
UDK 821.113.6.09:305-055.2
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.06>

Double-Censored Freedom? Cultural Memory's Censorship of Intimacy Writing in *Moj život* by Maga Magazinović

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Maga Magazinović (1882–1968) was a Serbian dancer artist and teacher. In this article, I analyse her little-known ego-document Moj život (2000), considering it as an example of first-person narrative due to her strategies of presenting intimacy in literature through genres such as diary and confession. I use cultural memory to research Magazinović's contribution to the cultural life of Serbia (memory object), what she transferred to her intimate description (memory medium), and then has been deliberately excluded by censorship from collective memory as inconsistent with the canon of Serbian cultural memory. Magazinović's intimacy writing broke all cultural taboos by describing close relationships and emphasizing the romantic ones, through her free thinking, blatantly advocating for feminism, and exposing the female private realm so far isolated against both the prudish nature of patriarchy and the new socialist reality. Therefore, I show the emancipatory perspective of a woman's body that frees itself from censorship limitations and its unconventional expression of intimate emotions through modern dance and writing. Moreover, I underline that this perspective in cultural memory was regulated by two censorship systems: that of moral/erotic nature in Kingdom of Yugoslavia and ideological/political one in socialist Yugoslavia.

Keywords: Serbian literature / autobiography / intimacy / cultural memory / censorship / Magazinović, Maga / emancipatory discourse

Maga Magazinović (1882–1968) was a pioneering Serbian dancer, artist and teacher.¹ Her little-known ego-document *Moj život* (*My life*), was written in the 1950s and not published until 2000. In *Moj život*, Magazinović describes her life from childhood and for the subsequent forty-five years (1882–1927). It is an example of first-person narrative, a narrative presenting intimacy in literature through genres such as memoirs and confession. It opens with an introduction by Jelena Šantić, “Maga Magazinović—Luk vekova” (Maga Magazinović—The Arch of the Ages). Šantić, a ballerina, dance historian and critic, was supported in her work on Magazinović by three generations of Magazinović’s family: Rajna Gazeman, Maga’s daughter; Radmila Popović, Maga’s daughter-in-law; and Marijana Popović, Maga’s grand-daughter. She did not live, however, to see the completion of her work and it was Marija Janković who prepared it for publication in 2000. *Moj život* therefore has many authors, but its protagonist, her autobiographical text and her contribution to Serbia’s cultural heritage are the subject of this discussion in the context of the work of cultural memory and the role of censorship towards unconventional figures in this country of former Yugoslavia. I use the model of Małgorzata Czermińska’s autobiographical triangle (Czermińska 2020) to assess the spectrum of author-reader relations and, therefore, to indicate the possible reasons for absence from the cultural memory. In Magazinović’s many ego-document stances and her balancing of the triangular strategies of testimony, confession and challenge in her autobiography I see one of the reasons for the censorship process. The second reason is her-story, the subject of this intimate description.

Autobiographical herstory

Magazinović was born in Užice in the western part of the Kingdom of Serbia, where she spent her childhood and attended school (Viša ženska škola). She studied philosophy (Filozofski fakultet) in Belgrade, where she had moved with her family. Upon graduating from the University of Belgrade (1904), she began working at the National Library, where she was the first woman to do so, and on the oldest Serbian newspaper *Politika*, where she was the first woman jour-

¹ This text was created within the project Preludium Bis 2 number UMO-2020/39/O/HS2/02719: “Cultural memory and the Serbian emancipatory discourse in autobiographical texts by Female Authors (nineteenth and twentieth centuries)” and financed by the National Science Centre in Poland.

nalist (1905). She published essays and theatre reviews but also her own literary texts, mainly short stories, and translations of plays. Her first published article “Obrazovanje ženskinja u Srbiji (Education of women in Serbia)” (1905) is of great importance. It is telling that she began her journalistic path with this topic. Magazinović was keenly aware in her own education she was an individual beneficiary of women’s emancipation but also saw its importance from a broader, group perspective, as an opportunity for the development of young women in general. She fought for the right of female students to take examinations on the same basis as male students, initiated the establishment of the Women Students’ Club (Klub Studentkinja) and led its activities. The members of the Club became known primarily for their fluency in foreign languages, so they translated pedagogical, socialist and feminist texts. The club also initiated the idea of breaking the Faculty of Law’s exclusion of female students. Thanks to her persuasion and academic competence Magazinović became the first female law student in Serbia. She did not, however, graduate. Graduation was not the goal, but she set a precedent and paved the educational path for future female candidates to study law at the University of Belgrade.

At that time, not long after graduating from the University, she started to work as a teacher (1906) and was simultaneously involved in the Abrašević theatre group, where she both acted and sang. For several years she repeatedly applied for a scholarship to study abroad but was consistently declined in favor of candidates from better connected families. She saved for several years in order to afford travel to Munich in 1909, where she immersed herself in life among artists and political debate about socialism, before moving on to Berlin to study German philology. Inspired by the performance of the Canadian dancer Maud Allan, which she had seen in Belgrade in 1907, and the Munich art scene, she decided to study dramaturgy under Max Reinhardt in Berlin (1909–1910). There she was taught both ballet and modern dance by Isadora Duncan’s sister Elizabeth. While at university she met her future husband Gerhard Gesemann (1888–1948), with whom she travelled extensively throughout northern Europe during her stays in Germany and before their marriage—in their premarital relationship, Maga only spent time with Gerhard when she came to Germany. In *Moj život*, she confesses to her many doubts about how she might reconcile a long-distance relationship with planned motherhood and her passion for her work, as well as the age difference between her and her future husband, Gesemann

being several years her junior. In 1910, Maga Magazinović opened her own performing arts school, School of Rhythmic and Fine Arts (Škola za Ritmiku i Plastiku) in Belgrade. At the same time, during the school vacations she would travel to Germany, particularly Munich, to advance in her artistic and pedagogic ambitions with, among others, Emile Jacques Delacroze. Not long after, Gerhard came to Belgrade to meet Maga's family just before the First Balkan War (1912) and they got married on the eve of the Great War (May 1914). She writes about the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 and the First World War (1914–1918) from the perspective of everyday life, describing life under Austro-Hungarian occupation, an account of her war migrations in Serbia, the deaths of her mother and brother, her marriage to Gerhard, the trauma of motherhood and the death of her first child, the world left behind after the evacuation of Serbian troops in 1915, the so-called Albanian Golgotha, and the departure of her husband Gerhard with them. After his betrayal, of which she found out when she had come to visit him in Switzerland, and her separation from him, she describes the birth of their daughter Rajna, later co-editor of an autobiographical study of her mother's writings. The last pages of *Moj život* are backstage stories and programs of plays, concerts and choreography, relationships with audiences and critics. She makes no mention of the Second World War: her autobiography comes to an end in 1927.

All this Magazinović included openly in the ego-document she began writing on her seventieth birthday, 14 October 1951. She opens her story with astonishment at her own persistence and professional activity, despite the political turbulence and war. She depicts her birthday with a bitter description of her loneliness but also describing her feeling of calm in the face of her imminent death. This introduction to the description of her life is simultaneously an element leading to what Philippe Lejeune called the conclusion of a clear "autobiographical pact [...] with the reader, that is, the recognition of the identity occurring between the author, narrator and protagonist of an autobiography" (Rodak, "Autobiografia" 44). It is complemented by a referential pact, i.e. a kind of promise by the author to the reader to bear witness to the truth:

It came to mind to me today to describe my life. [...] I know that I am not an important figure of any kind, with neither talent nor intellect, nor even love for dance or the performing arts in general. Perhaps, however, it will be no exaggeration to portray the course of one such life and, on its example, education: the upbringing and teaching of girls at the end of last century and

the beginning of this century, as well as the struggle and effort of my generation for every inch of both academic and artistic knowledge, and especially for the attainment of an academic success, today so easily accessible to all, to girls and boys, to the poor as well as the wealthiest. One thing, however, I fear in this endeavor: will my memory be sufficiently accurate and clear, and will I be able to lay out the paths of this memory with the necessary honesty, and as humanly impartial to myself and others as possible? (Magazinović 42–43)²

It is precisely this understanding of autobiography, based on the pact of truth-telling, that may have proved decisive regarding the cultural censorship of Maga Magazinović's herstory.

The autobiographical triangle: Magazinović's relationship with the reader

Małgorzata Czermińska's theory of the autobiographical triangle is an extension to the description of the author-reader relationship. The triangle is a visualization of the relation of three autobiographical stances, which "are not related to any specific genre, but to the position of the speaking I in relation to the object [world-I-you] of the statement" (Czermińska 26). The first stance, "witness [world], appears most often in memoirs devoted to events of historical importance and to people whom the author met in his or her lifetime and considered sufficiently significant to convey an image of them to future generations" (26). It is like an epic picture of the world. The second stance, confession, is closer to the notion of the lyric, as the subject of autobiographical reflections here is the author's intimate world (I). Challenge is the third autobiographical stance, distinguished by Czermińska, which resembles a dialogue in a play: "It shifts the weight of attention from the artefact to the artist's contact with the audience, and opens up the space for play, provocation." (48) In such an autobiographical account, the author "overtly renders the viewer the essential frame of reference against which [the ego-document] exists." The "strategy of constant changes of tension," moving the reader [you] to constant vigilance, is also significant (48–51).

Czermińska points out that "in the case of a particular text we can only speak of the domination of one dimension over the others, but never of the exclusion of any of them" (Czermińska 31). In the case of *Moj život* the dimensions of confession and testimony balance

² All translations from the works of Magazinović are by the author.

each other, intimate writing being intertwined with an account of the world around. We can see this in the way Magazinović writes about the sphere of inner transformation and her own motivations for seeking to influence the world:

The Faculty of Law had so far been the unquestionably male domain of studies. In our club [of female students] we arranged to conquer this domain. I decided to enroll in the Faculty of Law. There was a deal of wrangling around this [...] but I enrolled despite the opponents of this “female invasion” [of the university] [...] After two months, D. Rokić enrolled, and it was she who first graduated from this faculty. Since I had graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in 1904, I ceased to attend the Faculty of Law. The goal of my enrolment was achieved: the Faculty of Law had opened its doors to female students. (Magazinović 176)

About relationships:

For me it was mainly age that made the difference. We were also from different countries. The difference in the way he and we lived. And finally, perhaps the biggest obstacle: how I would manage to reconcile art and motherhood [...] I came home Hamlet-like: “a tear in one eye, a smile in the other!” My mother was old, kind and loving, but I was no longer the same person who had set out into the world, full of beautiful dreams. I had seen a great deal, heard a great deal, visited a great many places, met a great many people, experienced a great deal of beauty. (Magazinović 282)

About the non-normative in art:

During the break I was with Nadezhda in her dressing room [Maud Allan]. The dancer wore small flesh-colored panties. She said that it was “polizeilich verboten aufzutreten” [forbidden by the police to appear] without panties under her outfit. Her English body was flushed and seemed, in its slenderness, completely unblemished and “over-gendered,” and she also referred to it as such. Quite like a naked child. Only in Saloma’s costume, in gestures that were consciously sensual, could she give the impression of being feminine. (Magazinović 216)

Or about courageous choices:

[after being declined twice to study abroad due to other female candidates’ better family connections and in spite of Magazinović’s superior qualifications:] I, dear Professor,³ will nevertheless go to study in Germany at my own

³ This is about Bogdan Popović (1864–1944), a highly respected Serbian literary historian. He was a professor at the University of Belgrade and editor of the most important literary journal, *Srpski književni glasnik* (1901–1940). In his publications

expense, without your competitions; and thus I ended this uncomfortable state of affairs with yet another explanation. (Magazinović 204)

From the stance of confession, we read at once a desire for honesty with herself and with the audience. At times the author makes self-referential comments: about recollection, uncertainty about her own memory (“She married, if my memory is not wrong, some officer whose name I do not remember,” 81); she also follows memory in her story (“Since I’m on the subject of clothes, I’ll describe the fashion of the time,” 82); and she explains the reason she is writing about something (“I don’t remember exactly the dates of these visits. I bring them up to give an insight into the mood and understanding of gender relations in society at the time and the struggle of women in the early twentieth century for equal rights with men,” 175). We also find in these quotations features of testimony, through which we learn about the world at the turn of the twentieth century from the perspective of a Serbian artist, among other herstories of the socialist movement, in which the author consciously addressed gender equality:

We then translated Clara Zetkin’s treatise *Students and Socialism*. From Lily Braun *The Women’s Movement*. We also studied and discussed John Stuart Mill’s *The Subjection of Women*. At that time the most prominent German feminist of the time Käthe Schirmacher, the Danish literary figure and advocate for women’s rights Karin Michaëlis and even the English suffragette Lady Aberdeen came to Belgrade to campaign. (Magazinović 175)

And at the same time the features of a confession. Magazinović reveals herself to the reader through the honesty of her motivations. By introducing the reader to the sphere of *intimacy writing* a closer author-reader relationship is established. The stance of confession, focused on continuous development, the emancipation of thought and self-discovery through new experiences, becomes at the same time the stance of *challenge*, although in a different sense from that defined by Czermińska, thus not in the sense of a linguistic or textual play. The stance of challenge is created by what is recorded on the carrier of memory (the manuscript of the autobiography), i.e. Magazinović’s *herstory* itself and the fact of telling this herstory. As autobiography is “‘both a linguistic creation and a social act: by announcing that it will tell the truth, and by telling the truth about reality, it engages in interpersonal relations.’ Its individual subject ‘is not an illusion, but a fragile reality’” (Rodak,

on literature, he refused to include the works of women.

“Review” 250). As the following discussion will show, autobiography, through relating the author’s life, becomes a challenge to the politics of cultural memory. We will therefore come to a point where the text, as a carrier of cultural memory in a specific socio-political situation, may be subject to censorship.

Cultural memory, its formation and the censorship of memory

Paweł Rodak observes that “in autobiography, there is an indelible tension between the experienced, the remembered and the described and, by analogy, between three times: the time of living, the time of remembering and the time of writing” (Rodak, “Autobiografia” 44). This relationship brings us to the issue of cultural memory. According to Aleida Assmann’s memory theory, communicative memory is the basic unit of cultural memory. Communicative memory is characterized by the lack of a unified form of memory, which it acquires post factum, i.e. after being embedded in a story that stabilizes these memories, the *carrier of memory*. It is also limited in time and it begins as a vivid memory that “blurs always with the expiry of the third generation” (Assmann 87). This kind of memory in the case of *Moj život* is fundamental. It is thanks to this communicative memory that Magazinović’s testimony and confessions were published at all and thus saved from the ultimate censorship of oblivion. I refer here to the group of women who stored the manuscript, compiled and published it and, as her former students, continued her artistic work.

Cultural memory, on the other hand, enjoys great longevity in the collective memory and “only takes shape through subjective perceptions, evaluations and assimilations, supported by the media, cultural institutions and the educational system” (Assmann 88). It has a crucial impact on the construction of individual and collective identities. In Magazinović’s case such circumstances conducive to the emergence of cultural memory are only just beginning to emerge by dint of the publication of the autobiography thirty-two years after the author’s death and in the wake of promotional cultural endeavor associated with it. Her memoirs still need to go through “social processes of selection and canonization based on educational institutions” (Assmann 57). In doing so, attention should be paid to the notion of *power*, which influences cultural memory by creating a content-centered canon that constitutes “the ideas shared by the members of a social group about its past” and at the same time implies “the cultural creations formed

within the group for remembering” (Wawrzyniak 539). Ewa Bińczyk also notes that “there is no power not intrinsically associated with the field of knowledge. Power is also the distribution of ignorance, of what is silenced” (Bińczyk 68), and therefore subject to censorship. Starting from such a theoretical framing of the notion of power as a tool of historical politics, through which the elite pursues “such representations of the past from which the legitimacy of the power relations prevailing within that group would be derived” (Wawrzyniak 544), we arrive at a socio-political-cultural situation in which Maga Magazinović’s autobiographical herstory could not exist.

Context for censorship

Magazinović’s autobiography is focused on the years dominated by the narrative of the state, i.e. socialist Yugoslavia, which emerged after the Second World War and lived the legend of a heroic struggle with the old order. The story of the new historical policy therefore had no place for a voice from the bourgeois past (*Moj život*), which also addressed feminism and presented a different vision of socialism. This brings us to the vectors of forces of autobiographical tension “between the experienced, the remembered and the described and [...] the time of living, the time of remembering and the time of writing” (Rodak, “Autobiografija” 44). As the domain of interest here is censorship by oblivion, i.e. censorship established by the power of the fear of losing control, reduced to ignoring and seemingly assigning women only emancipated roles in the socialist state, it may be noted that the resultant moment of “autobiographical tension” falls during the non-publication of *Moj život*, a period of almost half a century, from the 1950s to 2000.

Magazinović’s intention to publish her ego-document is indicated by two memoir texts which appeared in the periodical *Letopis Matice srpske* (*The Chronicle of Matica Srpska*, January, February 1965) and form part of *Moj život: Sećanja. Detinjstvo u Užicu* (*Memories. Childhood in Užice*) and *Sećanja. Školovanje u Beogradu* (*Memories. Education in Belgrade*). A survey of the bibliography of *Moj život* made it possible to put together a table based that shows the number of Magazinović’s texts published up to 2000 (i.e. when the book was published) in periodicals (excluding her regular column in the daily *Politika*) and in edited collections, books and concert programs, and literature in which she was mentioned:

Published articles and text	Books	Lectures	Concerts	Literature about Magazinović:
14 – 1902-1936	2 – 1932	2 – 1912	72 – 1911-1943	136 – 1905-1940
1 – 1959	1 – 1951	5 – 1920-1924		0 – 1941-1973
2 – 1965		1 – 1937		6 – 1974-1973
1 – 1996		1 – 1938		16 – 1992-2000
1 – 1997				

Table 1: Number of texts published by year of publication

What is clear from this overview is the way Magazinović's works ceased to appear in published form or to be seen at the theatre after the Second World War, even though the author was professionally active until her death (1968). We will probably never know the reason for this, but we can examine the context in which *Moj život* was created and published, and some indications may emerge regarding the herstorical content of the autobiography.

Firstly, attention should be drawn to the gender bias resulting from the patriarchal nature of Serbian/Yugoslav society. We find Magazinović's intimacy writing in texts interspersed with descriptions of stage plays and the body in motion, which testifies to the artist's emancipated and unconventional life. Vera Obradović, an expert on Serbian choreodrama, assessed dance of Magazinović's time as provocative and subversive not only in the field of art but also from the perspective of patriarchal society:

How "indecent" modern dance was viewed in Belgrade at the time is recorded by Zora Prica-Krstić on the occasion of Maud Allan's visit: "When the American Maud Allan, a dancer in the style of Genevieve Stebbins and Isadora Duncan, first presented classical dance in Belgrade (1908), it gave rise to a huge outcry. She first had to dance in front of an areopagus of 'the chosen few,' artists and journalists, and only then did she receive permission from the police to dance before the public barefoot!" (Obradović Ljubinković 16)

This performance by the Canadian dancer was a turning point in Magazinović's professional career. She decided to take up dance professionally, and she learned from another controversial dancers, Duncan sisters. What was important in this style was the way the dance was performed: freely, barefoot, in lightweight clothes that sometimes revealed a good deal of flesh, as can be seen from the numerous photographs

included in *Moj život*, defying the pillars of the culture of songs about male heroes, and this culture was deeply rooted in Serbian society. In her choreodramas, Magazinović brought female characters from the background into the foreground, into leading roles, in order to reflect on their fates. These included the choreodramas *Jelisavka* (1926), *Smrt Majke Jugovića* (*Death of Jugović's Mother*, 1927), and *Kosovka devojka* (*Kosovian Girl*, 1935). It may have been problematic that Magazinović's works predated the era of classical ballet, which was unknown in Serbia at the time. The audience was immediately confronted with modern dance, which was also controversial in those parts of the world where stage dance and ballet had long been known. Magazinović would have been aware of prevalent disparaging associations related to the active role of women in the arts:

At my school, they did not look too favorably on my involvement in the workers' amateur theatre group and choir, or in the workers' movement itself. My former teacher Anđelija Aćimović [...] used to tell my mother how they spoke ill of me because of the time spent in the evenings from 8 to 10 "in the kafana," teaching German to the workers, and also because of my acting and singing in "Abrašević." And even before that, I was castigated for founding the "Students' Club" and translating Ellen Key's progressive work *The Century of the Child*. (Magazinović 200)

On the issue of carnality, it is worth noting that in *Moj život* Magazinović writes with relative openness about the body and sex education:

No one informed us directly about sex, and love was separated out as if in addition. Dada [Maga's sister] began her periods as early as at the end of second grade and cried in the room and covered her head with her fists, shouting "I don't want this!" [...] I thought she was "impure" in a way. (Magazinović 99)

She also detailed Gerhard's infidelities and her conceiving her daughter, which she decided to go ahead with despite knowing that she and her husband were on the verge of separating. These are some of the most intimate parts of the autobiography:

A great number of photos were sent to him by Kristel: countless nudes, others in swimsuits, and only some with clothes on. For me, it was all too much, especially the disgust at such "sisterly relationships" and at stealing men from each other. [...] I don't comprehend, and cannot find justification for such "impure" relationships! I do not understand how a man or a woman can have more than one human being with him or her at the same time, with whom they share sensual love. (Magazinović 356)

We went to the “Leman” hotel. And then there was my daughter [...]. She arose out of suffering, without faith in him (Gerhard), maybe even without the spark of love? And that was my great sin against Rajna. After all this, I should not have any more children with this man, who was no longer mine in soul. (Magazinović 355)

This is the first contextual pathway to show the breaking of social taboos and the transgression of cultural boundaries in the circumstances in which society marked a woman’s choices and her body with shame. In contrast, an emancipating woman emerges from *Moj život*. The second contextual pathway that may have influenced the phenomenon of censorship by oblivion relates to the involvement in the development of socio-political thought. In order to analyze the gaps in the cultural memory of Magazinović, I want to highlight some clues that indicate this involvement. First of all, I think it may be linked to her work for the newspaper *Politika*,⁴ where Magazinović held a specific, emancipatory position:

I have stocked the “Women’s World” column with news from the West European women’s movement, which at the beginning of the century was extremely vociferous and perceptibly strong, particularly in England and Germany. They fought for equality in academic and professional teaching and the acquisition of ever new positions; the more extremist suffragettes advocated the achievement of political rights, above all suffrage. (Magazinović 184)

Magazinović proudly wrote that it was at *Politika* that she began working as the first female Serbian journalist. The newspaper represented the idea of the unity of all southern Slavs, so essential to the socialist vision of Yugoslav society, but in the Greater Serbian form.⁵ Insofar as the new post-war order was socialist and supranational, as exemplified by the

⁴ “As bases for Serbia’s liberal progressive development Jovanovic advocated universal suffrage, complete freedom of press, speech, and assembly, full local self-government, a reduction in bureaucracy, and the creation of a democratic people’s army. Among his proposed social and economic reforms were progressive taxation, extension of agricultural co-operatives, improvement of public health, and elimination of state monopolies.” (Mackenzie 41) Is that not basically all that Tito denied?

⁵ At first Jovanović, Jovan Cvijić, and other independent Serbian intellectuals from “Slovenski Jug” supported Macedonia’s autonomy rather than its annexation to any of the Balkan states. Macedonians led by Gligor Hadži Tašković advocated an autonomous Macedonia as a self-governing unit in a future Balkan confederation. After conferring with political leaders and journalists, including Jovanović, they issued a short-lived newspaper in Belgrade, *Autonomna Makedonija* (*Autonomous Macedonia*). Denouncing it, Greater Serbian newspapers such as *Politika* and *Pravda* asserted that Macedonia was Serbian and, in the future, must belong to the Serbian state (Mackenzie 43).

slogan of Brotherhood and Unity, and women theoretically had equal rights to men it represented what Magazinović had long been advocating, the new elite needed to be “replaced” with figures unassociated with the old order, which, after all, had been challenged during the Second World War. It is therefore unsurprising that after the advent of the new Yugoslavia, from 1945 onwards, Magazinović was erased from the archives of the editors of *Politika*, although the source of this information gives no details (see Pančić and Zupanec). In *Moj život* Magazinović does not directly describe her political involvement, but it is difficult not to notice her links with the intellectual, bourgeois milieu. In particular it is worth noting the herstorical network:⁶ her close friendship with Delfa Ivanić may have been of particular importance for her being silenced in cultural memory. Frequently in *Moj život*, Magazinović mentions a friendly relationship, teaching Delfa’s daughter for years, or collaborating during the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 in the *Kolo srpskih sestara* (*Circle of Serbian Sisters*)⁷, founded by Ivanić, which was primarily involved in the education of girls, and thus, similarly to Magazinović, involved in breaking down barriers in higher education for other women. This friendship is of importance because *Uspomene* by Ivanić (*Memoirs*, written in the 1960s and published in 2015), as detailed by the editor Jasmina Milanović, was explicitly censored by dint of self-censorship motivated precisely by the political situation:⁸

Fearing that certain statements and assertions might be misinterpreted, single words, parts of sentences, and even whole paragraphs, have been deliberately omitted. This is particularly the case with the time that Delfa Ivanić spent in a communist prison in 1944. All deleted passages have been restored to their original places in square brackets [...]. For the same reasons, the events of Delfa Ivanić’s life after 1945 are not included in the manuscript [...] because for her, with the arrival of the new communist regime, life ended and she did not want or could not write about this period. (Milanović 23–24)

⁶ This includes Stanka Glišić, Nadežda Petrović, Delfa Ivanić, Louise Paget, Anka Andelkovička (“nekadašnja naša prva socijalistkinja,” Magazinović 219), Zora Prica, Ksenija Atanasijević, Isidora Sekulić, Mir-Jam/Milica Jakovljević.

⁷ *Kolo srpskih sestara*, a humanitarian organisation, founded in 1903 by Nadežda Petrović and Delfa Ivanić, which until the end of the Second World War focused on the education and professional activation of Serbian women and, in times of armed conflict, on supplying food and clothing to prisoners of war, setting up hospitals for wounded soldiers and training nurses. The educational scope of activities was also patriotic in nature.

⁸ In the categories of memory, censorship and self-censorship are often referred to as active forgetting.

Similar glimpses of self-censorship may be seen when reading *Moj život* makes no mention of her connection to the royal court of Serbia, but in the supplement which includes others' recollections of her, Mirijana Popović describes the time Magazinović worked directly for Queen Marija Karađorđević, giving lessons to her children. In her memoirs Ivanić tells that she was related through adoption to the royal family. She also recalls a visit by Magazinović, thanks to whom she met Ljuba Jovanović-Čupa, a controversial political figure in the days of the first Yugoslavia.⁹ This cast suspicion on Magazinović regarding her Greater Serbian or even nationalist leanings.¹⁰ After the war Delfa Ivanić's humanitarian work was officially banned and *Kolo srpskih sestara's* property was seized by the authorities of socialist Yugoslavia. The carriers of the memory of her activities were therefore effectively erased for a long time and replaced by symbols of the new state.¹¹ In *Uspomene*, Ivanić ends her herstory during the Second World War, *Moj život* includes no memories of the Second World War or the time after the war. Popović tentatively suggests that lack of time may have been the reason. During this time Magazinović no longer works for *Politika* and publishes almost nothing.

Based on a comparison of the fates of these two women, parallels may be drawn between Ivanić's and Magazinović's ego-documents in the context of censorship of cultural memory. Censorship takes place firstly because of *class identification*, linked to bourgeois culture in Serbia and its strong position among the elite, which often resonated with the Greater Serbian narrative; and secondly, *gender identification*, at the level of the threat to power by women's independent and emancipatory work.

⁹ Ljuba Jovanović-Čupa was involved with the secret organisation *Black Hand* (*Crna ruka*), which worked for the reunification of all Serbs outside the borders of the Serbian state. Its character is often assessed as nationalist and terrorist. On the other hand, "Jovanovic sided with the pan-Yugoslav element in a debate between proponents of Greater Serbia and Yugoslavia (with or without the Bulgars), which divided the Serbian national movement even after 1918. Jovanovic stands as a sincere, dedicated Serbian apostle of Yugoslav unity, brotherhood and the equality of all South Slavs" (Mackenzie 54).

¹⁰ It remains an open question for a separate study whether such nationalistic tendencies in Magazinović's activities actually existed.

¹¹ This element excellently represents the potential for Ivanić's legacy to function actively in cultural memory. The ban on the activities of the *Kolo srpskih sestara* issued by the Nazi authorities, after all, was enforced well before the written memoirs, and then, after 'liberation', the seizure of the KSS House by the communist authorities and its renaming as the Ivo Lola Ribar (a Yugoslav partisan hero) Cultural Centre.

It was only in the 1970s and 1980s that mentions of Magazinović tentatively began to appear in dance literature, but compared to editions of men's autobiographies from a similar period and area of creative activity, this interest was negligible (see Table 1). Svetlana Tomić, a researcher into women's literature in the Serbian canon, notes:

This is worth emphasizing because no matter what type of history textbooks on nineteenth-century Serbia you open, whether on the history of society or literature, you can hardly find any evidence that women existed in the past at all. (Tomić 126)

The series of memoirs, autobiographies and diaries published in the collection by the Belgrade publishing house Nolit in 1989 represents the apogee of ignorance. The collection consists of twenty-four volumes, of which twenty-one are by male authors, and the remaining three (*Memoarska proza 18. and 19. Veka I, II, Ratna memoarska i dnevnička proza*) are collections of excerpts from forty-three male and three female authors: Jelena Lozanić-Frothingham (1885–1972), Mina Karadžić-Vukomanović (1828–1894) and Milica Stojadinović Srpkinja (1828–1878). Clearly, therefore, the male voice predominates.¹² It was not until the 1990s that work began to recover cultural memory in individual initiatives. This brings us to the year 2000 when Magazinović's memoirs were reliably compiled and published.

Conclusions

Maga Magazinović's autobiographical narrative in the stances of witness and confession clearly clashed with the image of a patriarchal and socialist society portrayed by the authorities and their politics of cultural memory. Through intimacy writing, the stances of witness and confession created in reading the stance of the challenge to the taboo topics and the politics of cultural memory: issue of literature canon, gender canon, and above all the challenge to the position of women in society. What emerges from the autobiography is the figure of a woman emancipating herself and other women, independent, guided by her desires, courageous in her choices and successful in achieving her goals, despite

¹² I would identify here the influence of the emerging nationalist sentiments in the republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the period before the break-up in the 1990s, and thus the rediscovery of national identity. Perhaps this is the reason no place was found in the publishing canon for a socialist, feminist, cosmopolitan dancer.

the discrimination she faced. Magazinović was socially, culturally and philosophically engaged. The perspective of a woman's body that frees itself from the limitations of censorship and its unconventional expression of intimate emotions through her work and writing is a perspective that has been subjected to the double censorship of moral and ideological perceptions that censored literature, such as women's confessions and testimonies of feminist art, that failed to meet the conditions of the official narrative. Importantly, "feminist art [is] about changing perceptions, raising awareness, and pushing for change" (Tumbas 71), which will always encounter resistance from power. Systemic censorship, i.e. that derived from power-knowledge relations, coupled with the position of women in patriarchy, took place through oblivion, and the restorative work of memory was initiated by Magazinović's direct heirs. The autobiographical carrier of memory that testifies to Magazinović's contribution to the cultural heritage of Serbian society, i.e. *Moj život*, was ignored and lost in the stored memory of the archives, and only after changes in the system of power, the distributor of knowledge, and the transformation of society, emerging from a patriarchal regime that regulates canons, can the content of the carrier be reworked in cultural memory and be restored once more to its rightful place.

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Dvojno cenzurirana svoboda? Cenzura intimnega pisanja s strani kulturnega spomina v knjigi *Moj život* Mage Magazinović

Ključne besede: srbska književnost / avtobiografija / intimnost / kulturni spomin / cenzura / Magazinović, Maga / emancipacijski diskurz

Maga Magazinović (1882–1968) je bila srbska plesna umetnica in pedagoginja. Analiziram njen malo znani ego-dokument *Moj život* (2000) in ga obravnavam kot primer prvoosebne pripovedi zaradi njenih strategij predstavljanja intimnosti v literaturi z žanri, kot sta dnevnik in izpoved. S pomočjo kulturnega spomina raziskujem prispevek Mage Magazinović h kulturnemu življenju Srbije (objekt spomina), kaj je prenesla v svoj intimni opis (medij spomina) in kaj je nato cenzura namenoma izključila iz kolektivnega spomina kot neskladno s kanonom srbskega kulturnega spomina. Magazinović je s svojim intimnim pisanjem kršila vse kulturne tabuje, opisovala bližnje odnose, svobodno razmišljala in odkrito zagovarjala feminizem. Pri tem je izpostavljala žensko zasebno sfero, ki je bila dotlej zapostavljena – tako v dobi kraljevine, v času patriarhalnega zagovarjanja krepostnosti, kot tudi v novi socialistični stvarnosti. Zato v članku prikazujem emancipacijsko perspektivo ženskega telesa, ki se osvobaja cenzurnih omejitev, in njeno nekonvencionalno izražanje intimnih občutkov s pomočjo modernega plesa in pisanja. Poleg tega poudarjam, da sta to perspektivo v kulturnem spominu urejala dva cenzurna sistema: moralni/erotični v Kraljevini Jugoslaviji in ideološki/politični v socialistični Jugoslaviji.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.163.41.09Magazinović M.:305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.07>

The Censorship of a Closeted Spain: The Case of Elena Fortún (1886–1952)

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This article focuses on how self-censorship and state censorship have shaped the literary legacy of the Spanish author of children's books, Elena Fortún. The homosexual closet is presented as a key concept for understanding the impact of censorship on the work of a lesbian writer such as Fortún who has contributed to various narratives of Spanish femininity over the course of almost a century. The first of these is the narrative of gender dissidence during the Second Republic (1931–1939); followed by the narrative of the wife and mother belonging to the Franco Regime (1939–1975); and finally the LGBTQ inclusiveness of the new millennium in Spain (2005–2022). The works included in the analysis are varied, spanning from Fortún's children's books to her correspondence and finally two posthumously published novels. This reading of Fortún's texts reveals how censorship works as a controlling gaze that not only operates from the outside, but is also internalized in the individual, maintaining the doors of the homosexual closet closed from the inside.

Keywords: Spanish literature / Spanish women writers / Fortún, Elena / sexual identity / lesbianism / Franco regime / censorship

The name Elena Fortún (pseud. of Encarnación Aragoneses Urquijo 1886–1952) is well known in Spain from the covers of her children's books, and especially her series about the curious and unruly girl character Celia. Until recently, however, the person behind the name Elena Fortún was quite unknown to most of the readers who had grown up with the characters from her books. This changed in 2016, more than half a century after her death, when two literary scholars, Nuria Capdevila-Argüelles and María Jesús Fraga, decided to posthumously publish two of Fortún's manuscripts that revealed her hidden life as a lesbian.¹

¹ The pseudonym Elena Fortún derived from a character in a novel by the author's husband Eusebio Gorbea, *Los mil años de Elena Fortún: Magerit (The thousand years of*

Fortún's literary career begins in Madrid in 1929 with her debut as author of the children's series about Celia, at the same time as she lived a secret life as part of Madrid's sapphic circles. Both her life and career changed drastically in 1939 when she went into exile in Argentina due to the installation of the fascist Franco regime in Spain (1939–1975). From her exile, she continued publishing her Celia books in Spain under the pressure of censorship in her home country. The final years of Fortún's trajectory take us into a new millennium with the publication of her posthumously published novels, *Oculto sendero* (*Hidden Pathway*, 2016) and *El pensionado de Santa Casilda* (*Saint Casilda's Pension*, 2022). The first, *Oculto sendero*, has been interpreted as an autobiographical novel that depicts the life of a young homosexual woman in Spain. Its protagonist, a painter named María Luisa Arroyo, lives a life that in many ways parallels the author's own. *El pensionado de Santa Casilda* portrays a group of young women attending a boarding school in Madrid at the beginning of the twentieth century, some of whom have lesbian love relationships, sometimes simultaneously to their engagements with male partners. As Capdevila-Argüelles explains in her introduction to the novel, the young women portrayed here bear many similarities to the members of the sapphic circles that Elena Fortún frequented in Madrid during the years prior to the Franco regime. If the focus of *Oculto sendero* was on the hardships of living as a lesbian in a heteronormative society, *El pensionado de Santa Casilda* is more focused on the relationships between the women and includes joyful and explicit references to their love lives.

The exposing of Fortún's life as a lesbian through the posthumous publication of *Oculto sendero* in 2016 can be described using the well-known metaphor of "coming out of the closet," a saying that highlights homosexuality as a concealed condition, and the breaking of this concealment as a public act. In the case of Elena Fortún, it would perhaps be fairer to say that she was brought out of her closet, since it happened more than half a century after her death. As Capdevila-Argüelles has shown in her studies of the author, the closet is also a useful concept for shedding critical light on the life and work of an author who in many ways both defied and conformed to the gender norms of her times (Capdevila-Argüelles, "The Dissidence"). The aim of this article is, on the one hand, to develop an understanding of how the author's closeted condition was formed by censorship, but also how censorship

Elena Fortún: Magerit, 1922). Throughout this article, the pseudonym will be used to refer to the author, since she also used it in her private life, for example when signing personal letters.

contributed to integrate Fortún's work into three different narratives of Spanish femininity, belonging to three different versions of the Spanish nation: from the gender dissidence of the progressive Spanish Republic (1931–1939), through the Catholic feminine values of the Franco regime (1939–1975), to finally arrive at the open closet of LGBTQ-inclusive policies that arrived with the new millennium in Spain.²

In her queer theoretical classic *Epistemology of the Closet* Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick points to the closet as a metaphorical representation of the binary *hetero/homo*, describing it as one of the major nodes of thought that has structured modern society. According to Sedgwick, the whole idea of the closet is built on the need to silence—or censor—certain sexual behaviors, creating the closet as a spectacle on which authority is being manifested: "... the establishment of the spectacle of the homosexual closet as a presiding guarantor of rhetorical community, of authority—someone else's authority—over world-making discursive terrain that extends vastly beyond the ostensible question of the homosexual." (Sedgwick 230)

The rhetorical community of authority that Sedgwick refers to is described as one that does not include the closeted homosexual. Rather, it is "someone else's authority"—in our case, the Spanish nation and its narratives of femininity. To pinpoint the way that Elena Fortún has been both included in and excluded from this community, I turn to Benedict Anderson's idea of the modern nation as an imagined community, a rhetorical construct built on shared stories and images that create the illusion of sameness within a nation. However, as Anderson stresses in *Imagined Communities*, the idea of the nation is also dependent on the suppression of the narratives that cannot be allowed to have a place in the formation of the nation as one people (Anderson 1–7; 187–206). In the case of homosexuality, Sedgwick's idea of the closet might represent this suppressed narrative of the nation, the *homo* that needs to be hidden so that its imagined counterpart, the *hetero*, may come to the fore as the only possible, universal sexuality.

In Fortún's case, censorship has been one of the foremost guarantors of the homosexual closet that conditioned her trajectory as an author,

² In recent years, Elena Fortún and her female contemporaries have provided material for a renewed interest in Spanish popular culture through the lives and endeavors of the groundbreaking Spanish women who questioned gender norms and explored new ways of living and loving during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Examples of this include TV series based on their lives, such as *Las chicas del cable* (*Cable Girls*, Netflix 2017–2020), and the documentary *Las sinsabrero* (*The Hatless Women*, RTVE 2015–2021).

both during her lifetime and after her death. However, the workings of the censoring mechanisms that kept her inside of the closet are not easily placed outside of it, since it is difficult to pinpoint specific censoring actors that would have had direct influence over her decisions as an author. Rather, the way that censorship is interiorized in the lesbian subject in Fortún's texts resembles the panopticism described by Michel Foucault as a cornerstone of the modern idea of discipline, an invisible authority that is not directly seen by the controlled subject, but always present as an imagined controlling gaze (Foucault 199–230). In the following paragraphs, we will observe how censorship is manifested in Fortún's texts: sometimes as a generalized and invisible controlling state, sometimes in the form of external actors such as family members, but mostly as self-censorship, an interiorized control that keeps the walls of the lesbian closet intact from within.

The gender dissidence and open secrets of republican Madrid (1931–1939)

The late 1920s and early 1930s in Spain, when Elena Fortún started her career as an author of children's books, was dominated by the liberal and left-wing political coalitions of the Spanish Second Republic that was proclaimed in 1931 and ended in 1939 after a bloody civil war. This period was characterized by progressive reforms that changed the conditions for women and girls in the country, giving them rights to vote, to divorce and to education. During these years, Elena Fortún was an integral part of the feminist movements that promoted such reforms, for example at the Lyceum Club for women in Madrid, which she attended together with other salient intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s (Leggott). In public life, Fortún was a married woman, living a heterosexual life as a wife and mother, but in the 1920s—the same decade when she started to publish stories for children in the press—she also started to frequent the sapphic circles of Madrid (Capdevila-Argüelles, "Introducción" [2022] 39–63)

In many ways, the girl character Celia that Fortún created in her first book for children, *Celia, lo que dice* (*What Celia Says*, 1929), and then continued to recreate in several more books during the 1930s, personified the gender dissidence that characterized the Madrilenian feminist communities of the Second Republic. In the books that Fortún published in the Celia series during this period, the young female protagonist constantly defends her position as an individual on

her own terms, questions the rules of adults around her and defies gender norms. Celia also displays many of the characteristics of the modern figure of the New Girl that appeared in Western culture at the turn of the twentieth century as an ideal of a reformed girlhood: a girl who defends her rights to an independent self, who studies, plays and questions traditional norms of feminine obedience to patriarchal authority (Driscoll; Puchau de Lecea; Lindholm). There is also an adult character in the books from this period who stands out as a representative of the modern woman, namely Celia's mother Pilar de Montalbán, a woman who spends a lot of her time outside the house instead of dedicating it to her family. In fact, she resembles the author herself by attending the Lyceum Club, just like Elena Fortún did, to have tea and discuss important topics of the day with other members of Madrid's feminist intelligentsia (Fortún, *Celia, lo que dice* 74; Martín Gaité 17–20).

Despite the disdain for homosexuals in Spanish society, urban life in the Spanish capital during the decades prior to the Franco regime offered small spaces of a certain tolerance towards women who pushed the boundaries of ladylike behavior, especially among circles of avant-garde artists and authors, where pushing boundaries was part of the common artistic project. On the other hand, the left-wing and liberal movements that dominated the political life of the Second Republic were not necessarily harbors of tolerance towards homosexuals (Carretón Cano). In sum, despite her social life among the progressives of Madrid's feminist avant-garde and her success with the Celia books, there was a secrecy surrounding Fortún's life as a lesbian, even among the more politically progressive communities of which she was a part. The lesbians who engaged in the activities at the Residencia de Señoritas (Residence for young ladies) or the Lyceum Club in Madrid often met with prejudice from other women who frequented these hotspots for development of feminist thought, who expressed open disdain towards what they perceived as their "masculinized" fellow feminists ("masculinizados," Moreno-Lago 228).

Eva Moreno-Lago describes the strategy that lesbians among Madrid's feminists adopted to survive as "an open secret" ("un secreto a voces," Moreno-Lago 219), keeping the knowledge of their intimate relations within a tight web of sympathizers. Sedgwick also alludes to the notion of the open secret in her definition of the homosexual closet, and in fact puts forward homosexuality as "*the* open secret" of modern society, emphasizing homosexuality as something that must be hidden and yet visible in order to define heterosexual normativity (Sedgwick 22). In this manner, the presence of women who loved women within

Madrid's intellectual circles made the homosexual closet visible in the urban space as an unsettling presence of sexual others among the otherwise heteronormative feminists of the intelligentsia. They were talked about and named but had to be kept hidden in their closet to keep the narrative of the progressive Spanish femininity of the Second Republic within the realms of heteronormativity.

Fortún's posthumously published autobiographical novel, *Oculto sendero*, provides an insight into this spectacle of the closet that surrounded female homosexuality in Spanish urban life at the beginning of the twentieth century, where self-censorship seems to have been a strategy used to handle the strong attraction to other women that she describes in the novel. The love relationships depicted in *Oculto sendero* in many ways seem to mirror descriptions of the lesbian communities of Madrid in which Elena Fortún took part, and cross-dressing is perhaps the most salient marker of sapphic identity in the novel. Playing with gender identities through clothing was indeed an integral part of avant-garde aesthetics during the 1920s and 1930s, both in Madrid and elsewhere in Europe, and as Purificació Mascarell states in her analysis of *Oculto sendero*, clothes and appearance play an important part in the novel as a means of representing gender norms and the protagonist's yearning to overcome them (Mascarell).

In *Oculto sendero*, Elena Fortún depicts the presence of homosexuality as an open secret, where censorship and silencing on the part of the protagonist's family members work as markers of the limits between permitted heterosexuality and forbidden homosexuality, where their censoring actions indicate the limits of the homosexual closet. One passage in the novel where this becomes evident depicts the protagonist—Fortún's alter ego María Luisa—as a child accompanying her family to a hotel restaurant where they are celebrating the parents' wedding anniversary. The scene begins with María Luisa's mother asking her daughter to put on a traditionally girlish dress to wear to the celebration, which María Luisa objects to. She prefers a sailor's uniform "with a hat and all" ("con gorra y todo," Fortún, *Oculto sendero* 74), a proposal to which her mother responds with threats of sending her daughter to boarding school if she does not keep quiet: "—Let's see how you shut up! Right now, girl! Look, if you carry on like this I'll send you to a boarding school tomorrow ... Did you hear? Shut up I said! Don't let me hear you anymore ... Go away!" (74)³

³ "—¡Vamos a ver cómo te callas! ¡Ahora mismo, niña! Mira que si sigues así te mando mañana a un colegio interna ... ¿Has oído? ¡A callar he dicho! Que no te oiga más ... ¡Vete!" (All translations from Spanish are my own.)

With harsh words and explicit threats, the mother gets her way, and María Luisa wears the dress while the family has dinner at the restaurant. Both María Luisa's dress and the image of the two parents celebrating their marriage in the presence of their children stand out as symbols of the traditional, heterosexual nuclear family. The sense of heterosexual completeness at the dinner in the hotel is however suddenly broken when María Luisa is struck by the arrival of two young women. One of them is dressed in elegant, traditionally male attire, with a short haircut. The women are described as elegant and rich, but also as breaking social norms, smoking and crossing their legs in public at a "time when women wore dresses to their feet, and no decent woman crossed her legs in public" (83).⁴ The narrator, the pre-adolescent María Luisa, also hints at an intimate relationship between the two women who "looked at each other without saying anything, and in their gaze there was something new and incomprehensible to me" (83).⁵ The boundary that is manifested between the heteronormative family and María Luisa's homoerotic perception of the two women is reinforced by her family members who talk disparagingly of the women and of their unconventional behavior. As the narrator, María Luisa secretly takes the two women's side, but does so silently. In the contrast between the family's open disdain towards the women and María Luisa's silence, Fortún manages to illustrate how the heterosexual family works as a censoring authority that turns any norm-breaking expressions of gender or sexuality into a visible spectacle by naming them openly as deviant. María Luisa's defense of the two women, on the other hand, is manifested in silence, as if kept in secrecy behind the doors of the homosexual closet.

The passage where María Luisa watches the two modern women in the restaurant stands out as the pivotal moment where the protagonist steps onto the hidden sapphic life path of the novel's title, constantly silencing herself in order to survive in a world run according to the rules of heteronormativity. Elena Fortún herself married at the age of 20, and marriage is the only possible life path presented to her alter ego in *Oculto sendero*. Through her fictitious double, Fortún explores the hardships of a lesbian woman who is forced into a heterosexual relationship—for example, her experience of her wedding night, narrated from María Luisa's perspective:

⁴ "... época en la que las mujeres llevaban los vestidos hasta los pies, y ninguna mujer decente cruzaba las piernas en público."

⁵ "... se miraban sin decir nada, y en su mirada había algo nuevo e incomprendible para mí."

I stepped out onto the balcony that had a view over a patio and looked down at the ground ... To think, if I were to let myself fall! It was the third floor and I would be killed. All finished! How wonderful! No husband, no house, no children ... What a relief! [...] And what did it matter? My body, intact the day before, felt outraged ... (302)⁶

In the novel, María Luisa is frequently urged to marry by her family and friends, who repeatedly sing the praises of heterosexual love. María Luisa sometimes tries to tell the people around her about her feelings, her wish to pursue a career as a painter rather than to marry, and her instinctive revulsion at the thought of sex with men. At times, these passages where María Luisa questions the idea of traditional marriage as the only path for her to follow resemble the young Celia's objections when adults make plans for her, or request that she behave in a traditionally girlish manner against her will. However, there is no room for this kind of youthful rebellion in the adult life that Fortún creates for María Luisa in *Oculto sendero*. Rather, the message María Luisa receives from other women, and from the romance novels she reads, is that of heterosexual love as an all-encompassing truth. An example of this appears in a passage when María Luisa, before her wedding, tries to share her worries with her aunt Manuelita:

—Well ... I don't like men ...

—I'm glad! If you like your husband, that is more than enough for you. (301)⁷

The aunt's response indicates monogamous, heterosexual sex as the only option for a woman, but it also illustrates how women in María Luisa's family act as censors who keep any thought of escaping heterosexual monogamy from being uttered. When faced with this impossibility of even expressing a thought that goes beyond the boundaries of marriage, the protagonist of *Oculto sendero* accepts a closeted existence within the boundaries of heterosexual marriage as the only possible way of life for a lesbian woman.

⁶ “Me asomé al balcón que daba sobre un patio y miré al fondo ... ¡Si me dejara caer! Era tercer piso y me mataría. ¡Todo acabado! ¡Qué bien! Ya ni marido, ni casa, ni hijos ... ¡Qué descanso! [...] Y ¡Qué importaba? Mi cuerpo, intacto la víspera, se sentía ultrajado ...”

⁷ “—Pues ... que a mí no me gustan los hombres ... —¡Me alegro! Con que te guste tu marido te basta y te sobra.”

The catholic feminine values of the Franco regime (1939–1975)

When Franco took power in Spain in 1939, the small pockets of relative tolerance that lesbians had found in Madrid during the 1930s disappeared completely, and the strict heteronormativity expressed by María Luisa's family in *Oculto sendero* became official policy, enforced by the regime through state censorship. The same year, Elena Fortún and her husband fled to Argentina, mainly because of her husband being a member of the defeated Republican army. In her biography of Elena Fortún, Marisol Dorao describes how the community of women intellectuals that had gathered around the Lyceum Club was scattered in exile, finding refuge in France, Mexico, Chile, or Argentina (Dorao 166). As Sarah Leggott explains, the Lyceum Club as a vibrant hub for the development of feminist thought had since its opening been criticized by the Church and other conservative elements of society. With Franco's takeover, the club was closed, its records destroyed, and the building that housed it was taken over by the Women's Section (Sección Femenina) of the fascist party, Falange. If life in the closet had already been a reality for lesbian women before 1939, its doors now closed on any woman who aspired to an existence beyond the traditional Catholic ideals defended by the regime. Kathleen Richmond has pointed out the pivotal role of the fascist Women's Section in their efforts to remodel the public image of Spanish femininity. As Richmond puts it, characteristic to the new dictatorial regime, was its "determination to turn back the clock [...] on the lives of women" (Richmond 14). Together with representatives of the Catholic Church, the Women's Section with the regime's support, wanted to shift the paradigm from the politically active and educated woman that had been promoted by the feminist movements of the Second Republic, to a more traditional ideal of the girl as future mother and wife (Richmond 14–51).

Like other totalitarian regimes, under Franco the state used censorship to maintain control over the stories that construe the nation's shared narrative. The national narrative was to be kept under the auspices of the ruler to prevent alternative stories from threatening the one narrative that justifies the regime's power over the people. According to Jesús A. Martínez Martín, who has studied the Franco regime's influence on publishing, Catholicism has never penetrated the totality of Spanish society in such a profound manner as during the first and most repressive two decades of the Franco regime. Practically all printed matter had to pass through the censorship apparatus of the

regime, but the criteria for application of the censorship law remained imprecise and vaguely formulated around issues regarding sexual morals, Catholic dogma, and the political principles of the fascist Falange. When it was carried out, censorship was at times meticulous and severe, at others more benevolent and mild (Martínez Martín 38). Even if the state was the main censorship authority in Spain during the Franco regime, other groups of interest could also act as censors by banning texts or other forms of cultural expression, such as representatives of the Church or other political and religious organizations with close ties to the regime. Altogether, the different actors who had an influence on state censorship in Spain during the Franco years formed a complex and non-transparent web of relations (Martínez Martín; Thompson).

The indirect and unpredictable ways in which the mechanisms of censorship interfered in the publishing strategies of Elena Fortún, illustrates the entangled web of relations that Jesús A. Martínez Martín observes in the censorship apparatus of the Franco regime. Instead of transparency and predictability, the fear of an unpredictable authority and of the punishments that awaited those who transgressed its invisible limits caused authors and publishers to integrate the censorship apparatus into their own view of the work at hand. Fortún's documents from this period testify to an interiorized adaptation to the new standards, one similar to the internal senses of shame and distancing that Foucault describes in the context of modern penal systems as the interiorized authoritarian gaze of the panopticon, where the invisibility and arbitrariness of surveillance turns the controlling authority into a powerful fiction in the prisoner's mind (Foucault 204–206). To grasp the mechanism of censorship and how it affected Elena Fortún's situation as an author during these years, it is helpful to put her published work from the post-war period in contrast to her unpublished manuscripts and letters.

Looking at Fortún's publishing record during the Franco years up until her death in 1952, the all-encompassing and unpredictable censorship culture fostered by the regime and its supporters seems to have added yet another layer to the young lesbian woman's self-censorship, which her posthumously published novel *Oculto sendero* testifies to. Fortún published just a few more books in her popular Celia series in Spain after 1939, and by the publication of the last one in 1950, she had already returned to Spain from her exile in Argentina two years earlier in 1948. If the curious, self-asserted girl had been the ideal that shaped the character of Celia during the era of the Second Republic, the Franco regime brought with it new standards to follow. In the books

from this period, Celia grows up into a young woman, more adapted to the new regime's narrative of Spanish femininity. In contrast to the mischievous girl from the earlier books, this more mature version of Celia holds the maternal values fostered by both the Church and the Women's Section of Falange.

The first Celia book to hit the Spanish market after the fall of the Second Republic appeared as early as 1939, entitled *Celia madrecita* (*Celia, Little Mother*). Here, Celia's mother has died, and Celia is now an adolescent, taking on the maternal responsibilities of the household. As Capdevilla-Argüelles points out in her re-edition of *Celia madrecita*, Fortún not only reshapes the rebellious girl character from the earlier books, but also symbolically represents the downfall of the modern Spanish woman with the death of Celia's mother, who had been a fictitious member of the likewise defunct Lyceum Club (Capdevilla-Argüelles, "Introducción" [2015] 7–17).

Five years passed between *Celia madrecita* and *Celia institutriz en América* (*Celia, Teacher in America*), where Celia becomes a teacher for poor children in Argentina. Despite the caring characteristics that Fortún would continue to foster in Celia as a young teacher, the working and intellectually developed Celia, who also has a boyfriend in the book, apparently did not conform to the standards of the Church in Spain. The book was not formally banned, but in 1945 the organization Consejo Superior de Mujeres de Acción Católica (Women's Superior Council of Catholic Action) classified it together with *Celia en el colegio* (*Celia at School*, 1934) as "inconvenientes" (inappropriate) in their catalogue of children's books (Consejo Superior de Mujeres de Acción Católica 147).⁸ This catalogue, produced by religious organizations close to the regime, was intended to guide authors and editors in the production of morally, religiously and patriotically correct children's literature (García Padrino 42–43). Indeed, the indexing of prohibited or "inappropriate" books has a long history within the Catholic Church in Spain, where the listing of texts deemed threatening to the Catholic doctrine was an integral part of the inquisition (Petley 34–35).

It is hard to establish whether the inclusion of Fortún's books in the list of the Consejo Superior de Mujeres de Acción Católica was pivotal to the decisions made regarding the publication of the last two books in the Celia series, *El cuaderno de Celia* (*Celia's Notebook*, 1947) and *Celia*

⁸ None of Fortún's Celia books was included in the highest category in the catalogue, "recommended," but both *Celia, lo que dice* and *Celia madrecita* were included in the second highest category as "acceptable," whereas *Celia en el mundo* and *Celia y sus amigos* were included in the third category as "tolerable."

se casa (*Celia Gets Married*, 1950). Both these books suited the regime's standards of religiosity and traditional feminine values. The first, *El cuaderno de Celia*, depicts Celia's conversations on matters of virtue and religion with a nun, Sor Inés, who Nuria Capdevila-Argüelles identifies as a representation of the last love in Elena Fortún's life, Inés Field, whom she met in Argentina (Capdevila-Argüelles, "Introducción" [2017] 17). From Fortún's return to Spain in 1948 up until her death in 1952, she maintained close contact with Inés Field in Argentina by correspondence. The religious turn in the Celia series with *El cuaderno de Celia* is mirrored in Fortún's letters to Field during these last years of her life, of which some are full of regrets and self-contempt concerning her earlier way of life.⁹

Judging from the letters to Inés Field, the censorship of the Spanish regime was both an external reality to be dealt with when sending or receiving mail, and something that became manifest as an interiorized, ever-present, and sometimes even paranoid sense of being watched. Fortún's correspondence reveals how the pressure of censorship affected both her personal life and the literary work that she published, or chose not to publish, during the Franco years. For example, the fear of state censorship is to be perceived in Fortún's letters to Field in Argentina straight after her return to Madrid in 1948, where she was expecting to be accompanied by her husband, Eusebio Gorbea. In a letter from December 16, Fortún gives Field instructions for helping her husband to sort out which papers and manuscripts he may take with him from Argentina to Spain.¹⁰ Among the manuscripts that should not accompany him on the journey is the one containing *Celia en la revolución* (*Celia in the Revolution*), yet another unpublished book in the Celia series that portrays Celia and her family during the civil war.¹¹ Among the manuscripts that Fortún had left behind in Argentina were also those containing explicit references to lesbianism, posthumously published as *Oculto sendero* and *El pensionado de Santa Casilda*. However, Fortún never mentions them explicitly in her letter to Field. Instead, she writes: "It is possible there are some books that will not pass the censorship. It is easy to recognize them." (Fortún, *Sabes quién soy*

⁹ The letters from Fortún to Field have recently been published in two volumes, *Sabes quién soy* and *Mujer doliente* (*You know who I am* and *Aching woman*, both 2021). Unfortunately, there are no records of Field's corresponding letters to Fortún.

¹⁰ The day after this letter to Inés Field was written, on December 17, 1948, Fortún's husband Eusebio Gorbea committed suicide in Argentina.

¹¹ *Celia en la revolución* was published for the first time in 1987.

60–61)¹² The trust that Fortún shows in her friend may be interpreted as a sign of their close friendship, and that Field would probably have had knowledge of the possible lesbian content of some of the manuscripts that Fortún had left behind when she returned to Spain.

The all-encompassing fear of the regime and its censorial power expresses itself in a generalized suspicion throughout Fortún's correspondence to Inés Field, as in a letter sent from Orange, New Jersey on April 11, 1950, during a stay there with her son and niece. In it, she expresses her concern that the censorship of the Spanish regime might even extend to the letters Inés sends to her from Argentina to the United States: "I no longer have any doubt that your correspondence is being tapped ... I don't know by whom or why." (Fortún, *Sabes quién soy* 255)¹³

The pressure on Fortún to adapt her last Celia book, *Celia se casa*, to the standards of the regime can also be seen in her correspondence to Inés Field, where Fortún gives an account of the negotiations with her publisher Manuel Aguilar in Spain. In a letter from Barcelona on February 5, 1951, she mentions the manuscript for *Celia, bibliotecaria* (*Celia the Librarian*) "that I did not finish because Aguilar insisted on marrying her straight away" (Fortún, *Mujer doliente* 184).¹⁴ Fortún had already made plans for finishing the series with a book where Celia ends up working as a librarian. Among Fortún's unpublished manuscripts, there was an unfinished manuscript for *Celia, bibliotecaria*, but instead of finishing the series by giving Celia a profession, Fortún complied with the demands of her editor; judging from the letters, she even seems to have accepted this fate for her famous girl character as a suitable one. *Celia se casa* appears as a combination of what Yuval Beniziman would term political self-censorship and commercial self-censorship: the first being a result of political pressure on the author, in this case the social normativity approved by the Franco regime, and the second being the will of Fortún's editor, Aguilar, to please the presumed expectations of a Spanish audience who would prefer a married Celia to a working one (Beniziman 212–214).

¹² "Es posible también que haya algunos libros que no deje pasar la censura. Es fácil conocerlos."

¹³ "Ya no me cabe ninguna duda de que tu correspondencia está intervenida ... no sé por quién ni por qué."

¹⁴ "... que no acabé porque se empeñó Aguilar en que había que casarla enseguida."

The open closet of a new millennium (2005–2022)

On May 8, 1952, four years after her return to Spain from Argentina, Elena Fortún passed away. Continuing our use of the closet as a concept for capturing the censorship and silencing that conditioned Elena Fortún's life as an author, we now observe how the closet doors would become even thicker after her death, that was followed by more than four decades of public silence regarding the author's persona. Despite of this, her children's books continued to be read and appreciated by young readers in Spain during the last two decades of the Franco regime, without people really knowing much about the person behind the name on the book covers. However, in the 1980s, a time when Spain had just started its transition to democracy after more than three and a half decades of dictatorship, women scholars in Spain started to slowly dismantle Elena Fortún's closet, the walls of censorship that both Fortún herself and others around her had built over the years. The first of these was Marisol Dorao, one of the many admirers of Fortún's Celia character who by the 1980s had grown up and graduated in literature and was seeking out more information on the author for her doctoral thesis. As Dorao explains in the prologue to her biography of Fortún, finding material about the person behind the name that appeared on the beloved Celia books of her childhood was not an easy task.

In her quest to retrieve Elena Fortún's biographical remains, Dorao managed to get in touch with Fortún's niece in the United States, whom she travelled overseas to visit and who gave to her a bag that had belonged to Fortún, full of papers and unpublished materials (Dorao 11). Dorao's quest then took her to Argentina, where she visited the author's friends from her years in exile, Inés Field and Manuela Mur. In the introduction to her edition of *Oculto sendero*, Nuria Capdevila-Argüelles quotes from Dorao's notebook from her journey to Argentina, where she recalls how she got hold of the two manuscripts of *Oculto sendero* and *El pensionado de Santa Casilda* from a very nervous Manuela Mur, who had got them from Inés Field (Capdevila-Argüelles, "Introducción" [2022] 18–19). Both manuscripts contained explicitly lesbian content. They were typed and signed with the name Rosa María Castaños, seemingly yet another censoring strategy used by Fortún to disguise herself even in the afterlife. However, as Capdevila-Argüelles states, the style that characterized the manuscripts was unequivocally Fortún's, even down to the grammatical errors, which had not yet been corrected as in her other manuscripts. Near the end of her life, in a letter to Inés Field dated July 23, 1951, Fortún expressed

her wish that her friend in Argentina would burn her manuscripts, a final act of self-censorship that would have deprived the world of these two rare testimonies from inside the sapphic circles of early twentieth century Spain (Fortún, *Mujer doliente* 224).

Against the explicit wish of her dying friend, Inés Field kept the manuscripts for *Oculto sendero* and *El pensionado de Santa Casilda*. Marisol Dorao never published them, a choice that might be interpreted as respecting the author's wishes without destroying them. However, before she died in 2017, Dorao handed the materials over to her two younger colleagues, Nuria Capdevila-Argüelles and María José Fraga, who decided that the time was ripe to open the closet and finally let Elena Fortún out. In 2016 they published *Oculto sendero*, presenting it as an autobiographical novel. *El pensionado de Santa Casilda*, published in 2022, is a novel of a more erotically explicit content; part of it is attributed to Matilde Ras, who was one of Elena Fortún's closest friends and perhaps even intimate partner (Capdevila-Argüelles, "Introducción" [2022]).

The ethical question remains whether the author's wishes to have the manuscripts destroyed should have been respected after her death in 1952. On the other hand, several people who have taken possession of them over the years have made the same decision not to, from Fortún's friends in Argentina to the literary scholars in Spain into whose hands they eventually passed. If the timing was not right for opening up Fortún's homosexual closet when Dorao was working on her biography in the 1980s, it certainly was so by the time *Oculto sendero* and *El pensionado de Santa Casilda* were published. Spain had entered the new millennium, taking giant steps away from the intolerance of the Franco regime towards acceptance of homosexuality. For example, Spain was among the first countries in the world to permit same-sex marriage in 2005, and in 2022 the Spanish government approved a draft law which would allow transgender people to change their legal gender. In light of these new policies regarding LGBTQ rights in Spain, Elena Fortún yet again provides material for narrating Spanish femininity—this time for a Spain of the third millennium, more open to alternative sexual and gender identities.

In this article, we have seen how Elena Fortún's literary work has become part of three different narratives of Spanish femininity over almost a century, from the 1930s to the present day, but also how these narratives hold hidden stories of deviant sexualities or inappropriate expressions of gender identity that must be kept inside the homosexual closet in order to keep the shared narrative of the nation unified under

the banner of heterosexuality. Elena Fortún's closeted existence as an author during the 1930s and 1940s illustrates the complex workings of modern censorship. It appears as a form of prohibition that may well be enforced by authorities within the government or the family, but which is also effectively interiorized within the closeted subject's mind as a self-censoring, panoptic mechanism that keeps the doors of the closet shut from the inside.

Also, efforts to posthumously bring Elena Fortún out of the closet by publishing her unpublished manuscripts appear as a process that has run parallel with tendencies in Spain's public life at the turn of the millennium, where Fortún once again offers stories that are ripe to be integrated into the contemporary narrative of Spanish femininity. Letting stories such as Fortún's out into the open allows us to study the closet as a spectacle, in Sedgwick's terms, to learn more about the censoring mechanisms that keep its walls intact. The knowledge that Fortún's writing provides from inside the closet may eventually even help us keep its doors open, never to close again on anyone's life story of same-sex love.

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Cenzura zaprte Španije: Primer Elene Fortún (1886–1952)

Ključne besede: španska književnost / španske pisateljice / Fortún, Elena / spolna identiteta / lezbištvo / frankizem / cenzura

Članek se osredotoča na to, kako sta samocenzura in državna cenzura oblikovali literarno zapuščino španske avtorice otroških knjig Elene Fortún. *Klozet* je predstavljen kot ključni koncept za razumevanje vpliva cenzure na delo lezbične pisateljice, kot je Elena Fortún, ki je skoraj stoletje prispevala k različnim pripovedim o španski ženskosti. Prva med njimi je pripoved o disidentstvu spolov v času druge republike (1931–1939); sledi pripoved o ženi in materi, ki pripada Francovemu režimu (1939–1975), in nazadnje pripoved o vključevanju LGBTQ v Španiji v novem tisočletju (2005–2022). Dela, vključena v analizo, so raznovrstna, saj segajo od avtoričinih otroških knjig do njene korespondence in dveh posthumno objavljenih romanov. Branje besedil Elene Fortún razkriva, kako cenzura deluje kot nadzorni pogled, ki ne deluje le od zunaj, temveč je tudi ponotranjen v posamezniku in ohranja vrata klozeta zaprta od znotraj.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.134.2.'09Fortún E.:305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.08>

Samocenzura, družinske interpretacije in vpliv uradne pripovedi na avtobiografije žensk

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Članek primerjalno analizira avtobiografije treh žensk, Elvire Dolinar, Minke Govekar in Marice Bartol. Njihovi spominski zapisi so umeščeni v kontekst žanra slovenske avtobiografije, ki se je razvil konec 19. stoletja. Vse tri sodijo med protagonistke slovenskega ženskega gibanja, bile pa so tudi pisateljice, prevajalke in publicistke. V članku je predstavljena njihova interpretacija lastne življenjske zgodbe, tematizirane so pripovedi in argumentacije ter stil pripovedi, ki se včasih izreka, včasih pa molči o pomembnih življenjskih odločitvah. Njihove življenjske zgodbe so postavljene v širši zgodovinski kontekst, hkrati pa je njihova interpretacija lastne zgodbe soočena z interpretacijami njihovih življenj v očeh njihovih družinskih članov in z »uradno pripovedjo«. V tem okviru razprava pokaže, kako lahko v besedilu prepoznamo samocenzuro in kaj je bil njen predmet, prikazane pa so tudi tematske sorodnosti besedil ter razlike med njimi.

Ključne besede: slovenska književnost / slovenske pisateljice / 19. stoletje / avtobiografija / samocenzura / Dolinar, Elvira / Govekar, Minka / Bartol, Marica

Spomin na pisateljice in številne publicistke iz časa vzpona ženskega gibanja s konca devetnajstega in začetka dvajsetega stoletja živi v številnih monografijah, v katerih so predstavljene tudi njihove življenjske zgodbe (*Pozabljena polovica*, 2007; *Po svoji poti*, 2021; *Splošno žensko društvo 1901–1945*, 2003; *Nepozabne*, 2020; idr.).¹ Pogosto so bili podlaga za te objave ravno njihovi zapisani spomini ali intervjujski zapisi, podani na podlagi vprašanj urednic ali novinark. Ti skromni avtobiografski zapiski, nekateri objavljeni, drugi ne, s svojim zgovornim molkom ali poudarki veliko povedo o avtoricah in času, v katerem so ustvarjale, tudi o stvareh, o katerih ni slutnje v

¹ Članek je nastal v okviru raziskovalnega programa P6-0235 Slovenska zgodovina, ki ga sofinancira Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije iz državnega proračuna.

uradnih biografijah. Pred našimi očmi se ob branju vzpostavi zgodba ustvarjalke, aktivistke, pisateljice, ki skuša koherentno in običajno na zelo omejenem prostoru pripovedovati svojo zgodbo, lastno subjektivno doživetje sveta, in pri tem ustvarja osebno identiteto (Koron, »Avtobiografija«). V zapiskih ego dokumentov se jaz ne/namerno razkriva ali prikriva (Perenič 429). Prav vprašanji, kako so svojo zgodbo z avtobiografskimi zapiski osmislile tri intelektualke in akterke ženskega gibanja s preloma stoletja, pri tem interpretirale svoja življenja ter na kakšen način in pod kakšnimi pogoji je v njihovo pripoved vdiral samocenzura, bosta osrednja tema pričujočega članka. Prav tako se bo tekst ukvarjal z vprašanji, s kakšnimi vrednotami, omejitvami in družbenimi pravili je bila samocenzura povezana in kako so nanjo vplivale družbene razmere tistega časa. In končno se bo spraševal tudi, kako je dejstvo, da so bile avtorice ženskega spola, vplivalo na samocenzuro. Razprava temelji na časopisnih in arhivskih virih ter intervjujih z družinskimi člani, njen namen pa je, poleg kontekstualizacije samocenzure in spola, pokazati tudi na razmerja spopada med oblastjo in pozabo oziroma molkom.

Žanr avtobiografije

V pričujočem tekstu bodo zapisane življenjske zgodbe brane in razumljene kot nefikcijske avtobiografije, torej v njih ne gre za literarne tekste in fikcijske prvoosebne pripovedovalke, ampak za vsem prepoznavne identitete pripovedovalk, ki so v avtobiografiji fiksne, kar pomeni, da v njih ni distance med pisočim in doživljajskim jazom, teksti pa so jasne samoreprezentacije (Koron, »Roman« 192). Piske spominov tako ponavadi ponujajo koherentno »lastno življenjsko zgodbo«, kontinuirano pripovedovanje od rojstva do poznejših obdobj življenja brez kakršnegakoli dvoma, da so dogodki, o katerih pripovedujejo, del pripovedovalkinega življenja (Mihurko Poniž, »Začetki« 250). Predstavljena je samopodoba njihovega življenja, pri čemer se avtorice trudijo biti »objektivne«, hkrati pa ponujajo vpogled v posameznikovo individualno doživetje življenja v socialnih, gospodarskih, pravnih in tudi drugih razsežnostih (Perenič 429).

V sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih minulega stoletja je v zgodovinpisju zaživelo navdušenje za zблиžanje z avtorsko osebnostjo iz preteklosti, kar je zlasti v devetdesetih letih s svojo kompleksno koncepcijo *ego dokumentov* še dodatno spodbudil Winfried Schulz (Perenič 429). Le redki slovenski zgodovinarji, denimo Bogo Grafenauer, Marta

Verginella ali Igor Grdina, so doslej uporabili avtobiografije kot zgodovinski vir (gl. Grafenauer; Verginella, »Zgodovinopisna«; Grdina), sicer pa je bilo slovensko zgodovinopisje dolgo zadržano do njihove rabe, saj naj bi jih preveč določala »subjektivnost« in naj bi bili zato bolj nezanesljivi (Verginella, »Zgodovinopisna« 95). Vendar pa so se tako kot drugod pod vplivom paradigmatičnih obratov od makrozgodovine k mikrozgodovini in pod vplivom vzpona kulturne zgodovine ter uveljavitvijo metod zgodovinske antropologije tudi v slovenskem zgodovinopisju začele dogajati spremembe. Nastajati so začele drugačne zgodovinske študije, ki so želele zaobjeti vsakdanje življenje in »prodreti v duhovnost, v zavest ter podzavest človeka in družbe neke preteklosti« (Luthar 182). Avtorji so se usmerili k manj raziskanim socialnim in socialnozgodovinskim temam. Nastale so študije, ki so v celoti temeljile na avtobiografskih virih, denimo študija Andreja Studna in Katarine Kobilica *Volja do dela je bogastvo: Mikrozgodovinska študija o ljubljanskem stavbnem podjetniku Matku Curku (1885–1953) in njegovi družini* (1999) ali delo Marte Verginelle *Suha pašta, pesek in bombe: Vojni dnevnik Bruna Trampuža* (2004). Prav tako trenutno pospešeno izhajajo različni avtobiografski viri (Verginella, »Zgodovinopisna« 100), aktualizirani v kontekstu različnih obletnic, kot je bila denimo stoletnica prve svetovne vojne.²

Sam žanr avtobiografije se je sicer na Slovenskem pojavil v drugi polovici 19. stoletja, pred tem so bile namreč avtobiografske vsebine običajno izražene v drugih slovstvenih vrstah. Tedaj pa so začele izhajati zlasti avtobiografije politikov, ki so bile osredinjene na avtorjevo življenjsko razvojno pot in se počasi spremenile v žanr z lastnimi pravili. Še v medvojnem obdobju so avtorji sledili tistemu izročilu avtobiografskega pisanja, v katerem je bilo v ospredju prikazovanje razvoja slovenskega naroda v moderno kulturno-politično skupnost. Osrednje mesto je zavzel pisec kot glavni akter, vpet v dramaturški lok zgodovinskega dogajanja. Kot pravi Grdina, moderna nacionalna skupnost terja zapis izkustva svojih najveljavnejših mož in včasih tudi opravičevanje njihove vloge ali pa vsaj razlago njihovega delovanja (Grdina 342). V tem duhu so bili pisani številni spomini. Pogosto je v takratnih avtobiografijah izpričan tudi svetovni nazor oziroma življenjski *credo* posameznika, in mnogokrat se v kontekstu časa razkriva tudi njihovo razumevanje

² Izdan je bil dnevnik škofa Antona Jegliča (2015), dnevnik Barbare Širca, gospodinje iz Žalca iz sredine devetnajstega stoletja, *Babette* (2009), *Korespondenca Jožefine in Fidelisa Terpinca (1825–1858)* (2018), spomini Ane Župančič *Spomini na Otona* (2019), *Ljubezem v pismih: Korespondenca med in Felicito Koglot in Francem Pericem. Aleksandrija–Bilje. 1921–1929* (2020) itd.

spolne vloge (denimo moška čast), predvsem pa zvestoba rodoljubni ideji in svojim vrednotam (Grdina 359).

Pomembne osebnosti slovenske politike so v spominih večinoma govorile o svojem javnem udejstvovanju in narodnopolitičnem delu. Kot meščani so pristajali na ostro delitev javne in zasebne (družinske) sfere, tako da so veljavni možje zelo malo prostora namenili zasebnosti in svojim družinskim članom in članicam, hčeram in soprogam (Vodopivec, »Kako« 32). Izjema so v tem pogledu neuresničeni romantični ideali in »narodne dame«, pobudnice različnih ženskih narodnih aktivnosti, pevke, igralke in pisateljice/pesnice, ki so se udeleževale narodnih srečanj in prireditev (npr. v spominih Josipa Vošnjaka srečamo poglavji o Mariji Murnik in Albini Adeli Pongratz, Ivan Hribar pa v svojih spominih obuja lik sovražnice slovenstva iz Ljubljane, Line Kreuter Galle). Soproge slovenskih političnih veljakov 19. stoletja so se v objavljenih spominih umaknile v ozadje in so se v njihovih spominskih zapisih pojavile le ob izjemnih dogodkih (Vodopivec, »Kako« 32).

V obdobju med obema vojnama so se moškim avtobiografijam pridružila dela pisateljic in tudi ta prevzela ista pravila avtobiografskega pisanja. Tako pri obojih srečamo npr. samoopazovanje in težnje po preoblikovanju doživetega (Verginella, »Zgodovinopisna« 103), isto strukturo pripovedi, npr. premočrtnost dojemanja življenjske poti, in že zgoraj omenjen okvir kontekstualizacije (vzpostavljanje nacionalne skupnosti). Irena Novak Popov je v svojem članku preučila nekaj biografij avtoric, med njimi tudi novejših, in ugotovila, da je mogoče najti nekaj skupnih značilnosti ženskega pisanja avtobiografij (Novak Popov 54).³ Tako naj bi bilo za obdobje od poznega devetnajstega do zgodnjega dvajsetega stoletja značilno manj izrazito izpovedno-emocionalno doživljanje od intelektualno-spoznavnega. Življenje v njih predstavlja pot približevanja k idealu življenja, k življenjskim idealom, življenje je preizkus moči, volje, zmožnosti in vzdržljivosti do končnega cilja. Ključne teme v njih so nacionalna identiteta, svetovni nazori, izobraževanje in socialna občutljivost ter nepravilni spolni red, ki ga je mogoče prepoznati tudi v družinskih razmerjih. Kot bomo videli, igra v tem kontekstu zelo pomembno vlogo soproga, ki včasih skoraj pooseblja nepravilne družbene razmere.

³ Glej tudi Šlibar; Mihurko Poniž, »Zwischen« 68.

Samocenzura in ženski pogled

Samocenzura je del cenzure, toda v tem kontekstu lahko obstajajo zelo jasna pravila, kaj je in kaj ni dovoljeno, lahko pa je dopuščeno široko polje nedorečenosti, kjer ni docela jasno, kdaj je prestopljena meja in v katerem primeru te lahko doleti kazen (Dović 11). V takšnih pogojih je samocenzura realnejša grožnja. Dović tako pojmuje samocenzuro kot notranjo napetost boja proti tistemu, kar bi (morda) želel napisati in željo, da se ukloniš normam (18). Gre torej za samoomejevanje avtorja ali avtorice, ki načrtno kroji svoje izražanje zaradi moralnih, političnih, ideoloških in drugih razlogov, včasih pa tudi zunanjih pritiskov, denimo založbe in urednikov. Avtor oziroma avtorica lahko tudi zavestno spremeni svoje delo, da ne bi prišel ali prišla v konflikt z družbo (Troha 96), lahko pa mehanizmi delujejo tudi na bolj nezavedni ravni.

Samocenzura je podobno kot danes delovala tudi v družbi poznega 19. stoletja in brez dvoma so bili v njene sile ujeti tako avtorji kot avtorice. Vendar so bile ženske vpete dvojno. Družbenim prepovedim in pritiskom nosilcev oblasti niso bile podrejene le kot zgolj abstraktni, brezspolni subjekti, temveč so bile ujete tudi kot bitja, ki so bila podvržena spolno zaznamovanim predpisanim kulturnim normam. Kot pravi Katja Mihurko Poniž, konec 19. stoletja spolna identiteta še ni bila tematizirana kot spremenljiva, izmuzljiva ali celo nepodredljiva, obstajale so jasne spolne norme, ki so se vtisnile tudi v pripovedne strukture (Mihurko Poniž, »Začetki« 249). Pisateljice, ki so ponavadi delovale na obrobju pisateljske skupnosti, so bile zato podvržene vrsti omejitev, predvsem pa so bili njihovi teksti izpostavljeni dvojnemu pogledu, skozi oči nacionalne skupnosti in tudi skozi spol. Nekateri tako njihov položaj opredeljujejo z binomom vključenih/izključenih (Chin 14). Ženske tako sodijo v nacionalno skupnost, toda ta skupnost jih zaradi njihovega spola marginalizira in jim prav zaradi njihovega spola vsiljuje nov niz pravil (Yuval Davis 13, 37). S tem vprašanjem se ukvarjajo številni članki, ki iz zgodovinske perspektive odpirajo vprašanja nacionalne skupnosti in spola (Tzanaki 1–21; Mayer 1–22). Ženske nanje včasih odgovorijo z uporom, včasih pa obvladujejo strategije samocenzure tudi z molkom, z izogibanjem problematičnim družbeno-političnim temam.

V nadaljevanju bom predstavila delovanje samocenzure v avtobiografskih zapiskih treh publicistk s preloma stoletja. To bodo Elvira Sittig, poročena Dolinar (1870–1961), Marica Nadlišek, poročena Bartol (1867–1940), in Minka Vasič, poročena Govekar (1874–1950). Življenjske poti vseh treh so bile podobne. Vse so bile rojene v razponu

enega desetletja, ko se je iztekalo 19. stoletje. Bile so učiteljice, ki svojega poklica po poroki niso več opravljale, objavljale so članke v številnih revijah in časopisih, pa tudi daljše tekste, nekateri so bili leposlovni, drugi bolj publicistični. Delovale so v številnih ženskih društvih in vse so imele otroke. Vendar je bilo med njimi tudi nekaj razlik. Medtem ko Minka Govekar in Marica Bartol po poroki nista več opravljali svojega poklica, je Elvira Dolinar opravljala zelo različne: bila je zaposlena v fotografskem studiu in nato pri časopisu *Tedenske slike*, pomagala je v družinski trgovini in bila v medvojnem obdobju, ko je bila prepoved dela za poročene učiteljice umaknjena, spet zaposlena v šolstvu. Medtem ko sta bila soproga M. Govekar in M. Bartol uradnika, soprogo Elvire Dolinar ni bil zaposlen v državnem ali javnem sektorju in je tako bolj ali manj uspešno vodil svoje podjetniške podvige. Marica Bartol je po prvi svetovni vojni izkusila tudi begunstvo, saj se je morala zaradi pritiska fašistične oblasti preseliti iz domačega Trsta v novoustanovljeno jugoslovansko državo, v Ljubljano. Elvira Dolinar in Marica Bartol sta izkusili tudi revščino.

Avtobiografski zapiski, ki so ostali za njimi, so različne dolžine. Marica Bartol je ustvarjala svoje spomine v daljši sklenjeni obliki, nastali so v medvojnem obdobju, po drugi svetovni vojni pa so bili objavljeni v reviji *Razgledi* (1948). Spomini Elvire Dolinar so ohranjeni v Rokopisnem oddelku Narodne in univerzitetne knjižnice v Ljubljani, v fondu Erne Muser. Eni izmed njih so zagotovo nastali leta 1949 (»Moje življenje«), drugi niso datirani, so pa tudi ti nastali po drugi svetovni vojni (»Moji spomini«). Prvi obsegajo pet popisanih strani, drugi dvanajst. S svojimi lastnimi besedami je opisala svojo življenjsko pot tudi v zborniku *Slovenska žena* (1927). Za Minko Govekar imamo ohranjenih še nekoliko več krajših avtobiografskih zapisov, tipkopis na treh straneh se denimo nahaja v Arhivu Republike Slovenije, v osebнем fondu Minke Govekar; čeprav ni natančno datiran, ga lahko umestimo v obdobje med obema vojnoma. V že omenjenem fondu Erne Muser pa so še drugi spominski zapiski Minke Govekar, ki so strukturirani kot odgovori na zastavljena vprašanja in so nastali leta 1949.

Elvira Sittig, poročena Dolinar

Elvira Sittig je bila rojena v družini nemškega protestanta, geometra, ki ga je poklicna pot zanesla na Kranjsko. Končala je učiteljske in se zaposlila kot učiteljica, po krajšem obdobju službovanja pa je bila prisiljena zaradi zakonodaje, ki je preprečevala delo poročenim učiteljicam,

službo zapustiti. V obdobju skrbi za naraščajočo družino je kljub vsemu pričela pisati, pri tem pa je zglede iskala daleč stran iz vasi Velika Dolina, kjer je živela. Bila je naročena na tuje feministične časopise, iz katerih je črpala ideje. Sodelovala je pri prvem slovenskem ženskem časopisu *Slovenka* in s svojimi radikalnimi idejami dvigovala prah v slovenski javnosti, tudi zato so jo nekateri biografi označili za »tist(o) žen(o), ki je najvišje postavila cilje. Njeno ime bi morali imenovati na prvem mestu, kadar koli je govor o naprednih stremljenjih slovenske žene« (Mohorič 87). Imeli so jo tudi za prvo slovensko feministko (Štular Sotošek 16). Po prenehanju izhajanja *Slovenke* je E. Dolinar s pisanjem člankov nadaljevala; čeprav so ti izgubili nekdanji feministični naboj, pa jo je še vedno zanimala tudi politika, o tem priča njen podpis na avstrijski pacifistični izjavi žensk iz leta 1915 ali njen protivojni članek iz leta 1911.⁴ Vse to kaže na njene stike v širšem avstrijskem prostoru, vsaj denimo s feministično-socialistično revijo *Neues Frauenleben*, ki jo je izdajal Allgemeiner Österreichischer Frauenverein (Splošno avstrijsko žensko društvo). Pred prvo svetovno vojno najdemo njene članke tudi v drugem nemškem avstrijskem časopisu.⁵

V njenih spomilih so mogoče najbolj presenetljivi odlomki, ki se nanašajo na opis njenega partnerja. Pogosto namreč družinske razmere določijo ne le možnost ustvarjanja žensk v 19. stoletju, pač pa tudi njihovo zadovoljstvo z življenjem. V svojih dveh spominskih zapisih E. Dolinar dokaj zagrenjeno opisuje svojega življenjskega sopotnika, tako o njem piše kot o nekom, »ki je v bujni domišljiji sanjal o bajnem bogastvu, ki ga bo dosegel«, nato pa mu je spodletelo, zapadel je v dolgove in izgubil vse (Dolinar, »Moji spomini«). Na drugem mestu pa piše o njem kot o človeku, ki je bil strastni privrženec Marxa in njegove teorije:

[R]azlagal mi je neupravičeno zapostavljanje delovnega ljudstva, kako so delavci brezpravni in zatirani. Odprl se je pred mojimi očmi nov političen svet. O, kako blaga in pravična duša je ta mož, ki tako zagovarja pravice zatiranih. In tako se je zgodilo, da sem se z njim poročila. Toda prekasno sem spoznala, da so vse njegove lepe besede tičejo samo moža. Žena je stvarjenje nižjega reda, ki mora biti njemu podrejena in pokorna. Brezpravno bitje, ki živi samo za njegovo udobnost, ki mu mora biti pokorna in podrejena. (Dolinar, »Moje življenje«)

⁴ »Die Kriegsfackel Lodert!« *Neues Frauenleben* 23.11 (1911): 300–301; Anon., »Ein Weihnachtsgruss Englischerfrauen an Die Frauen in Deutschland und Österreich«, *Neues Frauenleben* 17.2 (1915): 35.

⁵ »Die Aufgabe der Frau«. *Österreichische Lehrerinnen-Zeitung*, 15. 10. 1900. s. 7; »Geistige-Erziehung: Ein Beitrag zur Gemüthsbildung«, *Schule und Haus. Zeitschrift zur Förderung der Erziehung und des Unterrichtes* 6 (1901): 10–15.

Po drugi svetovni vojni je marksistična ideologija postala sinonim za pravičnost. S tematizacijo tedaj priljubljene ideje je Elvira Dolinar po vsej verjetnosti želela posebej poudariti, kako težko je bilo njeno življenje, ker je bila podrejena možu, ki v vsakdanjem življenju ni razumel in upošteval njenih potreb in pravic, čeprav je ideale enakosti zagovarjal na načelnem nivoju in se prišteval k sledilcem napredka.

Znano je, da so spomini izpostavljeni spremembam in popravkom, duhu časa, da včasih preprosto bledijo, se spreminjajo, vsrkavajo tuje prvine (Levi 17). Spominjanje je aktiven proces, za katerega so značilne tudi določene uskladitve spomina s kolektivnim spominom. Kot pravi Maurice Halbwachs, se človek spominja skupaj s člani svoje družbe; spomin predstavlja neko vrsto bojnega polja, kjer je nekaj namenjeno izbrisu, drugo pa se formira v vzpostavljanju novega (Passerini 236). Vstop Marxa v spomine E. Dolinar in navezava na njenega moža po vsej verjetnosti ponazarjata prilagoditev času in aktualnim vrednotam. Pred začetkom stoletja je pri nas le malokdo, celo če je bil član socialdemokratske stranke, poznal Karla Marxa (Vodopivec, *Od Poblino* 120). Hkrati pa hrepenenje po bogastvu, ki naj bi bilo značilno za njenega moža, in egalitarnost oz. solidarnost Marxovega nauka, v kar naj bi mož prav tako verjel, težko sovpadata. V tem kontekstu soprogove ocene je zanimivo tudi družinsko ustno izročilo, ki govori o tem, da naj bi za bankrot družine ne bi bil odgovoren soprogo, pač pa avtoričin najljubši sin (Faganeli in Seljak).

V nadaljevanju se njena kritična ost naperi tudi proti soprogu Marice Nadlišek, ki naj bi na zahtevo svojega moža odložila uredništvo. E. Dolinar to komentira: »Eto ti enakopravnost!« Vendar pa naj bi tudi sama čutila negotovanje svojega soproga ob pisanju feminističnih člankov (Dolinar, »Moje življenje«). Hkrati naj bi jo po družinskem izročilu soprogo podpiral v njenem javnem delovanju oz. naj mu ne bi nasprotoval (Faganeli in Seljak). V avtobiografijah avtoric iz 19. oziroma začetka 20. stoletja osrednje mesto pogosto zavzema notranji razcep, ki so ga čutile zaradi konflikta med družbeno sprejemljivo vlogo žensk in željo po ustvarjanju (Mihurko Poniž, *Literarna* 56). Tako je razlog za feministično opredelitev avtorice v njeni osebni poziciji, saj naj bi ji prav osebne izkušnje dale mislite, zakaj naj bi ženska ne bila enakopravna. Zakaj naj ne bi uživala istih pravic kot mož?

Njene osebne izkušnje torej oblikujejo tudi njeno politično delovanje, če seveda razumemo politično v kontekstu izveninstitucionalnega, ki želi spremeniti razmerja moči v družbi. Sem bi tako lahko umestili tudi njen angažma v ženskih društvih in gibanjih. V spominih E. Dolinar sicer zapiše, »politično se pač nisem mogla udeleževati,

ko pa sem živela vedno na vasi« (Dolinar, »Moje življenje«). Tedanje razumevanje političnega je bilo torej silno ozko, o čemer pričajo tudi zgodovinske raziskave (Selišnik, »Constraints«) in tudi E. Dolinar politično razume v kontekstu političnih institucij. A po današnjih merilih je vendarle delovala politično, prisostvovala je denimo ustanovnemu sestanku Masarykovcev, tako da jo lahko umestimo med sopotnike in sopotnice tega kroga. Vse kaže, da je sodila v liberalno napredne mreže in gojila stike s politično aktivno mladino (Schweiger 202). V njenih zapisih se reflektirata dve konfliktni perspektivi: prva je v okvirih koncepta in vrednot, ki jih zavzema moška dominantna pozicija v kulturi (sprejema, da politika ni zanjo), druga pa nas informira o neposredni realnosti ženskih osebnih izkušenj in nas sramežljivo nagovarja z željo (zanima se za politiko, toda spol ji preprečuje angažma) (Rožac Darovec 457).

Še eden izmed dejavnikov, ki naj bi na njeno javno delovanje zelo negativno vplival, naj bi bila konservativnost Kranjske. Tako lahko preberemo, »ker je bila takrat atmosfera v Sloveniji, da mi sigurno ne bi bil noben list članka ponatisnil« (Dolinar, »Moje življenje«), se je temu podredila in iskala možnost objave v širšem avstrijskem prostoru. Kranjska je tudi sicer nosila pečat konservativnosti v stari monarhiji (Melik 196), ženskemu vprašanju pa naj bi bili nenaklonjeni celo napredni krogi. Tako naj bi tudi ti o njej sodili, da gre še za eno »prismojeno učiteljico« (Dolinar, »Moji spomini«). V kontekstu povojne družbe, ko je vse stremelo k spremembam, take zapise seveda lahko pričakujemo, pa vendarle ob podrobnejšem branju njeno feminističnost lahko reflektiramo tudi drugače. Med razlogi, da je prenehala objavljati pri *Slovenki*, denimo navaja prav preveliko feministično radikalnost njene druge urednice Ivanke Anžič Klemenčič, saj naj bi ta zastopala »ne žensko enakopravnost, nego žensko nadvlado« (Dolinar, »Moji spomini«). Toda tudi te zapise in trditve lahko postavimo pod vprašaj, ko poskuša utemeljiti svojo »pravo mero predanosti feminizmu«. V njeni korespondence lahko najdemo tudi druge vzroke za to, da je prenehala z dopisovanjem v *Slovenki*; bili naj bi bolj materialne narave, kot je neizplačevanje honorarja in ignoriranje njenih pisem (Selišnik, »Ivanka«), toda takšni razlogi v idealnem načinu pisanja pravzaprav nimajo prostora, namesto materialnih razlag morajo namreč imeti prednost idealistični.

Ker je samocenzura najpogosteje povezana z molkom, naj osvetlimo še en moment, ki ga sicer v njenih spominih ne srečamo, to je trenutek, ko se je začela identificirati za Slovenko. Kot je bilo že omenjeno, je bila Elvira s srednjima imenoma Leokadie Berte rojena nemškimi staršem,

Theodoru in Thekli Lang. V svojih objavljenih spomilih iz leta 1927 piše o tem, kako so jo starši poslali v dekliški internat, ki ga je vodila Irma Huth in kako se je že tam razumela za Slovenko. Zavod je bil nemški, v njem pa »nas je bilo le par Slovenk«, ravno po tej izkušnji naj bi začela intenzivno delovati za slovenski tabor (Govekar, »Elvira« 214). Toda v vseh njenih spomilih so identitetna vprašanja in po vsej verjetnosti intenzivni notranji boji, ki so se pred tem dogajali v njej, zamolčani. O zelo intenzivnem preizpraševanju lastne etnične/nacionalne identitete priča le družinsko izročilo (Faganeli in Seljak). Kako je dekleta, rojeno dvema prisiljencema iz nemških dežel, sprejelo slovensko identiteto? Kaj se je odvijalo v tej zasebni izobraževalni nemški ustanovi, namenjeni najpremožnejšim ljubljanskim dekletom, kako se je odločila, da se identificira in razume za Slovenko, ostaja odprto. V njenih spomilih namreč precej več prostora, tako kot je običajno v avtobiografijah iz konca devetnajstega stoletja in začetka dvajsetega stoletja, zasedajo vrstice, ki pišejo o njenem udejstvovanju v teh bojih po odhodu iz dekliškega internata in o stremljenjih pri vzpostavitvi slovenske skupnosti (Dolinar, »Pred proslavo« 4; Govekar, »Elvira« 214), kar se lepo umešča v pravila žanra.

Marica Nadlišek, poročena Bartol

Marica Nadlišek je bila rojena v Trstu, v družini geometra Štefana Nadliška, ki je bil tesno vpet v lokalno okolje; bil je namreč ustanovitelj političnega društva *Edinost* in izvoljen v tržaški mestni svet. Obe svoji hčeri je spodbujal k delu v javnosti in tako je tudi Marica, potem ko je postala učiteljica, sodelovala v celi vrsti društev. Poleg tega je pisala članke za tržaški slovenski dnevnik *Edinost*. Bila je prva urednica *Slovenke*, ki je spretno vijugala med progresivnimi silami in tradicionalisti (Mohorič 89), pri življenju je ohranjala prvi slovenski ženski časopis in s tem tudi kontinuirano debato o ženskem vprašanju (Verginella, »Marica«). Tudi po poroki je nadaljevala s pisanjem, vendar naj bi šlo večinoma za krajše leposlovne in publicistične članke. Po preselitvi v Ljubljano se je zelo dobro znašla v novem okolju. Bila je nekaj časa odgovorna urednica *Ženskega sveta*. Njeni članki so izhajali v slovenskih dnevnikih in ženskih časopisih.

Spomini Marice Bartol so v nekaterih segmentih podobni spominom E. Dolinar: tako kot Elvira Dolinar tudi ona o svojem možu ne piše preveč laskavo. »On, moj mož, je seveda prvega dne sedel in igral v kavarni do poznega večera. Spominjam se, kako sva ga nekega večera

čakali z mamó ob oknu, ker je šlo že proti deveti uri in sva se bali, da se mu ni kaj zgodilo. Kaj sva vedeli siroti! ... In če sva šla, se je kmalu obrnil, spremil me do vrat in šel svojo pot v kavarno ... ves svoj prosti čas (je) prebil v kavarni. Če denarja ni imel, je gledal in kibiciral.« (Bartol 368–369) Prav zaradi prepira v hiši naj bi tudi opustila uredništvo *Slovenke*, mož pa naj bi bil tudi sicer zelo nerazumevajoč: med drugim ji do svoje upokojitve ni zaupal, koliko zasluži. Sin se je na te zapise odzval s pripombo, da »mama ni poznala ne življenja ne moških« in da je bil oče skromen, zvest, zanesljiv mož, redka izjema. Podobno kot v primeru E. Dolinar torej družinsko izročilo omili njegovo pozicijo in sin Vladimir Bartol v objavljenih spominih v opombi pod črto postavi pod vprašaj mamino interpretacijo doživljanja zakonske skupnosti, po ugotovitvah M. Verginelle pa naj bi nekatere odlomke tudi umaknil iz objavljenega članka (Verginella, »Zgodovinopisna« 106–107). Hkrati pa njen zapis vendarle preseneča s svojo kritičnostjo, neznačilno za javno objavo, pa tudi z drugačnostjo od moških avtobiografij, saj ti o svojih soprogah nikoli ne pišejo tako kritično, oziroma če se z njimi ne razumejo dobro, namesto besed govori njihova odsotnost.

V pripovedi M. Nadlišek pa ne srečamo le kritičnosti, beremo tudi presenetljive izpovedi ljubezni. Tako v svojih spominih razkrije čustva do poročenega Janka Kersnika, le ta naj bi se razvila med njima kot čudež, ki se je rodil in se nato ohladil (zlasti z njegove strani). V avtobiografijah slovenskih politikov podobnih primerov skoraj ni, na podoben način morda izstopa le Josip Vošnjak, ki v svojih spominih v posebnem poglavju »Sentimentalni roman brez romantičnih dogodkov«, na dolgo in široko popisuje svojo zaljubljenost v dekle, ki pa se zaradi socialnih in narodnostnih razlogov ni realizirala v poroki. V njegovih spominih kar zadeva ženske nastopa samo ta izjema, Josip Vošnjak svoje soproge v spominih ne omenja, verjetno zato, ker je bila »skromna viničarska hči«, ki jo je po dveh nezakonskih otrocih končno poročil. Na koncu poglavja »Sentimentalni roman« je Vošnjak zapisal, da se je nekoliko nemoško poukvarjal s temo. Primerljivega izstopa iz ženskosti M. Bartol po tem, ko je sama tematizirala vlogo svojega moža in simpatij, sicer ne moremo očitati, saj njeno pisanje očitno sodi v ženski svet. Hkrati pa se lahko vprašamo, ali to idealizacijo lahko razumemo (kot razlaga njen sin), kot znak njenega tragičnega razumevanja sveta, razočaranosti, mogoče celo kot izraz »svetobolja«?

Ženske se v svojih spominih zagotovo pogosteje predajajo dogodkom iz družinskega življenja, moški pa poudarjajo dogodke povezane s poklicnim ali javnim udejstvovanjem (Rožac Darovec 450). V kontekstu nezavedne samocenzure smo tako lahko manj presenečeni,

da Marica Nadlišek ne omenja svojega zelo obsežnega publicističnega delovanja, polemike, ki jo je vodila s škofom Antonom Mahničem ali svojega dela v *Ženskem svetu*, ženskih društvih (npr. Splošno slovensko žensko društvo, Kolo jugoslovanskih sester) ali v številnih primorskih društvih, ki so po koncu prve svetovne vojne vzniknili v Ljubljani, kamor se je selilo vse večje število migrantov iz Kraljevine Italije (Klub Primork, Jugoslovanska straža, Branibor). M. Bartol je tako na nek nezaveden način pristala na javno (politično)/zasebno dihotomijo.

Minka Vasič, poročena Govekar

Minka Vasič se je rodila v družini zdravnika Ljudevita Vasiča, ki je bil manj politično aktiven kot oče Marice Bartol. Tudi ona je bila po izobrazbi učiteljica in je po poroki opustila svoje delo. Njeno zanimanje za literaturo se je pozneje kazalo ne zgolj v leposlovnih krajših delih, pač pa tudi prevodih, poleg tega je pisala daljša publicistična besedila oziroma knjige z gospodinjskimi nasveti za ženske. Minka Govekar je svoje članke pisala večinoma za slovenske tiskane medije, sodelovala pa je tudi s Čehinjami, z revijo *Ženská revue*, ki jo je v Brnu izdajala Zdenka Wiedermanova. Med drugim je bila tudi urednica *Slovenske gospodinjice*. Poleg tega je bila zelo dejavna v ženskih društvih v jugoslovanskem okviru. Nekatere avtorice so jo, podobno tako kot E. Dolinar, poimenovala za »prvo slovensko feministko« (Hočevar 266).

Minka Govekar v svojih spominih krši manj socialnih norm kot zgoraj obravnavani avtorici, tudi njen soprog je povsem drugače opisan. Na vprašanje, kaj jo je najbolj izpolnjevalo v življenju, je tako odgovorila »zveza z možem, ki sem ga razumela in je tudi on mene kolikor toliko razumel« (glej Osebni fond Minka Govekar). Nič čudnega torej, da sta Minka in Fran Govekar v Ljubljani predstavljala idealen par (Hočevar 266). M. Govekar je mož v intelektualnih podvigih podpiral in spodbujal. Nekoliko negativno je označen le na dveh mestih; tako naj bi bil »morilec romantičnih idealov«, ki jih je ubil, ko ji je v branje priporočal Tolstoja, saj se je takrat začela zavedati vse tragike življenja, in pa ker je na poroko z njim čakala dolgih pet let. Zlasti zadnja opomba je zanimiva v luči dejstva, da je za večino meščanskih deklet od seznanitve z bodočim možem do končne poroke običajno preteklo pet let. Zakonske zveze so se ponavadi sklepale po daljšem preudarku, hkrati pa so morali biti izpolnjeni tudi določeni gmotni pogoji. Po vsej verjetnosti njena zamera izhaja iz dejstva, da je bila pred poroko noseča in se je tako z njo mudilo, Fran Govekar pa

tega ni najbolje razumel (Moravec, 103). M. Govekar seveda še zdaleč ni bila edina noseča nevesta, tudi med zelo vidnimi meščankami jih najdemo nekaj. Nosečnost je bila včasih tudi sredstvo, s katerim so v poroko prepričale oklevajočo družino.

V svojih dveh biografijah M. Govekar precej na dolgo opisuje svoje aktivnosti v društvih, pisanje člankov, prevajanje in stike s češkimi feministkami. Podobno kot pri E. Dolinar so aktivnosti za pravice žensk predstavljene kot vir ponosa – vse dokler ne postanejo preveč subverzivne in radikalne. Tako v članku iz leta 1924, napisanem ob njeni petdesetletnici, lahko preberemo: »Pri vsem tem delu pa ga. Minka ni niti najmanj 'feministka' v proslulem pomenu te besede. Nasprotno: vzorna gospodinja je, dobra in srečna žena in mati.« (»Minka Govekarjeva« 3) Prav tako v svojih drugih zapisanih spominih izpostavi: »Sem feministka v dobrem pomenu te besede, napredna in svobodomiselna, dasi ne brezverska.« (glej Osebni fond Minka Govekar) V nadaljevanju tudi piše, da je, denimo, proti feminističnim zahtevam, ki so bile tedaj popularne in so zahtevale enake možnosti žensk na trgu dela; tovrstne zahteve so bile namreč proti zaščitni delavski zakonodaji za matere (Thébaud 74).

Zaključek

Vse tri ženske pripovedi o sebi v središče postavljajo zasebno, družino, partnerja, intimno dogajanje in prav v tem se najbolj razlikujejo od avtobiografij, ki so jih napisali moški. Delitev na javno in zasebno sfero, ki je zaznamovala družbo 19. stoletja, še zdaleč ni bila presežena, čeprav v vsakdanjem življenju nikoli ni bila zares upoštevana. Toda mehanizmi prisile in delitve, ki so iz nje izhajali, so žensko potiskali v družino in ji jemali pravico do nastopa v političnem. Umik političnega delovanja v biografijah E. Dolinar in M. Bartol in nakazovanje v smeri »moje delovanje ni bilo politično« tako zagotovo govorita o marginalnem položaju žensk. Ženske sicer so članice nacionalne skupnosti in v skladu s konvencijami pisanja avtobiografije v devetnajstem stoletju vse pišejo o svojem delovanju na manifestacijah za slovenstvo, o svojem sodelovanju v procesu vzpostavljanja slovenske skupnosti, hkrati pa zavzemajo zaradi spolno določenih vlog v svojih avtobiografijah zelo drugačno pozicijo in za narod delujejo iz obrobja (nepolitično). Ženske tako obdaja precej več omejitev kot pisce, njihova razdvojenost med osebnim in političnim pa je precej bolj opazna kot pri moških avtobiografijah, kjer je zasebno večinoma potisnjeno v molk.

Ženske so v svojih spominih osvojile moški »racionalni« pogled oziroma takratni pogled družbe, o čemer zgovorno pričajo molk E. Dolinar ob oblikovanju lastne nacionalne identitete ali besede M. Govekar, ko se je opredeljevala ob izrazu feminizem. Vendarle pa je ženska perspektiva, ta zamolčani, včasih samocenzurirani kanal, občasno vendarle prišla na plano z opisom majhnih in velikih zamer. Vprašanje, kako predstaviti lastno ustvarjalnost in ambicije, da ne bi bile preveč ogrožajoče, vse to je neprestano sililo ženske v samocenzuro. V tem kontekstu igrajo pri vseh treh pomembno vlogo tudi otroci, ki naj bi zelo zmanjšali količino časa, namenjeno za literarno in publicistično delovanje (Bartol 370; Osebni fond Minka Govekar; Govekar 214). Kljub vsemu pa je število člankov, ki so jih objavile, še vedno presenetljivo, ustvarjalna sila v njih je bila močna in zdi se skoraj, kot da so otroci uporabljeni kot sredstvo, da se njihovo delo po poroki še dodatno minimalizira. Naj ob koncu dodam le še to, da iz vseh spominov veje občutje časa, čustvena krajina devetnajstega stoletja, ki je imela rada ideale in strastno ljubezen, ki se je običajno družila s tragiko in trpljenjem.

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Self-censorship, Family Interpretation and the Influence of Legitimate Narrative on Autobiographies of Women

Keywords: Slovenian literature / Slovenian women writers / nineteenth century / autobiography / self-censorship / Dolinar, Elvira / Govekar, Minka / Bartol, Marica

This article presents a comparative analysis of the autobiographies of Elvira Dolinar, Minka Govekar, and Marica Bartol, analyzing them in the context of the Slovenian autobiographical genre that developed at the end of the nineteenth century. All three women were protagonists of the Slovenian women's movement, active as writers, translators, and publicists. The analysis presents their interpretations of the life story, along with a thematization of their narratives and argumentations, as well as the style of the narrative, which sometimes speaks openly about important life decisions and sometimes remains silent. In this context, the broader historical context is also considered. Their interpretations of life stories are compared to the corresponding interpretations of their lives by family members and the "official narrative." Within this framework, it will become evident how self-censorship can be discerned in the texts and what its goal was. It will be shown that in cases of self-censorship, there are similar but also different themes that are subject to self-censorship, and these will be explored through "different versions of the story."

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.163.6.09:305-055.2

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.09>

Koga nagovarjajo *Shakespearovi soneti* (v slovenščini)?

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Shakespearovih 154 sonetov, ki so prvič izšli leta 1609, je literarna veda tradicionalno razvrščala v dve skupini: soneti 1–126 naj bi opevali čednega mladeniča, soneti 127–154 pa »črno damo«. Večinoma je veljalo tudi, da soneti pripovedujejo precej koherentno pripoved o odnosu lirskega subjekta z njima. Besedilna resnica pa je, da je nemogoče reči, koliko oseb Soneti nagovarjajo, poleg tega pa jih je večina spolsko nezaznamovanih. Analize se pri različnih raziskovalkah in raziskovalcih razlikujejo, avtor članka predlaga naslednjo: od 139 sonetov z eno nagovorjeno osebo je v izvorniku 115 spolsko nedoločenih, 14 jih izrecno opeva moškega, 10 pa žensko. Šest sonetov nagovarja dve osebi, preostali pa abstraktne pojme. V slovenščini sta doslej izšla dva integralna prevoda – leta 1965 prevod Janeza Menarta, štiri desetletja pozneje pa Srečka Fišerja – in prevajalca sta se morala soočiti tudi z vprašanjem spolske (ne) določenosti pesemskih besedil ter s fluidnostjo spola in seksualnosti v izhodiščnih besedilih. Oba sta pri obsežnem spolskem razdvoumljanju sledila tradicionalni razporeditvi sonetov v že omenjeni skupini, pri čemer je Fišer neutralnost ohranil pri nekoliko večjem deležu sonetov kot Menart.

Ključne besede: angleška poezija / Shakespeare, William / soneti / spolna zaznamovanost / slovenski prevod / večpomenskost / razdvoumljanje

Leta 1609 je Thomas Thorpe prvič založil knjigo v kvartnem formatu z naslovom SHAKE-SPEARES / SONNETS. / Neuer before Imprinted., ki jo je v Londonu zanj natiskal George Eld. Thorpe je bil pravico do izdaje knjige uveljavil z vpisom v Tiskarski register 20. maja istega leta. V nasprotju z mnogimi ponatisi drugih Shakespearovih del *Soneti* za časa njegovega življenja niso izšli nikoli več.¹ Nasploh je malo tega, kar lahko o nastanku te, prve izdaje *Shakespearovih sonetov* rečemo zanesljivo. Neskončno več pa je ugibanj, med drugim o tem, komu

¹ Skupaj s *Shakespearovimi soneti* (1609) je bila objavljena tudi *Tožba zaljubljene*, ki je nobena slovenska izdaja *Sonetov* ne vključi. *Tožba* je v slovenščini izšla v prevodu Janka Modra v 14. zvezku Shakespearovih zbranih del.

so soneti namenjeni, ali so avtobiografski, kdaj so nastali, kakšno je njihovo pravo zaporedje in ali jih je Shakespeare sploh želel izdati ali pa gre za neavtorizirano izdajo. Ker gre za kanonsko besedilo književnosti v angleškem jeziku, je recepcijska zgodovina spletla neskončen »niz zapeljivih možnosti in nedokazljivih hipotez« oziroma (z besedami W. H. Audna) »več nesmislov kot o kateremkoli drugem ohranjenem literarnem delu« (cit. v Schoenfeldt, *The Cambridge Introduction* 57).

Prvi ponatis skoraj celotnega besedila *Shakespearovih sonetov* je z letnico 1640 izdal John Benson, ki pa je izpustil osem sonetov, spremenil vrstni red preostalih, jim dal opisne naslove, nekatere združil v daljše pesmi ter spremenil tri moške zaimke (in s tem spol naslovnika) v ženske v 101. sonetu ter zvezo »sweet boy« nadomestil s »sweet love« v 108. sonetu (Edmondson in Wells, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* 118; Burrow 93–94; Kingsley-Smith 3). Tako je »Bensonova izdaja uspešno vnesla dvom o tem, ali in kolikokrat subjekt nagovarja moškega, in implicitno nakazala, da bi soneti, če bi jih preuredili, lahko dobili bolj konvencionalno, dostopno in družbeno sprejemljivo sporočilo« (Duncan-Jones, »Introduction« 44). Ne drži pa, da se zaradi Bensonovih posegov zdi, »kot da so vsi soneti posvečeni neki dami« (Jurak 182), saj so bile njegove spremembe omejene (Shrank 272). Vendarle pa se Bensonova izdaja že dotika vprašanja, ki je tema tega prispevka: koga nagovarja lirski subjekt *Shakespearovih sonetov* in katerega spola je oziroma sta oziroma so v izvorniku in v slovenskem prevodu?

Shakespeareove sonete so v slovenščino prevajali Josip Jurčič, Mile Klopčič, Oton Župančič, Alojz Gradnik, Filibert Benedetič, Janko Moder, Karel Rakovec, Janez Menart in Srečko Fišer (Škulj). Le Menart in Fišer sta prevedla vseh 154 pesmi *Shakespearovih sonetov*. V knjižni obliki sta njuna prevoda izšla v letih 1965 (Menart), 1969 (Menart), 1976 (Menart), 1990 (Menart), 1998 (Menart, izbor 70 sonetov, dvojezična izdaja), 2005 (Fišer, dvojezična izdaja) in 2016 (Menart). Menart je prevode posameznih sonetov z večjimi in manjšimi spremembami že od leta 1950 objavljajal v periodiki. Vse njegove knjižne izdaje imajo razlagalne opombe in spremne zapise (včasih Menartove, včasih drugih avtorjev). Srečko Fišer prevodov drugje ni objavljajal, razen 151. soneta tri leta pred knjižno izdajo (Shakespeare, »Sonet 151«). Njegova izdaja *Sonetov* je brez opomb in spremnih besedil (razen zapisa na zavihku).

Raziskovalna vprašanja, ki si jih zastavljam v tem prispevku, so torej: katerega spola je objekt ljubezenske želje posameznega soneta, če ga sonet ima, ali pa oseba, o kateri lirski subjekt govori oziroma razmišlja? Koliko so interpretacije o spolu nagovorjene osebe ter seksualni želji in usmerjenosti utemeljene v besedilih sonetov ter koliko v parabesedilih

in literarnih študijah? Kako se pri opomenjanju in ospoljenju besedil (predvsem nagovorjenih oseb) prevodi razlikujejo od izvornikov? V ciljnem besedilu neizogibno nastaja nov, prevodu lasten (mnogo)pomenski potencial, in sicer zaradi jezikovnih posebnosti in razlik, subjektivnih in družbeno-kulturnih ter ideoloških okoliščin in prevajalskih strategij. Ker sta spol in spolnost pogosto razumljena kot družbeno nevralglični točki, sta nemalokrat predmet različnih oblik cenzurnih posegov in potvarjanja. Ali to velja tudi za prevode *Sonetov*?

Biografska branja Shakespearovih sonetov

Eno najvplivnejših izdaj v zgodovini *Shakespearovih sonetov* je leta 1780 izdal Edmond Malone, saj se je vrnil k prvotni izdaji ter popravil škodo, ki jo je besedilu povzročil Benson (Duncan-Jones, »Preface« xiv). Ta izdaja pa je bila vplivna še na drug način – Malone je besedila interpretativno zamejil na enega naslovljenca in eno naslovljenko (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 22). Po Malonu je torej obveljalo – v slovenskih zapisih pa je to tako rekoč še zmeraj edina interpretacija –, da Shakespearove sonete v grobem lahko razdelimo v dve skupini: prvih 126 naj bi bilo posvečenih nekemu mladeniču, preostalih 28 pa neki ženski (npr. Menart, »Spremna« xiii; Vidmar 69–71; Jurak 184; Novak 165; Logar 175). Od tukaj pa je le korak do vprašanj, kdo sta bila ta ženska in ta mladenič ter ali je mladenič, ki ga domnevno nagovarjajo soneti, ista oseba kot W. H., ki ga založnik Thorpe omenja v svojem zagonetnem posvetilu.

Pri Slovencih je biografske interpretacije že leta 1965 zavrnil Janko Kos, saj da nimamo podatkov, ki bi nam omogočali dostop do biografskega branja (Kos 93–94). Po drugi strani pa Mirko Jurak meni, da kljub pomanjkanju stvarnih podatkov ni dvoma, »da je pesnik v teh izpovedih na zelo neposreden in oseben način spregovoril o svojem življenju« in »odkril nekatere najintimnejše strani svojega življenja« (Jurak 177), da gre torej »za avtobiografsko izpoved, v kateri je Shakespeare upodobil svoja čustvena stanja in svoj miselni svet, svoje viške in padce, kot so se pač porajali« (184). Podobno tudi Boris A. Novak zapiše, »da so *Soneti* neusmiljeno odkrita, tako rekoč dnevniška izpoved globoke in pretresljive ljubezni« (Novak 165).

Ob branju sonetov je takoj očitno, da v nasprotju z večino drugih sonetistov Shakespeare oseb, ki v pesmih nastopajo, ne poimenuje (Schoenfeldt, *The Cambridge Introduction* 60). Zato je nemara ironično, da 81. sonet nagovorjeni osebi zagotavlja: »Nesmrtno bivanje bo tvoje

ime dobilo, / čeprav bom jaz mrtev za vse, ko bom odšel.« (Callaghan 31) V *Shakespearovih sonetih* ni namreč nobenega osebnega poimenovanja – razen *morda* dveh. Zato se želim kljub nenaklonjenosti biografskim interpretacijam vendarle ustaviti pri spekulacijah, ki so zanimive tudi za prevode.

Stephen Greenblatt v svojem biografsko-spekulativnem branju Shakespearovih del piše, da soneti »bralca naravnost spodbujajo, da bi pripovedovalca poistovetil s Shakespearom« in da v nasprotju z drugimi pesniki, ki so uporabljali psevdonime, Shakespeare ne uporablja »nobene maske, gre za, kot navaja naslov, *Shake-spearove sonete* in pesnik v besednih igrah pogosto uporablja svoje ime« (Greenblatt 212). Soneti 135, 136 in 143 se resda očitno in ponavljajoče se igrajo z besedo »will«, ki je v prvi izdaji včasih pisana z veliko začetnico in v kurzivi, kar pa je lahko tudi, kot piše Schoenfeldt, »bolj namenjeno odkrivanju kalejdoskopa pomenov, ki se kažejo v besedi 'will' kot pa razkrivanju biografskih okoliščin ali avtorjevih najglobljih misli« (Schoenfeldt, *The Cambridge Introduction* 61). Za primer, zanimiv za analizo prevodov, navajam konec 136. soneta, ki nekaterim pomeni edino omembo kakršnegakoli osebnega imena v sonetih, in to še celo pesnika samega (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 33), čeprav se drugim enačaj med subjektom in pesnikom ne zdi utemeljen (Hyland 178). Navsezadnje, tudi če res gre za osebno poimenovanje, je ta Will lahko pesnik, občudovani mladi možki ali mož ženske, ki jo subjekt nagovarja (Schalkwyk 185).

Make but my name thy love, and love that still,	A kljub vsemù ti bom le drag in mil, vsaj kot ime, saj mi ime je Will. (Prev. JM)
And then thou lov'st me for my name is Will.	Ljubi moje ime in nehala nikoli ne boš ljubiti me, saj imam ime po volji. (Prev. SF)

Slovenska prevajalca sta se odločila za prevod različnih delov semantičnega polja leksema »Will«. Očiten zaključek je, da Menartov prevod zadnjo besedo soneta razume in prevede kot osebno ime, Fišerjev pač ne.²

² Izvirnik je vseskozi citiran po Shakespeare, *All the Sonnets*. Menartov prevod (JM) navajam po izdaji iz leta 1976, saj je prevajalec zanjo zapisal, da je »popravljeni ponatis [iz leta 1969] ponovno pregledal in vnesel precej sprememb v postavljanju ločil. Zaradi tega želim, da za morebitne delne ali celotne ponatise teh prevodov služi pričujoča redakcija« (Menart, »Spremna« 164). Skrajšana oznaka za Fišerjev prevod (2005) je SF.

Leta 1971 je Andrew Gurr postavil tezo, da je v zaključnem dvostišju 145. soneta prisotna besedna igra na priimek Hathaway, dekliški priimek Shakespeareove žene Anne (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 4; Strojman 207). Sonet se konča takole:

‘I hate’ from hate away she threw,
And saved my life, saying ‘not you.’

»Sovražim,« je dejal njen glas
s pripombo blago, »a ne vas.« (Prev. JM)

sovražim je za mržnjo ostal na zgubi –
jaz rešen, ko je rekla: *te ne, ljubi*.
(Prev. SF)

Poleg »hate away«, ki bi se lahko izgovorilo enako ali vsaj podobno kot Hathaway, je Stephen Booth v svoji izdaji *Shakespeareovih sonetov* iz leta 1977 predlagal še branje začetka zadnjega verza kot »Anne saved my life«, saj bi bil veznik »and« lahko enakozvočnica za »Anne« (501). Besedna igra, če je res prisotna (nekateri so namreč skeptični, glej npr. Taylor in Loughnane 574), se je s prevodom izgubila.

Število in spol nagovorjenih oseb

Tradicionalno velja, da v *Sonetih* nastopajo »štirje osrednji igralci – lirski subjekt, mladenič, pesnik tekmeč in črna dama« (Schoenfeldt, »Sonnets« 132).³ Četudi se raziskovalke in raziskovalci strinjajo, da je nejasno, »komu je ta knjiga pravzaprav posvečena« (Novak 164), največkrat sprejmejo razporeditev sonetov v že omenjeni skupini. Značilen je takšen zaključek: »Kritiki se tudi strinjajo, da sta tako moški kot ženska, ki jima pesnik namenja svoje sonete, v obeh delih zbirke isti osebi, o katerih pa ne moremo z gotovostjo trditi, kdo sta.« (Jurak 184) In v podobni različici: »Stoštiriinpetdeset sonetov je razvrščenih tako, da nam kažejo vsaj približen oris zgodbe, katere junaki so poleg poželjivega pesnika in lepega mladeniča še en ali dva pesniška tekmeča in črna dama.« (Greenblatt 212)

Toda ali *Soneti* nagovarjajo le enega in istega moškega, le eno in isto žensko ter le enega in istega rivala? Več avtoric in avtorjev opozarja, da takšno razumevanje ni utemeljeno v besedilih sonetov in da mnogi soneti ne nakazujejo niti identitete niti spola osebe, ki jo nagovarjajo

³ Besedna zveza, ki je postala sinonim za naslovljenko, »dark lady« (v slovenščini »črna/temna dama«), se v besedilu sonetov sploh ne pojavi (Hyland 168); še več, ne pojavi se niti »lady« (Hammond 4).

(Burrow 118; Hyland 149). Čeprav »gre za kritično ortodoksijo, ki je v našem času tako mogočna, da se je šele komaj začela rušiti« (Kingsley-Smith 2), pa so osamljeni glasovi že davno tega zagovarjali »domnevo, da Shakespeareovi soneti po vsebini ne tvorijo enega predmetnega cikla, da Shakespeare v njih ne govori o dveh, temveč o mnogih osebah in da kažejo najrazličnejša dejstva pesnikovega življenja« (Morozov 37).

Prvi slovenski prevajalec vseh sonetov, Janez Menart, med prevajalskimi težavami navaja, »da jih je dobra tretjina napisanih tako, da ni jasno, ali so namenjeni moškemu ali ženski.« Pri delu se je zato oprl na literarno zgodovino in njeno stališče, »da so soneti od 1 do 126 napisani moškemu, ostali pa ženski. Tam, kjer sem kljub temu preveč dvomil, sem prevedel tako, da lahko pomeni oboje, tako kot v angleščini« (Menart, »Opombe« 175). Ta Menartov komentar razkriva vsaj dvoje: pomen študij in metabesedil za prevajanje ter teoretično možnost, da bi soneti, ki so spolsko nevtralni v izhodiščnem jeziku, v idealnem prevodu lahko oziroma celo morali ostati spolsko nevtralni tudi v ciljnem jeziku.

Razlagalke in razlagalci, ki se lotevajo branja *Shakespeareovih sonetov* z namenom razbiranja spola ljubljene osebe, ki so ji soneti namenjeni oziroma o kateri govorijo, prihajajo do različnih zaključkov, vsi pa ugotavljajo, da je večina sonetov spolsko nezaznamovanih. Margreta De Grazia spolsko nedoločenost poudarja kot eno Shakespeareovih posebnosti, vsaj v primerjavi z drugimi angleškimi sonetisti, in piše, da je spol nagovorjene osebe nedoločen v približno petih šestinah sonetov med prvimi 126 soneti in v le malo manjšem deležu v celotni zbirki (De Grazia 40–41). Sasha Roberts ugotavlja, da več kot 120 sonetov v celotni zbirki ne uporabi spolsko določenega zaimka, s katerim bi lahko določili spol nagovorjene osebe (Roberts 179). Po štetju Williama Nellesa je 15 sonetov namenjenih moškemu ali govorijo o njem, 20 sonetov je namenjenih ženski ali govorijo o njej, 8 sonetov govori o moškem in o ženski, 111 sonetov pa je spolsko nezaznamovanih (Nelles 131). Paul Edmondson in Stanley Wells sonete, ki nagovarjajo ljudi, v svoji monografiji iz leta 2004 uvrstita v naslednjih pet kategorij: soneti, ki nagovarjajo moškega (20 sonetov), soneti, ki zaradi konteksta ali tematike nakazujejo naslovljenca, vendar bi ob samostojnem branju lahko nagovarjali moškega ali žensko (21 sonetov), soneti, ki nagovarjajo žensko (7 sonetov), soneti, ki zaradi konteksta ali tematike nakazujejo naslovljenko, vendar bi ob samostojnem branju lahko nagovarjali moškega ali žensko (10 sonetov), soneti, ki govorijo o moških in ženskah (4 soneti) (Edmondson in Wells, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* 30). Leta 2020 sta avtorja svojo kategorizacijo nekoliko spremenita in še nadalje razčlenila ter

podala tale seštevek: 121 sonetov nagovarja ljudi, 6 sonetov nagovarja abstraktne pojme, 25 je meditacij, 2 sta prevoda istega grškega epigrama. Pri spolu nagovorjene osebe upoštevata naslednje kategorije: soneti, ki nagovarjajo moškega (14 sonetov), verjetno nagovarjajo moškega (13 sonetov), nagovarjajo žensko (7 sonetov), verjetno nagovarjajo žensko (3 soneti), nagovarjajo moškega ali žensko (84 sonetov).⁴ Avtorja nadalje posebej razporejata sonete, ki govorijo o ženski (3 soneti), o moškem (3 soneti), o razmerju z žensko (1 sonet), o razmerju z moškim (1 sonet) in o razmerju z moškim in žensko (1 sonet) (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 28–29, 32–33). Eva Spišiaková združi sonete, ki jih subjekt naslavlja neposredno v drugi ali o njih govori posredno v tretji osebi, in upošteva štiri kategorije: soneti, ki lahko nagovarjajo moškega ali žensko (125 sonetov), soneti, ki nagovarjajo moškega (15 sonetov), soneti, ki nagovarjajo žensko (9 sonetov), soneti, ki nagovarjajo več oseb (5 sonetov) (Spišiaková 54–55, 113–121).

Edmondson in Wells opozarjata tudi na kulturne vidike branja in pisanja, rekoč, da »ni dvoma, da je prvih sedemnajst sonetov, kot so bili natisnjeni leta 1609, namenjenih moškemu. Shakespeare, ki je pisal v skrajno patriarhalni kulturi, ne bi prepričeval ženske, naj si zagotovi potomstvo. Ali pa je vseh teh sedemnajst sonetov namenjenih istemu moškemu, več moškim ali moškim na splošno, je drugo vprašanje, na katerega ni mogoče odgovoriti« (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 27, 29). Gotovo je pomembno upoštevati tudi to perspektivo, čeprav je branje izven vsakršnih kontekstov pogosto in izpričano. Za 2. sonet, na primer, je v 17. stoletju pogosto veljalo, da nagovarja žensko (Kingsley-Smith 183). Avtorja upoštevata tudi sintaktične in tematske povezave med soneti, ki jih povezujeta v manjše skupine, zaradi česar ponekod pripišeta spol tudi osebam, nagovorjenih v sonetih, ki ga, če te sonete beremo v izolaciji, sami po sebi ne izražajo (Edmondson in Wells, *Shakespeare's Sonnets* 33; Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 18–19, 30). Tu bi se želel pridružiti Nellesovemu opozorilu, da so skupine, v katere avtorja razporejata sonete, zelo majhne, saj mnoge sestavljata komaj dva soneta, zato je treba biti do vsakršnega tovrstnega iskanja vzorcev in izpeljevanja sklepov skeptičen (Nelles 138). Sam besedila posameznih sonetov berem v izolaciji, vsakega zase, ne kot dele tematskih skupin, saj je razbiranje velikih naracij v sonetih preveč tvegano.

⁴ V razpredelnici manjka sonet 150, ki pa ga v opombi pri samem besedilu pesmi označita kot spolsko nevtralnega (Edmondson in Well, »Introduction« 79); torej bi moral biti njun seštevek spolsko nevtralnih sonetov 85 in seštevek sonetov, ki nagovarjajo ljudi, 122.

Po pregledu zaključkov navedenih avtoric in avtorjev in ob svojem branju sonetov sam prihajam do naslednje opredelitve sonetov glede na spol osebe, ki jo lirski subjekt (ali subjektka) nagovarja oziroma o njej govori (glej Prilogo):

- soneti, ki nagovarjajo moškega ali govorijo o njem (14 sonetov);
- soneti, ki nagovarjajo žensko ali govorijo o njej (10 sonetov);
- soneti, v katerih je spol nagovorjene osebe oziroma osebe, o kateri sonet govori, nedoločen (115 sonetov);
- soneti, ki nagovarjajo več oseb oziroma govorijo o njih (6 sonetov).

Kot je razvidno, upoštevam podobne kategorije kot Nelles in Spišiaková, toda v nasprotju z navedenima avtorjem in avtorico v analizi ne upoštevam devetih sonetov, ki ne naslavljajo oseb oziroma ne govorijo o njih, ampak so abstraktne meditacije, večinoma o lepoti, ljubezni, času, poželenju, duši, smrtnosti ipd. (soneti 5, 94, 116, 121, 123, 124, 129, 146, 148). Čeprav sta soneta 153 in 154 morebiti zgolj »šolska vaja v prevajanju« istega grškega epigrama, ne pa intimni ljubezenski izpovedi (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 5), ju vseeno upoštevam, saj govorita o ljubljeni, prav tako pa se izogibam vnaprejšnjim sodbam o stopnji intimnosti.

Ponekod je spol nagovorjene osebe očiten – npr. »lord of my love« (sonet 26), »sweet boy« (sonet 108), »my mistress' eyes« (sonet 130) –, drugod pa delujemo na ravni verjetnosti in spekulacij, zato je treba vsa tovrstna preštevanja in razpredelnice jemati z zadržkom ter bolj kot na natančne številke gledati na širše razvidne značilnosti obravnavanih besedil. V slovenščini spol nagovorjene osebe večinoma zlahka določimo, kar je v angleščini zaradi njene manjše spolske zaznamovanosti težje. Tudi v slovenskih besedilih pa so mesta, kjer je spol nejasen, lahko pa bi ga določili na osnovi posrednih dokazov, jezikovnih in spolnih predsodkov ter stereotipov. Na primer: ali so »prstki« v Menartovem prevodu 128. soneta znak, da gre za žensko (»A da ne onesrečiš tipk, glej, skleni / njim dati prstke, ustnice pa meni!«)? Kako razumeti »ljubezen« v, denimo, zaključnih verzih 66. soneta v Fišerjevem prevodu (»utrujen vsega hotel bi v smrt uiti: / ko mogel bi ljubezen samo zapustiti«)? Pri obeh se v svoji analizi odločam, da je spol nagovorjene osebe nedoločljiv, enako ravnam nasploh, kadarkoli je sonet mogoče razumeti kot spolsko nevtralnega, četudi bi se morda na prvi pogled zdelo, da gre za protiintuitivno branje.

V mojem branju je v izhodiščnem besedilu od 139 sonetov z eno nagovorjeno osebo 115 spolno nedoločljivih (83 %), 14 jih opeva

moškega, 10 pa žensko. Šest sonetov nagovarja (vsaj) dve osebi, preostali pa abstraktne ideje. Pri Menartu je od sonetov z eno nagovorjeno osebo spolsko nevtralnih 51 sonetov (37 %), moškega naslavlja 71, žensko pa 17 sonetov. V Fišerjevem prevodu je 61 sonetov (44 %) spolsko nedoločenih, moškemu jih je namenjenih 59, ženski pa 19. Od tistih 14 sonetov, ki so v izhodiščnem besedilu posvečeni moškemu, jih je pri Menartu 13 ostalo posvečenih moškemu, pri Fišerju pa vseh 14. Od 10, ki so pri Shakespearu posvečeni ženski, je Menart ohranil 8, Fišer pa 9 sonetov, ki so ostali posvečeni ženski. Če primerjamo samo tiste sonete, ki so v izvorniku spolsko nevtralni (115 sonetov), je v prevodih ta nedoločljivost ostala v 48 sonetih pri Menartu in 60 sonetih pri Fišerju. Od sonetov, ki so v izvorniku spolsko določeni, Menart pri enem naslovljenca spremeni v spolsko nedoločeno osebo (sonet 54), pri dveh pa v spolsko nedoločeno osebo spremeni naslovljenko (soneta 141 in 154). Fišer podvoumi en tak sonet (sonet 135), ki iz naslovljenke v izhodiščnem besedilu dobi spolsko nedoločeno nagovorjeno osebo.

izvirnik > prevod		Menart (70 sprememb)	Fišer (56 sprememb)
M > X	število sonetov, v katerih pride do sprememb	1	0
	soneti	54	
Ž > X	število sonetov, v katerih pride do sprememb	2	1
	soneti	141, 154	135
X > M	število sonetov, v katerih pride do sprememb	58	45
	soneti	2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 22, 23, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 55, 56, 58, 64, 65, 66, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 99, 100, 104, 105, 106, 107, 120	2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 17, 18, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 45, 48, 49, 50, 53, 55, 57, 69, 70, 72, 77, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 104, 105, 107, 110, 111, 112, 120

X > Ž	število sonetov, v katerih pride do sprememb	9	10
	soneti	131, 132, 136, 140, 142, 143, 149, 150, 152	131, 132, 136, 140, 142, 143, 147, 149, 150, 152

Tabela 1. Soneti, v katerih v prevodu pride do spremembe spolske (ne)določenosti nagovorjene osebe (M = moški, Ž = ženska, X = spol ni določljiv)

Osnovna statistika je zelo jasna glede trojega: (1) v izvorniku je veliko večji delež spolsko nedoločenih sonetov kot v prevodih, predvsem gre za premike iz nevtralnih v sonete z naslovnikom (homoerotizacija); (2) Fišerjev prevod v večji meri upošteva spolsko nezaznamovanost; in (3) spolsko razdvoumljanje v slovenskih prevodih povsem sledi tradicionalni razporeditvi sonetov v dve skupini (soneti 1–126, ki naj bi bili posvečeni moškemu, in soneti 127–154, ki naj bi bili posvečeni ženski): vsi soneti, ki sta jih prevajalca – oba in brez izjeme – iz spolsko nedoločenih spremenila v sonete, posvečene moškemu, so iz prve skupine, in vsi, ki sta jih iz spolsko nedoločenih spremenila v sonete, posvečene ženski, so iz druge skupine.

Analiza prevodov glede na spol nagovorjene osebe

Eden temeljnih konceptov sodobnega razumevanja književnosti, pa tudi prevoda, je mnogopomenskost oziroma mnogopomenski potencial (umetnostnih) besedil. »Besedilni smisel,« kot piše Marko Juvan, »je dinamičen, izmuzljiv, pogosto tudi protisloven, saj je odvisen od mreže razmerij med jezikovnimi elementi teksta, od njihovih odnosov do drugih besedil, znakovnih sistemov in družbeno-zgodovinske resničnosti, pa tudi od funkcij besedila v situacijah njegove produkcije in recepcije« (Juvan 121). Smisel besedila tako sodoločajo »tudi subjekti, saj njihova miselna, govorna ali bralna dejanja konstituirajo svet, na katerega se jezikovno besedilo nanaša« (133). Izhajajoč iz tega in z mislijo na veliko pomensko polivalentnost Shakespeareovih besedil si analiza, ki sledi, za predmet jemlje le eno, zdaj že očitno vrsto mnogopomenskosti – spolsko odprtost *Shakespeareovih sonetov*. Moja opažanja niso namenjena ocenjevanju prevodov ali kakršnikoli dokončni oceni prevajalskih odločitev ali pa verznim in drugim poetološkim vprašanjem, ampak zgolj orisu strategij razdvoumljanja (in ohranjanja) spolske nezaznamovanosti sonetov v slovenskih prevodih.

Edmondson in Wells za šest sonetov (30, 50, 82, 104, 110 in 111), ki jih v anotacijah sicer spolno ne opredelita, zapišeta, da izraz »friend« uporabijo na način, ki nakazuje naslovljenca, čeprav takoj dodata, da gre za besedo s širokim pomenskim poljem (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 42). Fišer v vseh šestih primerih uporabi samostalnik »prijatelj« in s tem razdvoumi spolsko nedoločenost izvirnika. Menart na nobenem od teh mest ne uporabi »prijatelja«, pač pa izraz dvakrat izpusti (soneta 110 in 111), po enkrat pa uporabi »dragi« (v množini, sonet 30), »dragi« (v ednini, sonet 50), »poet« (sonet 82) in »fant« (sonet 104). V prvih treh primerih ohrani spolsko nezaznamovanost pesemskih besedil. Tule, za primer, je konec 30. soneta:

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend, All losses are restored, and sorrows end.	A če vtem misel nate me prešine, poplačan sem za vse in žalost mine. (Prev. JM) A hip ko tebe spomnim se, prijatelj ljubi, ni žalosti več, ne sledu o kaki izgubi. (Prev. SF)
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Slovenska prevoda zaključnega dvostišja tega soneta ponazorita kompleksnost koncepta »zvestobe« prevoda. S tem ko Fišer ohrani zvalnik (»dear friend«), sonet neizogibno spolsko razdvoumi. Po drugi strani se Menart vokativu odreče, toda s tem ohrani spolsko nedorečenost soneta. Menart zvalnik (»beauteous and lovely youth«) izpusti tudi v 54. sonetu, s čimer sonet z naslovljencem pretvori v sonet s spolom nedoločeno ljubljeno osebo. Fišer je skladen z izhodiščnim besedilom tako ori ohranitvi zvalnika kot tudi spolsko določenega besedila.

And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth, When that shall fade, by verse distils your truth.	In, glej, ko tvoja vrtnica ovene, moj stih ohrani žlahtnost biti njene. (Prev. JM) tako iz tebe, lepi in ljubi moj; ko lice zveni, stih moj bo zvest prekap tvoje resnice. (Prev. SF)
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Podobno kot »friend« je imel tudi leksem »love« v angleščini Shakespeareove dobe širok semantični razpon in je lahko opisoval razmerja različnih vrst, od ljubezenskih do prijateljskih in služabniških (Hammond 18). Očitno (spolsko) polivalenten leksem »lovers« v 55. sonetu Menart pretvori v razdvoumljen izraz »deklet«, na kar opozarja tudi sam: »deklet, izvirnik ima – ljubimcev (lahko moških ali žensk)« (Menart, »Opombe« 181). Fišer to konkretno dvoumnost ohrani.

So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers'
eyes.

takó boš, dókler sam ne vstaneš spet,
živel v teh pesmih in v očeh deklet.
(Prev. JM)

Dotlej – dokler ne vstaneš sam, ko izteče
se čas – tukaj živiš, tvoj dom so oči
ljubeče. (Prev. SF)

Tudi sicer se Fišer po pravilu izogiba razdvoumljanju leksema »love«, ki ga načeloma prevaja kot »ljubezen«, s čimer poleg spolske neopredeljenosti objekta želje ohranja tudi abstraktni pomen ljubezni. Tudi on »love« včasih razdvoumi, npr. v samostalnike »ljubi« (sonet 63, kjer pa je tudi v izvorniku razvidno, da gre za naslovljenca), »ljuba« in »draga« (soneta 138 in 139, kjer pa je tudi v izhodiščnem besedilu razvidno, da gre za naslovljenko).

Obratno pa Menart leksem »love« precej dosledno spolno razdvoumlja, kar pa ima posledico, ki je prav nasprotna od pravkar omenjene heteronormalizacije 55. soneta. V prvi skupini sonetov (1–126), za katero tradicionalno velja, da nagovarja moškega, Menart »love«, kadar se nanaša na osebo, po pravilu prevaja kot »dragi« (npr. soneti 13, 22, 40, 63, 65, 66, 76, 79, 100, 101), pa tudi kot »mili« (sonet 72) in »ljubi« (sonet 99), izraz pa včasih tudi izpusti (npr. soneta 82 in 89). V zaključnem dvostihu 66. soneta, na primer, se Menart odloči za prevod »love« v »dragi«, pri čemer ogovorjenega iz tretje spremeni v drugo osebo. Fišer vztraja pri svoji prevajalski strategiji in »love« prevede« z »ljubezen«, ohrani pa tudi tretjo slovnično osebo in spolsko dvoumen sonet. Mile Klopčič (1937) v svoji različici sicer ohrani tretjo osebo, toda ker »love« prevede v »prijatelja«, se odloči za naslovljenca.

utrujen od vsega, bi rad zaspal,
če ne bi ti, moj dragi, sam ostal.
(Prev. JM)

Tired with all these, from these would
I be gone,
Save that to die I leave my love alone.

utrujen vsega hotel bi v smrt uiti:
ko mogel bi ljubezen samo zapustiti.
(Prev. SF)

izmučilo me je, da rad bi umrl,
če ne bi s tem prijatelja potrl.
(Prev. Klopčič)

Odločitev za prevod leksema »love« v »dragi« Menart pojasni takole: »Da bi se čimbolj približal renesančnemu pomenu besede 'love' in da ne bi prejudiciral, kako je razumeti razmerje med pesnikom in prijateljem,

sem uporabljal besedo 'dragi', ki jo je mogoče razumeti tako ali tako, kot v angleščini.« (Menart, »Opombe« 175) Poleg tega, da se lahko ta interpretacija glede prejudiciranja razmerja med pesnikom in prijateljem danes zdi vprašljiva, ima Menartova prevajalska odločitev učinek večje spolske zaznamovanosti (tj. homoerotizacije) sonetov v primerjavi z izhodiščnim besedilom in tudi s Fišerjevim prevodom.

Tudi sonet 147 je v izvirniku spolsko nezaznamovan, v prevodu pa opazimo podobne strategije kot doslej:

da tvoj obraz ves lep je in sijoč,
čprav je grd kot vrag, teman kot noč.
(Prev. JM)

For I have sworn thee fair, and thought
thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as
night.

saj mislim in razglašam na vso moč,
da lepa si, a črna si kot noč.
(Prev. Menart 1993)

kajti da svetla si kot luč, sem se zarekel;
pa temna si kot noč in črna bolj kot
peklo. (Prev. SF)

Menart v prvotnem prevodu nagovor iz druge osebe ednine spremeni v govor v tretji osebi, o obrazu objekta poželenja, in ohrani spolsko nedoločenost. Nova, poskusna, a po mnenju prevajalca samega šibkejša verzija iz leta 1993 (Menart, »O prevajalskem« 70), vpelje drugoosebni nagovor, s tem pa tudi spol naslovljenke. Podobno ravna Fišer.

Sonet 18, ki je v izhodiščnem besedilu spolsko nezaznamovan, je pri Menartu in Fišerju posvečen moškemu. Karel Rakovec pa se je pri prevodu tega soneta odločil za ženske slovnične oblike (Rakovec 51). Tudi v filmu *Zaljubljeni Shakespeare* (režiser John Madden, scenarista Marc Norman in Tom Stoppard, 1998) naslovni junak 18. sonet piše ženski (Schoenfeldt, »Sonnets« 137). Slovenski podnapisi temu ustrezno prilagodijo Menartov prevod iz »Te naj primerjam mar s poletnim dnevem? / Ti manj minljiv si in bolj poln miline« v »Naj te primerjam mar s poletnim dnevem? / Ti manj minljiva si in polnejša miline«. Je takšno branje – in prevajanje – napačno? Najbrž le pod predpostavkami, da je zaporedje sonetov v zbirki iz leta 1609 Shakespeareovo in da pripoveduje neko jasno zgodbo ter da naj avtorjeva intenca pri pisanju omejuje tudi naše branje (Kingsley-Smith 4). Kadar govorimo o prevodu, je težava najbrž drugje, in sicer pri razdvoumljanju spolsko nespecifičnega izvornika. V tem smislu pa so vsi trije prevodi enako (ne) problematični, čeprav imata Menartov in Fišerjev na svoji strani močno uveljavljeno, večstoletno literarnovedno tradicijo.

Menartov prevod soneta 122 nam lahko osvetli vlogo, ki jo ima paratekst pri realizaciji pomenskega potenciala besedil. Sonet, ki je v izvorniku spolsko nedoločen, tak ostaja tudi v obeh slovenskih prevodih, vendar pa Menart v svojih opombah govori o »prijatelju«, s čimer besedilo posredno spolsko razdvoumi. Odločitev za »prijatelja« je sem ter tja povezana tudi z željo, da bi »odpravili vsakršno domnevo, da bi v tem odnosu lahko obstajal seksualen element« (Hammond 3–4). V takšni interpretaciji Mirko Jurak zapiše: »V nekaterih sonetih, kot na primer v 56. in 110., je čutna navezanost pesnika na njegovega prijatelja zelo jasno izražena, čeprav se lahko vprašamo, ali se morda za njo ne skriva hrepenenje po sožitju dveh sorodnih duš, še zlasti, ker se je pesnik strastem odrekel v 20. sonetu.« (Jurak 197)

Prav 20. sonet, ki je predmet mnogih različnih in medsebojno izključujočih se interpretacij, je tozadevno posebej znamenit. Pesem je očitno posvečena moškemu, in tukaj se slovenska prevoda ujemata z izhodiščnim besedilom. Bolj povedne so interpretacije tega soneta, saj ga literarna zgodovina navaja »kot potrditev, da je bil Shakespeare homoseksualec, in kot dokaz, da je bil heteroseksualec« (Schoenfeldt, *The Cambridge Introduction* 91). Slovenska literarna veda je bolj naklonjena drugi možnosti, ki jo ilustrira pravkar navedeno Jurakovo mnenje, da se je »pesnik strastem odrekel v 20. sonetu«. Podobna stališča sta v šestdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja zagovarjala tudi Janez Menart in Janko Kos. Menart navaja razlage, ki »dokazujejo, da pesnik ni bil nikdar homoseksualec v fizičnem smislu (kvečjemu morda psihično nagnjen k moškim)« (Menart, »Opombe« 177),⁵ Kos pa meni, da je »Shakespeare sam [v sonetu 20] nedvoumno povedal, da čustvo, ki ga veže na naslovljenca, ne izvira iz erotičnih nagibov v pravem pomenu besede« (Kos 96). Te razlage so v določenem nasprotju s prevodi, saj je želja, ki jo ubesedujejo slovenska besedila sonetov, homoerotična v veliko večjem deležu kot v izvorniku. V izhodiščnem besedilu je namreč le 14 sonetov izrecno namenjenih moškemu, pri Menartu jih je 71, pri Fišerju pa 59.

Tradicija kritičkega pojasnjevanja in opravičevanja fiksacije lirskega subjekta 20. soneta na penis naslovljenca sicer izhaja iz zadnjih desetletij 18. stoletja, ko se je Georgeu Steevensu zdelo nemogoče »brati to slavospev, namenjen moškemu, brez enakomerne mešanice gnusa in ogorčenja« (nav. v Kingsley-Smith 124). Edmond Malone mu je odgovoril, da so bili takšni nagovori v Shakespearovem času običajni in niso veljali za nespodobne ali kriminalne (Kingsley-Smith 124). Ta zagovor pa se v nekaterih interpretacijah pojavlja še danes. Tudi pri Tinetu Logarju, ki kar petino sicer kratkega zapisa k najnovejši izdaji

⁵ Te opombe v poznejših izdajah ni več.

Menartovega prevoda *Sonetov* (2016) nameni anahronističnemu zatrtjevanju, da pesnik ni bil homoseksualec:

V nekaj zgodnjih sonetih je v ospredju ljubezen lirskega subjekta do moškega, na podlagi česar so nekateri menili, da je bil Shakespeare homoseksualec. Vendar je tako sklepanje neosnovano in kaže na nepoznavanje elizabetinskega časa, ko ni bilo nič nenavadnega, če so si prijatelji izkazovali čustva velike naklonjenosti. Dejstvo je tudi, da večina sonetov govori o ljubezni med moškim in žensko, pa tudi o seksualnih odnosih med lirskim subjektom in njegovo ljubico. (Logar 176)

Ravno obratno od trditve, »da večina sonetov govori o ljubezni med moškim in žensko«, avtor na prejšnji strani zapiše, da je »večina (od 1 do 126) posvečenih mladeniču W. H.« (175). In čeprav avtor zapisa ugotavlja, da so »soneti v zgodovini doživeli zelo različna branja« in da jih določa »izjemna pomenska odprtost« (176), se zdi, da za to izdajo, ki naj bi Shakespeara sicer želela še posebej približati mladini, pomenska odprtost ne pomeni tudi resnične inkluzivnosti, ampak zgolj skrbno regulirano polodprtost, ki naj nekatera branja še naprej onemogoča.

Spolska nezaznamovanost in pomenska odprtost Shakespeareovih pesemskih besedil druge razlagalke in razlagalce vodi k novim poudarkom in opomenjanjem. Edmondson in Wells, na primer, v svoji izdaji vseh Shakespeareovih sonetov ugotavljata, da je razmeroma malo razlag, ki bi *Sonete* brale kot eno osrednjih biseksualnih besedil književnosti v angleščini (Edmondson in Wells, »Introduction« 31). S svojo izdajo želita to interpretacijo posebej podčrtati, kar poudarjata tudi v (promocijskih) nastopih in objavah.



Tvit soavtorja in sourednika izdaje *All the Sonnets of Shakespeare* (2020), Twitter, 23. september 2022 (posnetek zaslona, 26. oktober 2022)

Tudi v šestih sonetih, ki tematizirajo ljubezenske trikotnike, je zaznati precejšnjo spolno fluidnost ali pa vsaj dvoumnost.

sonet	izvirnik	Menart	Fišer
40	X+X	M+Ž	M+X
41	M+Ž	M+Ž	M+Ž
42	X+Ž	M+Ž	M+Ž
133	X+M	X+M	Ž+M
134	X+M	Ž+M	Ž+M
144	M+Ž	M+Ž	M+Ž

Tabela 2. Soneti, v katerih lirski subjekt nagovarja dve osebi
(M = moški, Ž = ženska, X = spol ni določljiv)

V izhodiščnem besedilu le pri dveh sonetih (41 in 144) poleg lirskega subjekta nedvoumno participirata še moški in ženska, pri dveh (133, 134) je poleg moškega spol tretje osebe nedoločen, pri enem (42) je poleg ženske spol tretje osebe nedoločen, pri enem (40) pa je spol obeh ljubljenih oseb nedoločen. To omogoča zelo raznolika in spolno ter seksualno vključujoča branja teh sonetov.

Oba slovenska prevajalca sta pri petih od šestih sonetov predvidela, da gre pri nagovorjenih osebah za žensko in moškega, vsak pri enem pa sta pustila nekaj nedoločenosti: Menart je 133. sonet prevedel tako, kot je v izvirniku, torej da poleg ljubljenega moškega spol tretje osebe ostaja nedoločen, Fišer pa je 40. sonet prevedel tako, da je od v izvirniku spolsko nedoločenih oseb eno razdvoumil v moškega, drugo pa pustil spolsko nezaznamovano.

V 144. sonetu je subjekt razpet med istospolno in raznospolno erotiko, ki ju kot v kakšni moraliteti zastopata dva angela (Schoenfeldt, »Sonnets« 138). Tretji in četrti verz soneta ju označita takole:

Moj angel fant je, lep kot nihče drug,
zli duh je ženska črnega sijaja. (Prev. JM)

Moj angel moški je, ves lep in ljub,
moj vrag je črnolaska, polna zla.
(Prev. Menart 2002)

The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman coloured ill.

[...] ta je angel, mož dober in ljub,
drugi je demon, ženska, ki je barve zloče.
(Prev. SF)

moj boljši angel – fant s poltjo bleščéčo,
moj hujši duh – podoben temni ženi.
(Prev. Moder 1973)

V navedenih verzih ima izhodiščno besedilo samostalniški par moški – ženska (man – woman), ki se mu najbolj približa Fišer (mož – ženska), Menart in Moder se odločita za »fanta«, ki v skladu s tradicionalnim razumevanjem sonetov nakazuje starostno razliko med subjektom in naslovljencem kakor tudi med naslovljenko in naslovljencem. Menart v svoji novi, poskusni različici iz leta 2002 (Menart, »O prevajalskem« 90) uvede »moškega«, žensko pa spremeni v »črno-lasko«, s čimer sledi tistim razlagam, ki brez dokazov verjamejo, da je imela naslovljenka temne lase.

Zaključek

Številni raziskovalke in raziskovalci Shakespeareovih sonetov se kljub razhajanjem pri podrobnostih strinjajo, da je v izvorniku večina pesmi spolsko nevtralnih. Po mojem štetju je takih 115 od 139 sonetov, ki nagovarjajo eno osebo, pri štirih od šestih, ki opevajo dve, pa je vsaj ena oseba neospoljena. Vse bolj za neutemeljeno se izkazuje tudi sklepanje, da gre pri prvih 126 sonetih za opis ene same ljubezenske navezanosti na enega samega moškega in pri ostalih za eno in isto žensko. To ima pomembne posledice tudi za prevajanje teh besedil in analizo prevodov, saj prevajalke in prevajalci reproducirajo predpostavke, prepričanja, norme in predsodke ciljne kulture, in čeprav se morda zdi, da so njihove odločitve zgolj jezikovne, so (tudi) posledica kulturnih, družbenih, ideoloških in drugih vidikov. O tem, kako bodo pristopili k prevajanju in ga izvedli, odloča obilica dejavnikov, med katerimi so tudi njihove subjektivne teorije in ideologije, sposobnosti, znanje itd. V tem – če se omejim samo na temo svojega prispevka, torej spolsko (ne) določenost oseb, ki jih nagovarjajo Shakespeareovi soneti – mora vsako branje (in tako tudi prevajanje) presoditi, koliko bo znotraj objektivnih možnosti (recimo ospoljenosti jezika) med vsem drugim upoštevalo tudi fluidnost spola in seksualnosti izhodiščnega besedila. Skratka, koliko bo tudi samo odprto in inkluzivno, koliko pa bo vztrajalo na pozicijah, ki temu – in Shakespeareovemu izvorniku – nasprotujejo.

Ne pri Menartu ne pri Fišerju ne bi mogli govoriti o cenzuri v klasičnem pomenu prikrivanja ali brisanja neželenih vsebin; še več, pri njunem prevodu *Sonetov* med drugim opazimo očitno nasproten učinek, saj lirski subjekt nagovarja moškega v veliko več sonetih kot v izvorniku, kar je ravno obratno od tega, kar bi pri cenzuri pričakovali. Pogojno pa bi morda lahko govorili o »cenzuri« spolske nezaznamovanosti oziroma fluidnosti izhodiščnih besedil, toda ker je prevajanje

najprej branje in interpretacija besedila, so razdvoumljanja in oženja (ali pa širitve) pomenskega potenciala njegov neizbežen, celo bistven del.

»William Shakespeare je bil skoraj zagotovo homoseksualen, biseksualen ali heteroseksualen. Njegovi soneti o tej zadevi ne ponujajo nikakršnih dokazov,« je leta 1977 zapisal Stephen Booth (Booth 548). Če bi pisal danes, bi morda uporabil (še) kakšne druge izraze, recimo nebinaren, panseksualen, poliamoren itn., vendarle pa poanta ostaja enaka: soneti o pesnikovi biografiji ne morejo povedati nič posebej konkretnega in nič zelo dokončnega. Zato je od biografskih in identitetopolitičnih oznak pesnika za branje in prevajanje Shakespearovih sonetov pomembnejše priznanje, da gre za odprta besedila, katerih opomenjanje neizogibno trči ob bralska in prevajalska pričakovanja, izkušnje, predsodke, vrednote, prepričanja ali pa literarnozgodovinsko tradicijo, ki njihov pomenski potencial omeji (ali razširijo).

Priloga

Prevodi Shakespearovih sonetov v slovenščino z oznako spola nagovorjene osebe (M = moški, Ž = ženska, X = spol ni določljiv, / = sonet ne naslavlja osebe, okvirček brez oznake pomeni, da prevajalec tega soneta ni prevedel)

sonet	izvirnik	Menart	Fišer	Jurčič	Klopčič	Župančič	Gradnik	Benedetič	Moder	Rakovec
1	M	M	M				M			
2	X	M	M							
3	M	M	M				M			
4	X	M	M							
5	/	/	/							
6	X	M	M							
7	X	M	M							
8	X	M	M							
9	M	M	M							
10	X	M	M							
11	X	M	X							
12	X	X	X							

13	X	M	M							
14	X	X	X							
15	X	X	X							
16	M	M	M							
17	X	M	M							
18	X	M	M							Ž
19	M	M	M				M			
20	M	M	M							
21	X	X	X							
22	X	M	X							
23	X	M	X							
24	X	X	X							
25	X	X	X							
26	M	M	M							
27	X	X	X							
28	X	X	X							
29	X	X	X							
30	X	X	M							
31	X	X	X							
32	X	M	X							
33	X	X	M							
34	X	M	M							
35	X	M	M							
36	X	M	M							
37	X	X	X							
38	X	M	X							
39	X	X	M							
40	X+X	M+Ž	M+X							
41	M+Ž	M+Ž	M+Ž							
42	X+Ž	M+Ž	M+Ž							
43	X	X	X							
44	X	X	X							
45	X	M	M							
46	X	X	X							
47	X	M	X							

48	X	M	M							
49	X	M	M							
50	X	M	M							
51	X	X	X							
52	X	M	X							
53	X	X	M							
54	M	X	M							
55	X	M	M				M			
56	X	M	X							
57	X	X	M							
58	X	M	X							
59	X	X	X							
60	X	X	X							
61	X	X	X							
62	X	X	X							
63	M	M	M							
64	X	M	X							
65	X	M	X							
66	X	M	X		M					
67	M	M	M							
68	M	M	M							
69	X	X	M							
70	X	M	M							
71	X	M	X				X			
72	X	M	M							
73	X	X	X							
74	X	M	X							
75	X	M	X							
76	X	M	X							
77	X	M	M							
78	X	M	X							
79	X	M	X							
80	X	X	X							
81	X	M	M							
82	X	M	M							
83	X	M	M							
84	X	M	M							

85	X	X	X						
86	X	X	X						
87	X	M	M						
88	X	M	M						
89	X	M	M						
90	X	M	M						
91	X	M	X						
92	X	M	M						
93	X	M	M						
94	/	/	/						
95	X	M	M						
96	X	M	M						
97	X	X	X				X		
98	X	X	X			X			
99	X	M	X						
100	X	M	X						
101	M	M	M						
102	X	X	X						
103	X	X	X						
104	X	M	M						
105	X	M	M						
106	X	M	X						
107	X	M	M						
108	M	M	M						
109	X	X	X						
110	X	X	M						
111	X	X	M						
112	X	X	M						
113	X	X	X						
114	X	X	X						
115	X	X	X						
116	/	/	/					/	
117	X	X	X						
118	X	X	X						
119	X	X	X						
120	X	M	M						
121	/	/	/						

122	X	X	X							
123	/	/	/							
124	/	/	/							
125	X	X	X							
126	M	M	M							
127	Ž	Ž	Ž							
128	X	X	X							Ž
129	/	/	/							
130	Ž	Ž	Ž							
131	X	Ž	Ž							
132	X	Ž	Ž							
133	X+M	X+M	Ž+M							
134	X+M	Ž+M	Ž+M							
135	Ž	Ž	X							
136	X	Ž	Ž							
137	X	X	X							
138	Ž	Ž	Ž						Ž	
139	Ž	Ž	Ž							
140	X	Ž	Ž							
141	Ž	X	Ž	Ž						
142	X	Ž	Ž							
143	X	Ž	Ž							
144	M+Ž	M+Ž	M+Ž						M+Ž	
145	Ž	Ž	Ž							
146	/	/	/							/
147	X	X	Ž							
148	/	/	/							
149	X	Ž	Ž							
150	X	Ž	Ž							
151	Ž	Ž	Ž							
152	X	Ž	Ž							
153	Ž	Ž	Ž							
154	Ž	X	Ž							

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Who are the Addressees of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (in Slovenian)?

Keywords: English poetry / Shakespeare, William / sonnets / gender / Slovenian translation / polysemy / disambiguation

Shakespeare's Sonnets (1609) were traditionally understood as falling into two groups: sonnets 1–126 were said to celebrate a handsome young man and sonnets 127–154 were thought to address a “dark lady.” It was also generally believed that the sonnets develop a fairly coherent narrative of the speaker's relationship with the two individuals. The textual truth, however, is that it is impossible to determine how many addressees the *Sonnets* have or what gender they are. The article argues that out of the 139 sonnets with one addressee, 115 are ungendered in the source text (83%), while 14 are about a man and 10 are about a woman. Six sonnets have (at least) two addressees and the rest are about abstract concepts. Two integral Slovenian translations have been published so far—by Janez Menart in 1965 and by Srečko Fišer in 2005—and in confronting gender ambiguity and sexual fluidity in the source texts, both translators followed the traditionally assumed gendering of the sonnets, with Fišer maintaining neutrality in a slightly larger proportion of the sonnets than Menart (44% and 37% respectively).

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.111.09-1Shakespeare W.

81'255.4=163.6

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.10>

Goreča *Erotika* in Cankarjeva revolucija v slovenskem pesništvu

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Konec 19. stoletja je slovensko literarno polje pretresel nastop novoromantične umetniške generacije. Med začetniki slovenske »moderne« je daleč največ prahu dvignil Ivan Cankar s pesniško zbirko Erotika – njen izid je namreč pospremil odmeven recepcijski škandal. Cankarjev knjižni prvenec, pristni sadež pesništva slovenske dekadence, je takoj po izidu marca 1899 večinoma pokupil in požgal ljubljanski škof Anton Bonaventura Jeglič. Poseg, ki ga je liberalni tisk izkoristil za frontalni napad na »inkvizicijsko« mentaliteto klerikalnega tabora, je ambicioznega mladega literata postavil v središče zanimanja kot znanilca erotične revolucije v slovenski poeziji. Razprava uvodoma oriše potek slovite cenzurne epizode, nato pa s pozornim branjem Erotike – zlasti najbolj problematičnega cikla »Dunajski večeri« – pokaže, zakaj je zbirka morala v ogenj. Kot se izkaže v nadaljevanju s pomočjo kratke primerjave s sodno prepovedanimi pesmimi iz Baudelairejevih Rož zla, razvpitega škofovega posega v resnici ni mogoče označiti za cenzuro v strogem smislu, saj za njim ni (več) stal represivni državni aparat. Jeglič se v tej epizodi bolj kot omnipotentni inkvizitor izkaže kot karikirani cenzor brez dejanske izvršne moči. Cankarja so kot angažiranega pisatelja resnično boleči posegi uradne cesarske cenzure doleteli šele nekaj let pozneje.

Ključne besede: slovenska poezija / Cankar, Ivan: *Erotika* / moderna / dekadenca / cenzura / obscenost / blasfemija

Ubeseditve intimnosti so od nekdanj zbudale nelagodje in izzivale cenzuro.¹ Preganjanje ljubezenske in erotične poezije ima dolgo zgodovino in je privzemalo različne oblike: od prepovedi in fizičnega uničevanja del do omejevanja dostopa, čiščenja (*expurgatio*) in prirejanja besedil. Na udaru skrbnikov morale so bile tako avtorice (kot kažejo študije v tej številki, te še posebej izrazito) kot avtorji: konec koncev je

¹ Razprava je nastala v okviru raziskovalnega projekta »Slovenski literati in cesarska cenzura v dolgem 19. stoletju« (J6-2583), ki ga iz državnega proračuna sofinancira Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije.

prva znana cenzurirana ljubezenska pesnica Sapfo, medtem ko klasični primer iz rimskega pesništva predstavlja Ovidij, ki je rojake namesto v ideologijo osvajalskega imperija (*militia patriae*) napeljeval k drugačnim, ljubezenskim bojem (*militia amoris*) – a je svojo predrznost naposled plačal z izgnanstvom. Navihani pesnik, ki je čudežno preživel avgustejski *damnatio memoriae* in celo srednji vek, je prag drznosti erotične izpovedi v zbirkah *Amores*, *Ars amatoria* in *Remedia amoris* postavil visoko: po njem ga je bržkone šele v renesansi dvignil kontroverzni florentinski pesnik Pietro Aretino s (pornografskimi) *Sonetti lussuriosi*, ki so bili deležni ostrega pregona.² Toda erotični diskurz v novem veku ni zares vzcvetel, saj se je kot dežurni zatiralec seksualne eksplicitnosti vzpostavila cerkvena cenzura (v katoliških deželah jo paradigmatično zastopa papeški *Index librorum prohibitorum*), po njeni postopni sekularizaciji pa so takšno prakso nadaljevali državni cenzorji, varuhi »javne morale«. Tako je radikalnejša erotična izpoved – večinoma seveda moške in heteroseksualne – morala v ilegalo,³ medtem ko je v visoki literaturi, tudi v poeziji, ostala omejena: celo romantika, ki vzneseno kipi od ljubezni, je v tem pogledu značilno zavrta in sublimirana.⁴ Nalogo, da na novo umeri pragove dopustnega, si je šele v drugi polovici 19. stoletja zadala novoromantična poezija, zlasti dekadencična. V ta kontekst pa se v slovenski literaturi seveda umešča zlasti epizoda požiga Cankarjeve *Erotike*.⁵

***Erotika* 1899: dekadentna revolucija v slovenskem pesništvu**

V impresivni celoti Cankarjevega opusa, ki v *Zbranem delu* obsega kar trideset knjig, pesništvo sprva deluje nekoliko obrobno. Toda podrobnejši pogled na Cankarjeve objavljene in neobjavljene pesmi kaže, da je ta opus še vedno tehten tako po obsegu (dve knjigi) kot po vsebini. Ni dvoma o tem, da je Cankar na slovensko literarno polje ambiciozno stopil predvsem kot pesnik: začel je pesniti že pri petnajstih,

² O Sapfo prim. Lester, o Ovidiju Gantar, o Aretinu Green in Karolides 20.

³ V večjih književnostih se je v novem veku razvil živahen in finančno pomemben črni trg z erotično in pornografsko literaturo. Slovensko pornografsko poezijo dokumentira antologija Marjana Dolgana in Mirana Hladnika *Fuk je Kranjcem v kratak čas* (1993).

⁴ Kljub temu je bila deležna pregona: že Prešernova ljubezenska poezija je bila deležna cenzorskih posegov, pa tudi znamenite obsodbe, da »nam v zlati, umeteljno izdelani posodi podaja strup pregrešne strasti« (Mahnič, *Dvanajst večerov* 155).

⁵ O slovenski literaturi in cenzuri v 19. st. prim. Dović, »Slovenski literati«.

se v dijaških združenjih »Sloga« in »Zadruga« po letu 1891 v krogu mladih svobodomislecev proslavil z zbadljivimi pesmimi na račun (klerikalnih) nasprotnikov svobodne misli in umetnosti,⁶ od leta 1893 pa je svoje verze objavljal v osrednjem literarnem glasilu liberalne orientacije, *Ljubljanskem zvonu*.

Tako je mladi Cankar, ki je v Ljubljani neuradno že slovel kot prvak »dekadentov«, od aprila 1897 mislil tudi na samostojno pesniško zbirko, ki jo je hotel izdati pri Bambergu. Zanj je uspešno lobiral s pomočjo Antona Aškercera in Frana Levca in že 14. junija 1897 z Bambergom sklenil pogodbo o izdaji knjige, za katero je dobil spodoben honorar 200 goldinarjev, izplačan v dveh obrokih do konca septembra.⁷ Po manjših zapletih – Cankar je zavlačeval z oddajo rokopisa (popravljanje in dopolnjevanje) kar do sredine julija 1898, Bamberg pa je potem zamujal z dokončanjem tiska, je *Erotika* naposled izšla konec marca 1899 (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 246–254). Zbirka je skupaj obsegala 50 pesmi, od tega jih je bilo le 20 že prej revijalno objavljenih, razdeljena pa je bila v štiri cikle: »Helena« (10 pesmi), »Iz lepih časov« (20 pesmi), »Dunajski večeri« (8 pesmi) in »Romance« (12 pesmi). Vsekakor je šlo za drzno izdajo. Že naslov je bil neposredno izzivalen in Cankar se je zavedal, da utegne povzročiti škandal. Tudi po vsebinski plati je bila poezija – navdahnile so jo Cankarjeve (konkretne) muze, ki jih je v teh letih pesnik hitro menjaval – provokativna: zbirka, ki bi bila kot celota posvečena (erotični) ljubezni, v slovenskem jeziku dotlej še ni izšla.⁸

Nekaj dni po prvih časnikarskih noticah o izidu knjige se je začel »vik in krik«, ki ga je v pismu napovedal Fran Govekar. 1. aprila je katoliški *Slovenski list* anonimno diskvalificiral Cankarja: pesmi v tej »kužni« zbirki naj bi narekovala pohota (»Ta piruh je zaprtek; kdor ga kupiš, odpri okno, da ti ne okuži zraka«, Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 255). Toda razmere je zares zaostriła šele intervencija ljubljanskega škofa Antona Bonaventure Jegliča, ki je kmalu po izidu pri založniku pokupil vse dosegljive izvode *Erotike* – od natisnjenih 1000 izvodov

⁶ Prim. neobjavljene pesmi, kot so »Junaška pesem iz naših dnij«, »Modrijan«, »Svoboda«, »Pred škofijo« v Cankar, *Zbrano delo 2*, gl. tudi opombe.

⁷ Cankar že resno računa na honorar, ki bi mu omogočil svobodo od »podlistkarstva«. O Cankarju kot profesionalnem pisatelju prim. Dovič, »Cankar«.

⁸ Privlačne domneve, da bi na izbiro naslova utegnil vplivati odmevni pesniški prvenec *Neurotica* iz leta 1891 Felixa Dörmanna (s pravim imenom Felix Biedermann), »prva nemška pesniška zbirka, ki je skoz in skoz prežeta s povsem tipično dekadenco miselnostjo« (Pirjevec 45), doslej ni bilo mogoče potrditi. Težko pa je verjeti, da radovedni Cankar odmevne zbirke, ravno tako preganjane zaradi blasfemije in nemoralnosti, ne bi poznal, čeprav Dörmanna nikjer konkretno ne omenja (Pirjevec 143–144).

naj bi jih v roke dobil okrog 700 – in jih dal sežgati. Cankar je hitro dojel, da škofov »inkvizicijski« poseg na dolgi rok ne bo mogel povsem uničiti pesmi, saj je že 9. aprila pisal bratu Karlu: »Škof je torej res tako prismojen, da se grè blamirat s tako srednjeveško neumnostjo. Pesmij s tem ni zatrl. Zakaj po §. 20. zákona o autorjevem pravu mora izdati založnik tekom treh let drugo izdajo knjige, drugače pa imá vse pravice zopet pisatelj sam« (257).⁹

Razvnela se je huda polemika, ki jo zvesto dokumentirajo opombe Franceta Bernika k prvi knjigi Cankarjevih *Zbranih del*. Cankarju se je 10. aprila v bran postavil socialdemokratski *Rdeči prapor*, ki se je pritožil nad »novodobno inkvizicijo«, *Slovenski narod* pa je v polemičnem uvodniku 13. aprila ostro napadel katoliško duhovščino in jo obtožil, da so se iz njenih vrst od nekdaj rekrutirali najbolj »fanatični sovražniki duševne svobode«, omejeni zeloti, ki zatirajo svobodno misel in umetnosti. Dva dni pozneje je F. G. (najverjetneje Fran Govekar) v podlistku »Žrtve zelotizma« še zaostril obtožbe in napadel fanatično »sovrašstvo slovenskega klerikalizma do svobodne besede«; klerikalne »zelote« pa označil za »bornirane reakcionarje« ter »slepce in glušce za umetnost«:

Od slovitega škofa Hrena, ki je sežigal cele vozove slovenskih knjig, do kranjskega dekana Dagarina, in do škofa Mahniča, ki je proklel »pijanca in pohotnika« Prešerna, do Mahniča, ki je ubil S. Gregorčiča ter obrizgal J. Stritarja, A. Aškerca, dr. Tavčarja in druge z žolčem in blatom, – vsi so jednaki sovražniki svobodomiselné slovenske literature in slovenske umetnosti. [...] Nikjer v Evropi ni zbrano na tako majhnem prostoru toliko nestrpnosti, toliko fanatičnega sovrašstva do svobode v umetnosti kakor pri nas. In ta klerikalna môra duší in davi že od Hrenovih in Dagarinovih časov našo umetnost, ki se pa ugonobiti vzlic temu ne da. (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 261–262)

Pisec je branil Cankarjevo poezijo pred očitki o nemoralnosti in domneval, da je »cerkvena cenzura« udarila po Cankarju zlasti zaradi cikla »Dunajski večeri«. Pravilno pa je sklepal tudi, da bo »knezoškofijska konfiskacija« za mladega pesnika predvsem reklama: preostalih 300 izvodov bo namreč zdaj romalo iz roke v roko: »vsak jih bode bral, vsak jih bode užival še z večjo naslodo, a vsak bode *iskal* v njih – nemoralnost« (263). Škofov poseg bo po njegovem torej izzval celo nasproten učinek, namesto da bi preprečil »pohujšanje«, ga bo spodbudil, saj bodo *Erotiko* sedaj »natanko preštudirali« tudi bralci in bralke, ki se sicer

⁹ Zagnani škof je svojo intervencijo v založniški trg dokumentiral v dnevniku 31. 3. 1899 (Polajnar 70).

sploh ne bi menili zanjo. Govekar je torej opozoril na staro zadrego cenzorjev, promocijsko vlogo njihovih odločitev – tudi papeške indekse je bilo pač od nekdaj mogoče brati kot bibliografije, ki so bralce vodile k napetemu branju sadežev, oslajenih s prepovedjo.

Medtem ko konservativni tisk ni našel pravega odgovora na liberalno ofenzivo, je Govekar za *Slovenski narod* pridobil kritiko Vladimirja Levca, ki je izhajala od 29. maja do 2. junija. Levčeva kritika je resna in temeljita, a Cankarju ne pretirano naklonjena: pesnik *Erotike* se mu sicer še ne zdi naravnost »lasciven«, a se že giblje ob »nevarni meji«. Pri obravnavi prostitucije Levec pesniku očita slepoto za socialno razsežnost pojava, kritizira njegov nerazumljivi »motni mysticizem« in nezrelost in se (upravičeno) spotakne ob nacionalistični podton, ki je anahronistično pritaknjen Trubarju v romanci »Ungnadovi gostje«. Cankar je v korespondenci kritikove očitke skušal razvrednotiti in pokazati, da je Levca pri pisanju gnala zlasti »osebna mržnja«. Toda do njegovih očitkov vseeno ni bil brezbrizen: kot se je izkazalo v novi izdaji *Erotike* leta 1902, je nekatere njegove opazke vzel nadvse resno. Anton Aškerc je, nasprotno, v kritiki za *Ljubljanski zvon* junija 1899 Cankarja zagovarjal skoraj brez pridržkov. V bran je vzel tudi problematični cikel »Dunajski večeri«, v katerem naj bi Cankar le zvesto (naturalistično) beležil, kar je (v moralno razpuščenem velemestu) že tako našel: »Kjer slika greh, nemoralnost, *ne pravi nikjer, da odobrava to življenje*. On samo riše po naravi. Nemoralnosti Cankar torej tukaj ne uči in je ne proslavlja.« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 280) A celo Aškerc meni, da se Cankar tu in tam vendarle nevarno bliža tisti »delikatni meji«.

Katoliški tisk se je večinoma odzival s paberkovanji in ironizacijo, napadal pa je zlasti Aškerc in Govekarja. Diskusije so večinoma ostajale na ravni pamfletov – niti Evgen Lampe ni argumentirano vzel v bran škofovega požiga. 29. julija je, pričakovano, pozitivno kritiko *Erotike* objavila tržaška *Slovenka*. V njej je E(tbin) K(ristan) branil Cankarja, češ da je pesniku iz pornografske vsebine uspelo oblikovati umetnino in naposled – obsoditi pohoto. Epizoda *Erotike* s škofovimi požigi je torej učinkovala kot klasični sprožilec slovenskega kulturnega boja in povzročila močno polarizacijo v kulturnem in političnem prostoru. Odmevi nanjo še leta 1900 niso potihnili, požig pa je odmeval celo izven slovenskih meja (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 295–297).

Cankar je praktično takoj začel razmišljati o prenovljeni izdaji. Ker Bamberg ni imel avtorskih pravic, se je že maja 1899 začel o novem natisu pogajati najprej z Narodno tiskarno (neuspešno) in potem z Bambergom: 27. maja je pisal bratu Karlu, da bo Bamberg prenovljeno izdajo natisnil v letu dni. Toda izkazalo se je, da Bamberg novo

izdajo pogojuje s tem, da Cankar izpusti inkriminirane pesmi – na to pa Cankar ni hotel pristati. Za Bambergovo pogojevanje, ki se zdi nepričakovano, saj je založnik med slovenskimi literati velja za brezobzirnega poslovneža (Cankar ga v korespondenci označuje za »žida«), izvemo šele v poznejšem pismu Lavoslavu Schwentnerju, na katerega se je Cankar v zvezi z novo izdajo obrnil poleti 1901. V pesnikovem pismu založniku in mecenu slovenske moderne 21. avgusta 1901 izvemo, da namerava Cankar zamenjati 15–20 pesmi, a hkrati obdržati najbolj sporne: »Vse tiste, ki jih je škof smatral za pohujšljive, pa ostanejo« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 2* 273). Po krajšem barantanju sta se pisatelj in založnik dogovorila za honorar in sklenila, da bo knjiga izšla za veliko noč 1902. Cankar, ki je honorar tudi tokrat dobil in porabil že mnogo pred oddajo rokopisa, je z oddajo spet zamujal in v zbirko vnašal številne spremembe. Tako je njegov »kruto zamorjeni« prvenec, kot je zapisal Schwentner v oglasu konec leta 1901, naposled izšel šele v začetku julija 1902 (268–275).

Pismo Schwentnerju 23. aprila 1902 razkriva, da je Cankar tik pred izidom podvomil o naslovu zbirke: »Naslov sem dal 'Pesmi'. 'Erotika' je malo smešen naslov – ali če ravno hočete, pa ga obdržite« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 2* 280). Naposled se je vendarle odločil za stari naslov *Erotika* in podnaslov »nova izdaja« (namesto »druga izdaja«). Primerjava s prvo izdajo pokaže, da je Cankar 21 pesmi izločil, dodal je 14 novih, nekatere pa je predelal. Na spremembe in predelave je najbolj vplivala samokritika, saj pesnik z mnogimi pesmimi ni bil več zadovoljen, deloma pa je upošteval tudi očitke kritikov. Toda nova izdaja ni več pretirano razburkala duhov. Leopold Lenard je sicer v *Domu in svetu* avgusta 1902 zbirko ocenil kot blasfemično, nihilistično in izprijeno ter obsodil dodano prvo pesem »Dunajskih večerov« in nenaslovljeni prozni epilog. Toda eksplozivnosti, s katero se je javnost odzvala na prvo izdajo, ni bilo več, odzivov je bilo manj, bili so mnogo bolj umirjeni – in naposled si tudi Schwentner ni napolnil blagajne (287–294).

Cankar je v epilogu k novi izdaji temeljito obračunal s svojo mladostno poezijo (»sentimentalni, luninih žarkov polni verzi« so zdaj le še »oveneli, malo na novo parfimirani šopek«, h kateremu se ozira z nostalgичno resignacijo), pa tudi s svojimi hipokritskimi kritiki, »velikimi duhovni in farizeji«:

O veliki noči leta tisočosemstodevetindevetdesetega so napravili velik ogenj in v njem so zgoarele vse moje pesmi, vse napisane in še ne napisane. [...] To so bile sanje, ki sem grešil v njih. Ali tisti človek, ki je sanjal te sanje, je bil v vsem svojem nehanju najpoštenejši, najnedolžnejši in najmiroljubnejši človek [...]

Nedolžen je bil in hodil je po meglenih ulicah bolan in ubožen, takó ubožen, da niti grešiti ni mogel. (Cankar, *Zbrano delo* 2 89–93)

V luči novih življenjskih spoznanj je Cankar napravil križ čez mladostni idealizem in tudi svoje dotedanje literarno udejstvovanje: »Preveč natanko gledajo moje razočarane, umazanosti in vsakdanjosti navajene oči, da bi mogle še kdaj mirno sanjati ter si domišljati nad stvarmi rožno-barven pajčolan, ki ga je bilo bridko izkustvo že davno vzdignilo.« (95)

Erotičnost *Erotike*: cenzorsko branje

Seveda se današnji bralec ob vsem tem pompu z zanimanjem vpraša, koliko erotična je v resnici Cankarjeva *Erotika*? Glede na to, da škof Jeglič nikdar ni natanko ekspliciral, kaj konkretno ga je v zbirki tako motilo, da jo je moral zažgati, si moremo pri odgovoru na to vprašanje pomagati s poskusom »cenzorskega« branja. Oglejmo si torej štiri cikle, iz katerih je sestavljena *Erotika*, iz stroge perspektive škofa, umeščenega leto dni pred tem.

Prvi cikel »Helena«, deset pesmi, ki jih je v letih 1895–1896 navdihnila tedanja Cankarjeva muza, učiteljica Helena Pehani (vroče zaljubljenosti mu ni vračala), vsekakor obsega ljubezenske pesmi, ki deloma stopajo tudi v erotično območje. Zanje je značilna novoromantična idealizacija, ki se kaže zlasti v »konstruiranju Helene kot odsotne, nedostopne ženske, bitja iz drugega časa in prostora« (Novak Popov 59). Atmosfera je mestoma izrazito čutna (»strasti polni ples«, »ljubezni žar«), dekadénčno rafinirana in detajlirana (»očesca sanjava«, »vroči dah usten«), a vsaj na videz večinoma ne prestopa klišejskih okvirov tedanjega ljubezenskega izraza: »Ah pesem o strasti kipeči / O vzdihih, o tajnih solzah« (Cankar, *Erotika* 10); »Strastij mogočno morje – kdó / Bi znal upokojíti?« (14). Nemara še najbolj erotičen se zdi nagovor lirskega subjekta Heleni v zaključnih kiticah sedme pesmi:

[»]Samó nocoj, nocoj me ljubi,
Poljubi me enkrat samó,
Da na gorečih tvojih ustnih
Nebesa meni se pričnó ...«

– In iz dvorane zazvení spet
Razkošen valček, šum in smeh, –
In v plesu ji drhtíjo udje,
Ljubezen ji gorí v očéh. (17)

Ali je mogoče v teh pesmih videti tudi kaj izrazito obscenega? Marcel Štefančič v nedavnem branju *Erotike* denimo odpre možnost blasfemičnega razumevanja šeste pesmi v ciklu, kjer spolnost vstopi kar v »temno cerkev«, polno ljudi. Tu sta tudi zaljubljenca:

Objamem in poljubim te,
Da v mehkih rokah tvojih
Ugasne ta pekoča strast,
Ta ogenj v prsih mojih ... (15)

Štefančičevo drzno branje – »[s]trastij mogočno morje« je ob veličastnem bučanju orgel »upokojil« kar »hand-job« (Štefančič 502–503) – deluje pretirano: najbrž bi presenetilo celo Cankarja (in Jegliča). Toda nemara je bilo čisto dovolj problematično že to, da strast sploh tako določno vstopa v sakralni prostor. Tu Cankar ni inovativen, sledi tradiciji evropske ljubezenske poezije, ki jo je k nam uvedel že Prešeren, zadet od neugasljive »iskre ognjene« ravno v (razsvetljeni) cerkvi (»Je od vesel'ga časa teklo leto«). Pesniki moderne tu stopajo za velikim romantičnim sonetistom: tudi Kette obžaluje obisk cerkve, kjer mu je lepota »s pogledom enim / zažgala srce« (»Zakaj sem bil v kapteljnu«). Toda Cankar in Župančič gresta korak dlje: svojo strast namenoma postavita v »temni hram« – zlasti radikalen je v ciklu »Albertina« iz *Čase opojnosti* mladi Župančič, ki v sonetu »Kako je poln kristjanov temni hram!« ponuja nemara najlepši primer slovenske dekadentne erotike z blasfemično konotacijo.¹⁰ Kot se lahko poučimo že v Cankarjevi neobjavljeni mladostni pesmi »Pred škofijo« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 2* 175–177), katoliški rituali poživljajoče vplivajo na erotiko: dekadentni subjekt si z vstopanjem v polje sakralnega širi prostor (estetiziranega) senzualnega izkustva.

Ciklu »Helena« sledi cikel »Iz lepih časov«, ki ga sestavlja 20 pesmi, kronološko najzgodnejših v zbirki, ki jih je v letih 1894–1895 večinoma navdihnila prva velika »Cankarjeva Lavra« Franja Opeka.¹¹ Vsaj na prvi pogled se zdi, da je v njem ljubezensko doživljanje še izrazito poznoro-

¹⁰ V pesmi lirski subjekt zasleduje izbranko v »kristjanov temni hram« in »ukrade« njen poljub, ki še gorak in sladak dehti na ustnicah križanega (Župančič 16). Tudi Župančičev prvenec je bil seveda po izidu deležen hudih napadov.

¹¹ Zadnja pesem v ciklu je že posvečena novi muzi, krasotici Pavli Kermavner, ki je Cankarja obsedala jeseni 1996, za nedostopno Heleno. Ravno cikel »Iz lepih časov« je bil v novi izdaji iz 1902 najbolj predelan. Kar deset pesmi je Cankar umaknil, dodal pa je osem novih, ki jih je navdihnila nova, aktualnejša muza Ana Lušin. Nove pesmi so večinoma boljše, zanimivo pa je, da je v zbirki pustil tiste, ki jih je v *Ljubljanskem zvonu* hvalil Vladimir Levce.

mantično in v tem smislu tradicionalno. Ali je mogoče, da zadnja kitica druge pesmi v ciklu – z nekaj domišljije – prebujala lascivne misli?

In kadar sapa zapihljá,
Na lipi listje šepetá, –
Pa v izbo stopiva temná,
Ne čuje naju tam nikdó ...
Nikar, nikar ne boj se več,
Glej, čakam te, drhtěč, ljubeč ... (Cankar, *Erotika* 29)

Previdni cenzor bi takšne misli nemara lahko zaznal tudi v predzadnjem verzu pete pesmi («ko pri tebi čaka noč me krasna», 33), ali v predzadnji kitici sedemnajste pesmi:

[»]Zdaj naj sneží, naj brije veter,
Naj zgrne se nad nama noč, –
Kaj méniva za tó se mídva,
Na gorkem se objemajoč – – « (47)

Ali pa v drugi kitici zadnje pesmi cikla, ko lirski subjekt ogovarja občudovano Pavlo:

Ne, tega nisi ti pisala!
Nekdó ti je čez ramo gledal
Ko si dajala mi slovó;
In treslo se ti je teló
V žarečem dihu ust njegovih,
V razpenjene krvi valovih,
Ko se je nagnil nad tebé ...
In ustna so ti trepetala,
Motno je gledalo okó ... (50)

Naj bo motno ali bistro – vsekakor je *oko* bralca tisto, ki iz verzov izlušči predstavno vsebino, ta pa je lahko bolj ali manj »obscena«. Težko bi rekli, da Cankarjeva *Erotika* vsebuje izrazito eksplicitne prizore – a po drugi strani vendarle odpira precej prostora za imaginacijo. Štefančič tako v *Erotiki* lahko prebere mnogo več, kot je eksplicitno zapisano: orgazme, izlive, fantazije voajerstva, seksa v troje, celo nekrofilije: »Erotika je namreč polna fantaziranja, vzdihovanja, hlipanja, stokanja, rajcanja, tiščanja, kipenja in vrenja, seksualne omotice ter poželjivih in mokrih oces, ki se 'bleščijo kot brušen nož'. In seveda, polna je seksa« (Štefančič 498). Štefančičevo branje je hipertrofirano, deluje kot najskrajnejša konkretizacija besedilnih nastavkov – torej kot

branje najbolj paranoičnega cenzorja. S tem pa nehote ilustrira poanto, da je pri cenzuri bolj kot avtorjeva »intenca« (»najpoštenejši, najnedolžnejši ...«) odločilno tisto, kar v besedilu lahko najde »sumničavi« bralec, ki, kot je poudaril že Govekar, »išče nemoralnost«. ¹²

Kot so upravičeno sklepali že Cankarjevi sodobniki, se je jedro težav skrivalo v tretjem ciklu, naslovljenem »Dunajski večeri«. Gre za kronološko najmlajše verze, ki dotlej še niso bili objavljeni. Cankar jih je sicer hotel objaviti v *Ljubljanskem zvonu*, a mu to ni uspelo. Oglejmo si na kratko, zakaj ne. Že od januarja 1897 je Cankar mislil na objavo cikla, čeprav se je, kot je omenil v pismu bratu Karlu, zavedal, da se bodo mnogi »jezili«. Februarja je poslal uredniku Viktorju Bežku pet pesmi in hkrati skušal dobiti podporo Govekarja in Aškerca. Kot razkriva pismo Aškercu 11. maja, vsaj Govekarja Cankar s ciklom ni prepričal: »fant *hoče* biti *dekadent* in sensualist, zato pisari grozne kolobocije [...] Prostitucijo in prešestvo opisovati v 4–5 kiticah se mi zdi skoro nemožno, ker nedostaja blažilnih momentov na vseh krajih« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo* 1 326). Avtor naturalističnega romana *V krvi* se je spotaknil zlasti ob pesem »Ne vstajaj«, ki se mu zdi »naravnost grda, nepoetična«: »Manjka ji morale, manjka *etičnega ozadja*. Če je mož pijanec in morda celó surovak, to še nikakor ne ublaži *greha* žene – matere! Niti glad bi ne bil v pesni (!!)) dovolj močan motiv, da se uda mati – prostituciji ... Ali se motim?? – In taka je večina tistih pesmij. Sama poltnost brez dovolj krepkih blažilnih strani!« (327). Objavi se je izmikal tudi urednik *Ljubljanskega zvona*: Cankar je 16. maja v pismu potožil Franu Levcu, kako naj bi Bežek govoril, da ga bodo kamenjali, če to priobči, in da smo pri nas do dekadence še daleč. In res je čez tri tedne Cankar dobil tudi uradno zavrnitev. Tako so »Dunajski večeri«, ki jim je revijalni natis prepričala »liberalna« uredniška cenzura, naposled prvič izšli šele v *Erotiki*.

»Dunajski večeri« v resnici drgetajo od senzualnosti in na široko odpirajo vrata prvinam pesniške dekadence. Vsebinsko je cikel bolj kompleksen od drugih, saj je nastal kot odziv na fascinantni utrip vele-mesta, ki je na Cankarja napravilo silovit vtis: mladi pesnik je Dunaj doživljal kot ekstatično priložnost osebne osvoboditve, razširitve perspektiv, omogočal mu je imerzijo v brezimno, neskončno pisano in socialno razslojeno množico, v kateri je lahko postal novoromantični, baudelairejevski »flaneur«. Tu, v »brezsrčnem, tujem svetu« (Cankar,

¹² Proces zoper Flaubertovo *Gospo Bovaryjevo* je februarja 1857 »spodletel« zlasti zato, ker pisatelju niso mogli dokazali maliciozne intence. Ko je tožilec Ernest Pinard pol leta pozneje težišče interpretacije z avtorjeve intence prenesel na možna obscena branja (in v tej gesti »usmrtilve« avtorja anticipiral literarno teorijo 20. stoletja), je sodišče lahko obsodilo Baudelaireja (RayAlexander 36, 42–46).

Erotika 56) je Cankar okušal blišč in bedo fin-de-sièclovskega veleme-
sta, se potapljal v njegovo mamljivo dekadènčno atmosfero in obenem
izkusil radikalno kriviènost družbenega ustroja (ta izkušnja je pozneje
navdihnila njegova najboljša dela). Kot je ugotovila Irena Novak Popov,
v »Dunajskih večerih« od slovenske tradicije »najbolj odstopajo motivi
uživanja do utrujenosti, naveličanosti, spleena in čaščenje propada,
lepote nizkega, pregrešnega« (Novak Popov 64).

Prvi dve pesmi v ciklu še ne izstopata. V drugi pesmi cikla »Ah ne,
ne hodi več od tukaj« sicer najdemo nagovor ljubice, ki ni brez erotiè-
nega naboja – toda erotika tu deluje predvsem kot blažilo mrakobnega
vzdušja, njenih strahov, kesanja in eksistencialne stiske:

Ostani ... tu na dívàn sedi,
V naroèje svoje vzemi me,
Gorkó poljubi me na ustna,
Poljubi in objemi me! ... (Cankar, *Erotika* 57)

Tretja pesem iz cikla »Vzduh opojen, težak« pred bralca postavi deka-
dentni prizor v kavarni, kjer kraljujeta alkoholna omama in poželenje.
Lirski subjekt ogovarja prostitutko, »grešnico krasno«, ki je hkrati odbi-
jajoèa (hladna, bleða, bolešna), a po drugi strani v svoji pregrešnosti
neustavljivo privlaèna. Erotika se tu spaja kršèansko ikonografijo in zla-
sti v èetrtni in peti kitici prehaja v znaèilno dekadènčno blasfemiènost –
denimo v metafori »greha, strasti nebeška krasota« in v komparaciji, ki
»veličastvo pregrehe« poveže z Madoninim plaščem:

Na obrazu trepeèe, kot lunin žar
Greha, strasti nebeška krasota,
In trpljenje, brezupa zaduhla noè
Iz uvelega diha života.

In srcé se mi širi, okó strmí –
Kakor plašč te Madonin ovija
Velièastvo pregrehe, propalosti kras,
Tvoje duše temná tragedija ... (59–60)

V èetrtni pesmi, ki je tako zmotila Govekarja, cikel doseže enega izmed
vrhuncev (navajam jo v celoti):

Ne vstajaj, ne vstajaj! ... Ah moj bog, – kakó
Pohotna ti ustna drhtíjo;
V objemu trepeèe ti belo teló,
Od mraza ti lica bledíjo!

Ti ljubica moja, čemú ta strah?
Čemú se ozíra tvoj pógled plah
Bolestno na duri, na okna?

Po veži odmeva neznan korak
Ob pozni, polnočni uri;
Pred oknom se ziblje črno drevó,
Na steklo deževne kaplje bijó,
V viharju se stresajo duri ...

Ne boj se, – ne vstajaj! ... Nikogar ní ...
Otrok tvoj v zibelki mirno spí,
Tvoj mož sedi v krčmi in pije. (61–62)

Res, tu ni nobenih »blažil«: strast in prešuštvo (doječe?) matere (prostitucija?) sta podana hladno, klinično – in celo zapriseženemu naturalistu se zdi, da to v poeziji enostavno ne gre.

Tudi naslednja pesem »Pod oblačnim, sivim nebom« bi se utegnila moraličnemu bralcu zatakni v grlu: ljubimca v dialogu eden drugemu očitata »nepošteno strast«, s katero sta si pogubila duši. Spet se izkaže, da gre za nedovoljeno ljubezen: on je zapustil zvesto dekle, ki se mu zdaj prikazuje na ljubičinih »pohotnih ustnah« in v »poželjivih rokah«, medtem ko je ona poročena, a mož seveda preklinja njeno nezvestobo. Cankar značilni preplet strasti in krivde vnovič naslika poetično – brez moraliziranja, brez »blažilnih momentov«, ki bi si jih želel Govekar.

Vrhunec pohujšanja bi naposled mogla izzvati – zaradi stopnjevane čutnosti podobja in prvih sledov nekonvencionalne, nemara že rahlo mazohistične seksualnosti – sedma pesem v ciklu (navedena je brez prvih dveh kitic):¹³

In jaz vidim njó, ah njó ...
Kipí in trepeče ji belo teló,
Prozorna meglà je po udih razlíta,
Pretkana s kristali od sončnega svíta;
Na polne ramé
Valjjo mogočno se črni lasjé,
In njeno okó, poželjívo in mokro,
Bleščí se kot brušen nož.

In v dušo kipečo in v srca dnò
Sesá se mi njeno pohotno okó;

¹³ Za genezo prim. še rokopisne variante (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 332–333), npr. umaknjeni tretji verz zadnje kitive »In peni se v žilah razgreta kri«.

V boleznem razkošju teló mi trepeče,
V objem se mi dvigajo roke drhteče ...
In v prahu nesvesten klečí pred teboj
In ljubi in moli te suženj tvoj –
Venus, Venus!

Noč brezupna, – in nikdár več
Ne posíje sonce vanjo.
Roke črne in ledéne
Ségajo iz dnà nočí,
Kot opolzke, mokre kače
Drsajo po mojih licih;
Mráz ledén leží na udih,
V srcu mojem strah in stud. (Cankar, *Erotika* 67–68)

Drzni akordi cikla »Dunajski večeri«, v katerih se celo Aškercu adjektiv »pohoten« prevečkrat ponavlja (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 1* 280–281), izzvenijo v sklepnih pesmi »O tebi sem sanjal vse dolge večere«, ki z moralne plati bržkone ni bila pretirano sporna, a je kritikom povzročala znatne kognitivne zadrege: o kom sanja lirski subjekt, koga vabi, da položi »trudno čelo« na »ljubeče, mrzle roke« – je to nemara smrt?¹⁴

Zadnji, četrti razdelek *Erotike* sestavlja pretežno epska poezija. Tudi Cankarjeve »Romance« so v prvi izdaji erotično obarvane: ljubezen je v njih prevladujoča tema. Že prva med njimi, »Sulamit« (Cankar si jo je v enem od pisem zamislil celo kot prolog k »Dunajskim večerom«), vpelje bralca v vrtinec dekadentne čutnosti, kjer se prepletejo zvonki nakit, strastni ples in tančice, ki komaj zakrivajo vabljivo mlado žensko telo – le kako naj se upira modri stari Salomon, poln državnških skrbi, ko se k njemu lahko in gorko privije prelestna Sulamit? V originalni izdaji se odzove takole: »Po vsem životu čut mehák / Sladkó se mu razlije« (Cankar, *Erotika* 74), v novi izdaji je Cankar še nazornejši: »in sladek balzam v težko kri / tedaj se mu izlije« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo 2* 69). Na koncu trudni modrec državniške skrbi potlači in se kajpada odloči za Sulamit:

»Ah, nagni k meni, Sulamit,
Prebele prsi svoje, –
Pogíne naj ves Izrael, –
Ti si kraljestvo moje!« (Cankar, *Erotika* 75)

¹⁴ Vladimir Levec je to pesem kritiziral, a Cankar jo je v novi izdaji ohranil. Pač pa je izpustil poetični prozni odlomek (v ciklu oštevilčen s 6.), ki ni bil vseč niti Aškercu.

V pesmi »Romantika« pa tragični preplet prepovedane ljubezni, neustavljive grešne strasti in bridkega kesanja mladega meniha in njegovo izbranko dobesedno ubijeta – takole gre prva kitica:

Na zemlji noč temná leží;
Tam v cerkvi mlad menih klečí:
»Oj večni bog, gospod svetá,
Ti gledaš mi na dnò srcá,
Na dnò srcá, kjer noč in dan
Te vnovič križa greh strašan:
Le ona polni mi glavó,
Povsod le gledam njó, le njó;
Kot večne luči sveti žar
Gorí očij prelepih par,
Kot zárije večerne kras
Žarí nebeški njen obráz ...
Kakó kipí mi vroča krí,
Kakó si je srcé želí,
Kedàr jo vidijo očí ...
O bog dobrotni, ti me čuj,
Ljubezni grešne me varuj!« (96)

Kot je pravilno opazila Irena Novak Popov, je erotika osemnajstletnemu pesniku vsaj v tej fazi predstavljala »najglobljo in najbolj avtentično izkušnjo, ki izpolnjuje dušo« (Novak Popov 56). K temu je mogoče dodati še, da je Cankar to izkušnjo nadgradil s spoznanjem o silovitosti libida kot sile, ki usodno kroji svet – in sicer ne le sveta laikov, temveč tudi svet klerikov z njegovo zatrto seksualnostjo. To pa je spoznanje, ki ga je Cankar anticipiral že v (neobjavljenih) pesmih prejšnjih let, zlasti v »Junaški pesmi iz naših dni«, v kateri je Mahniča zločesto upodobil kot pijanca in pohotneža.¹⁵

Erotofobni škof Jeglič – v prihodnjih letih ga je čakala odmevna afera z golo Prešernovo muzo, mladi novomeški »prekucuhi« pa so pred njim še leta 1920 na razstavi panično skrivali akte (Mušič, *Novomeška pomlad* 101–102) – je imel torej kar nekaj dobrih razlogov, da mu Cankarjeva zbirka ni bila všeč. In vsaj v nečem je bil njegov instinkt pravilen: Cankar ni zgolj naturalistično »slikal« nemoralnosti, kot ga je

¹⁵ Mahniča v tej fantastični pesmi pohota tako prevzame, da po kleti lovi lebdečo prikazen zapeljive lepote, ovite v prozorno tančico, katere »nemirne prsi, / prsi polne in takó nedolžne« in »gole, čudokrasne noge« ga vznemirjajo do blaznosti, dokler je naposled ne ujame in »v radósti divji« strastno objema »devíco gorko, zapeljívo« ... da bi se na koncu, po nočni mori, naposled prebudil v realnosti, ki sanje še prekaša: znajde se v postelji z golo mlado kuharico (Cankar, *Zbrano delo* 2 159–169).

branil Aškerc, kaj šele, da bi »obsodil pohoto«, kot je zapisal Kristan. Kot ugotavlja Janko Kos, je Cankar pozneje zlasti v prozi razvijal kompleksnejše tematizacije seksualnosti »v vsej njeni mnogostrani protislovnosti« (175). V resnici tudi erotika *Erotike* ni povsem brez ambivalenc in protislovij – toda v jedru spora vendarle ostaja preprosto dejstvo, da je Cankar z *Erotiko* »nad cerkev poslal hudiča – seks« (Štefančič 505). Škof mu tega ni mogel odpustiti, in zbirka je morala v plamene.

Cankar in Baudelaire: kratek primerjalni ekskurz

Cankarjeva erotična revolucija v slovenskem pesništvu v marsičem korespondira s tisto, ki jo je dobra štiri desetletja pred tem v francoški književnosti uprizoril Charles Baudelaire. Tudi sloviti dekadenci pesnik je nihal med (simbolističnim) težanjem k neulovljivi transcendeni in fascinaciji nad (dekadenco) čutnostjo, ki ga je vabila v svoja vrtoglava brezna. Zgodba o njegovih *Rožah zla*, eni temeljnih pesniških zbirk moderne dobe, je ravno tako uokvirjena s cenzurno afero, znamenitim sodnim procesom zaradi obscenosti. Ker je bila tudi pri Baudelaireju glavni razlog za cenzurni poseg dekadenci erotika, si oglejmo njegov primer nekoliko podrobneje.¹⁶

Rože zla so bile prvič natisnjene v Parizu leta 1857, a je bila zbirka že pred začetkom razpečevanja zasežena. Sledil je sodni proces, na katerem je obveljala prepoved šestih pesmi, ki so morale biti na koncu umaknjene iz izdaje. Okoliščine procesa so izredno zanimive: na podlagi skrivne prijave policiji in članka v *Le Figaroju*, kjer je urednik Gustave Bourdin knjigo že pred izidom razglasil za bolno in monstrozno, je 7. julija sledila uradna ovadba. Baudelaire je skušal izdajo rešiti, a je bilo prepovedno: 17. julija se je namreč cenzor pojavil v pariški izpostavi bruseljskega založnika Poulet-Malassisa in zasegel celotno naklado. Že konec meseca je moral Baudelaire pred sodnika, kjer je knjigo pred očitki tožilca Ernesta Pinarda branil z zahtevo, da je treba zbirko presojati kot celoto, ne pa kot zbir posameznih formulacij, iztrganih iz konteksta. Skušal je pokazati, da v knjigi ne gre za apologijo zla ali čutnosti, temveč

¹⁶ Cankar se na Baudelaireja in Verlaina (ki mu je bil verjetno še bližji) izrecno sklicuje v ostri kritiki *Popevčic milemu narodu* Antona Hribarja-Korinskega za *Slovenski narod* februarja 1899, torej v času, ko je čakal na izid *Erotike*: »Kakšna je ta moč izraza pri Baudelaireu! Baudelaire je modernejši, – človek na skrajnem vrhuncu kulture« (Cankar, *Zbrano delo* 24 62). A kot je ugotovil že Dušan Pirjevec (118–120), je to sklicevanje predvsem načelne narave, saj je Cankar zaradi svoje skromne francoščine Baudelairejevo poezijo v izvirniku slabo razumel.

da jo motivira predvsem groza pred zlom; pri tem se je skliceval zlasti na posebno moralo umetnosti in doseženo raven literarnih svoboščin. Toda obramba ni bila uspešna in na sojenju 20. avgusta – potekalo je na sodišču, kjer so januarja istega leta sodili Flaubertu zaradi *Gospo Bovaryjeve* (in ga 7. februarja oprostili) – so bili pesnik, založnik in tiskar obsojeni na visoke denarne kazni. Sodba sicer ni ugotovila žalitve religiozne morale (blasfemija), temveč le žalitev javne morale (obsce-nost); presodila je torej, da delo vsebuje nemoralne pasaže ali izraze. Višino kazni je pesniku s posredovanjem na dvoru sicer uspelo znižati s 300 na 50 frankov – toda zbirka je lahko izšla le v okrnjeni obliki.¹⁷

Oglejmo si na hitro šesterico sodno prepovedanih pesmi (odlomke navajam v odličnem slovenskem prevodu Marije Javoršek). Prva med njimi, »Dragulji«, se začinja z značilno fetišistično fascinacijo:

Preljuba gola je bila in si nadela,
ker me pozna, samó dragulje je zvenčeče;
v bogatem lišpu se je zmagoslavna zdela,
prav taka kakor sužnje Mavrov v dnevih sreče. (Baudelaire, *Rože zla* 269)

Sijoči svet dragih kamnov pesnika spravlja v ekstazo in ga omamlja do blaznosti; neizbežno sledi ljubezenski akt: »tako ležala je in se ljubiti dala«, »zasanjano preskušala je položaje«. Z današnje perspektive pesem ne deluje drastično, saj je upesnitev očaranosti nad telesom ljubice izrazito poetična – a francoski moralistični razsodniki v 19. stoletju brž-kone niso razmišljali tako.

Kaj bi utegnilo biti problematično v pesmi »Lete«, ni povsem jasno: nemara sta to verza »Poljubljaj brez kesanja rad telo / bi tvoje, lepo kakor baker zglajen«? Ali pa je, bolj verjetno, cenzorje zmotila podoba sesanja prsi:

Sesal bom, da bom utopil mržnjo zlo
lek iz nepenta, zwarek trobelikov,
iz vršičkov prsi čvrstih, polnih mikov
ki v njih srca nikoli ni bilo. (Baudelaire, *Rože zla* 272)

V pesmi »Njej, ki je preveč vesela« po poetičnem uvodu sledi napoved, ki iztrgana iz konteksta zveni kot napoved posilstva – v uri strasti bi se pesnik splazil do ljubice kot tat:

¹⁷ O procesu zoper Baudelaireja prim. Novak 355–362, o obeh slavni procesih pa RayAlexander. Processa danes veljata za temeljno prizorišče obrambe modernega, larpurlatičnega koncepta literature pred cenzuro (Habjan).

[...]
v osupli bok zarežem naj
globoko in široko rano
in – sladki, vrtoglavi up!
skoz nove ustnice režeče,
sijajnejše in še bolj rdeče,
naj, sestra, vbrizgnem ti svoj strup! (275)

V pesmi »Lesbos«, »kjer poljubi so kakor kaskade«, »kjer noči so tople in medleče«, ne bomo našli seksualno eksplicitnih mest, a očitno je za prepoved zadoščala atmosfera opojne čutnosti (276–279). Sporočilo »Pogubljenk« je nekoliko bolj zapleteno; kljub moralističnemu sklepu (»za vajine naslade kazen bo prišla«) je bila ta pesem verjetno sporna zaradi odkrito lezbične vsebine, padca krhke Hipolite v sladostrastne objeme razvnete Delfine. So sodniki nemara posumili, da je moralistični konec zgolj zaigran, hudomušno pritaknjen za pomiritev razgretih kritikov?

Tudi »Metamorfoze vampirja« prenašajo večplastna sporočila in so daleč od gole lascivnosti. Po ljubezenskem aktu (»Ko mi ves mozeg izsesala je iz kosti« in si nabrala »zalogo krvi«) sledi iztreznitev – najprej se izkaže, da so spolzki boki ženske polni gnoja, na koncu ostane le še škripajoči okostnjak ... Toda bržkone je iskalcem spornih pasusov zadoščalo dejstvo, da so zapeljivki, ki »se kot kača na žerjavici je vila / in prsi ob železju steznika mesíla«, položene v usta naslednje besede:

»Jaz, učenjak moj, na naslade se spoznam:
ko moškega dušim, ko v rokah ga imam
in ko ugrizom svoje prsi prepustim,
tako pohotna, plaha, čvrsta sem, medlim,
da na teh žimnicah, ki mrejo od omame,
še angel se nezmožen bi pogubil zame!« (Baudelaire, *Rože zla* 287)

Baudelaire se je pozneje branil, da njegove pesmi niso za vsakogar – k branju vabi le trpečo in zvedavo dušo, ki zmore strmeti v »prepadov mrak«. V sonetu »Moto za obsojeno knjigo« ironično poziva naivnega bralca, ki ne razume njegove poezije in ga »dolži histerije«, naj knjigo preprosto odloži:

Spokojni bralec, zvest idili,
preprost in trezen poštenjak,
zavrzi knjigo – v njej so mrak,
razvrat in žalost se združili. (291)

Ni dvoma, da je cenzurni poseg Baudelaireja močno prizadel. Šest obsojenih pesmi, »pièces condamnées«, ki so morale biti umaknjene iz prve izdaje, je pesnik (ilegalno) izdal šele tik pred koncem življenja v zbirki *Razbitine* (*Les Épaves*), ki je izšla 1866 v Bruslju. Sodna prepoved njegovih pesmi je bila uradno preklicana šele slabo stoletje pozneje, 31. maja 1949, ko je kasacijsko sodišče na predlog pisateljskega društva pesnika in založnika, že zdavnaj pokojna, naposled oprostilo.¹⁸

Primerjava med Cankarjem in Baudelairejem bi bila obetavna in vznemirljiva na številnih ravneh – a z vidika cenzure se lahko omejimo na nekaj ključnih opazanj. Že če na hitro vzporejamo Cankarjeve problematične »Dunajske večere« s šesterico prepovedanih Baudelairejevih pesmi, ne moremo mimo očitne ugotovitve: Cankarjeva erotika skoraj pol stoletja pozneje deluje vsaj za odtенок bolj konvencionalno in sprejemljivo od Baudelairejeve. Prav mogoče je torej, da se francosko sodišče leta 1857 za Cankarjevo zbirko ne bi kaj prida zmenilo. Toda v kontekstu slovenske pesniške tradicije je bil Cankarjev nastop vseeno dovolj radikalen, da je sprožil burne reakcije. Kot je poudaril Štefančič, je Cankar v slovensko poezijo namesto nadzorovane, prokreativne spolnosti v okviru zakonske zveze poskusil vpeljati seksualnost, ki je sama sebi namen – in s tem Jegliča in njegove somišljenike »stresel, šokiral, zgrozil, zaprepadel, razdražil, razjezil, zrevoltiral« (502).

A obstaja še ena razlika med usodama obeh zbirk, ki je nemara pomembnejša. V nasprotju z Baudelairejevimi *Rožami zla*, ki so bile deležne trde roke uradne cenzure (v podobi pravosodja), zgodba Cankarjeve *Erotike* sploh ni zgodba o cenzuri v strogem pomenu besede – vsaj če v tem oziru sledimo lucidni ugotovitvi Roberta Darntona, da je cenzura nujno povezana z državo in njeno močjo sankcioniranja (Darnton 229–230). Ljubljanski škof je namreč v njej ravnal kot zasebnik, storil je, kar bi lahko načeloma storil vsakdo: potrošil je veliko denarja, da je na trgu odkupil vso razpoložljivo naklado.¹⁹ Cerkev na Kranjskem torej ob koncu stoletja ni več imela realne cenzorske pristojnosti, zato Jegličev demonstrativni požig bolj kot izraz moči deluje kot izraz cenzorske impotence. Cankarja je

¹⁸ Podrobneje o procesu in dolgi poti do končne oprostitve prim. razdelek »Dossier du procès« (Baudelaire, *Les fleurs* 317–329).

¹⁹ Kot je zapisal škof Jeglič v svojem dnevniku 22. 4. 1899, je šlo za 478 goldinarjev – to pa je bil znesek v velikostnem razredu letnega proračuna manjše družine (Poljnar 72).

resda doletel kritiški linč s klerikalnega pola, a tega moremo pač šteti za povsem legitimen konflikt v vse bolj diferenciranem literarnem sistemu.²⁰

Omeniti pa velja še nekaj. Kot je pronicljivo opazil Boris A. Novak, so bile cenzure deležne zlasti Baudelairejeve obscene pesmi, ne pa tudi tri pesmi iz cikla »Upor«, ki zastavljajo heretična vprašanja in vsebujejo klasične elemente blasfemije.²¹ Dejstvo, da je razsodba pri Baudelaireju prezrla blasfemične vsebine in se osredotočila zgolj na obscenost, je svojevrsten indikator spremembe težišča (francoske) cenzure sredi devetnajstega stoletja. Zanimivo je, da se tudi v Cankarjevi *Erotiki* potencialna problematičnost – gledano s perspektive katoliškega škofa – ne izčrpa v erotični dimenziji pesmi. Četudi to ni bilo nikjer eksplicirano, je mogoče domnevati, da so Jegliča kot bralca *Erotike* vznemirjale tudi protiklerikalne osti, kakršne najdemo v nekaterih Cankarjevih romancah (in jih bomo pozneje srečali denimo v *Hlapcih*). Tako se v pesmi »Ob grobu tiranovem« moči pokojnega vladarja prvi skuša polastiti verski voditelj, patriarh, ki ga eden izmed knezov takole zavrne: »Dovolj je roki tvoji križ, / Zakaj po žezlu hrepeniš?« (Cankar, *Erotika* 77) V romanci »Ungnadovi gostje« pa med družčino protestantskega barona Ungnada v Urachu sedi tudi Trubar, katerega poslanstvo med Slovenci naj bi prekinil meč, ne moč argumenta:

Vojvódsko je žezlo me vzmoglo,
 Ni vzmoglo me žezlo duhá – –
 Nadvojvoda Karol je vzdignil
 Svoj préstol nad préstol bogá. (93)

Kakor koli že, Cankar je v novi izdaji *Erotike* inkriminirane pesmi večinoma kljubovalno ohranil, vseeno pa ni bil imun na očitke kritikov. Nova izdaja priča o pokončnem umetniku, ki temeljito obračunava s samim seboj, a to počne po svoji vesti. Že omenjeni epilog razkriva, da se pesnik vse bolj obrača proč od poezije, k (poetični) prozi, drugi dodatki pa nakazujejo, da se tudi tematsko žarišče odmika od erotike. »Svečanost v Varšavi« se denimo izrazito usmerja v (slovansko) nacionalno

²⁰ Za Cankarja je zgodba imela tudi negativne finančne posledice: podporo mu je odtegnil Andrej Kalan, urednik katoliškega *Slovenca*, ki je dotlej mladega pesnika podpiral – s tem pa je za Cankarja presahnil eden od virov zaslužka, kar mu je bivanje na Dunaju dodatno otežilo (Harlamov 24).

²¹ Takšne so zlasti »Satanove litanije« in pesem »Kajn in Abel«, ki se konča z distihom: »Rod Kajnov, v raj se vzpni, od tam / na zemljo pahni dol Boga!« (Novak 356–357).

politiko,²² premik od dekadentne zasebnosti v sfero javnega, k nacionalni in socialnokritični tematiki, pa razkrivajo tudi spremembe v »Dunajskih večerih«: zlasti dodana uvodna pesem cikla dopolni s socialnim kontekstom, ki so ga pogrešali Levstik, pa tudi Govekar in celo Cankarju naklonjeni Aškerc. Cankarjevo izkušanje Dunaja in njegovih protislovij je naposled začelo delovati še z druge strani. Domnevati moremo, da uporniško intonirana pesem, ki v ironizirani blasfemični gesti protestira zoper pereče družbene krivice (ob njo se je obregnil kritik nove izdaje Lenard), tudi knezoškofu ni najbolj ugajala:

V bogatih kočijah se vozijo
baroni, tatjè, bankirji,
mimo mladih kostanjev, skoz jasni večer,
ob nas siromakov špalirji.

Poznam te obraze, te tihe oči,
lokave, mežikajoče;
tatú, ki na čelu zapisan jim je,
izbrisati ni mogoče.

V glacé rokavicah se skrivajo
tatinski dolgi prsti –
dà, kradli so in prešéstvali
in ubijali vse po vrsti.

In kaj je napravil pravični Bog?
Nasul jim je bogastva,
blagá in častí in odel jih povrh
še z gloriojo veličastva.

Takó se vozijo tatjè
in hudo mi je siromaku,
ves truden in lačen in ves bolan
se spotikam ob vsakem koraku.

O kaj sem ti storil, pravični Bog?
Ali nisem nad tabo dvomil?
Pokaži mi v pismu zapoved svojò,
ki bi je ne bil prelomil!

²² Pesem, prvič objavljena že leta 1899 v *Rdečem praporu*, odraža Cankarjevo solidariziranje s poljskimi rojaki, ki so prek kulta nacionalnega pesnika (ob odprtju varšavskega spomenika Adamu Mickieviczu) z »nevarnim molčanjem« izrazili težnjo po osvoboditvi izpod (ruskega) jarma (*Zbrano delo* 2 87–88, 345–346).

Prešestval sem in kradel sem
in ubijal – preštej vse tiste,
ki so me ljubili; razžalil sem
in ubil njih duše čiste.

In svojo dušo, nedolžno vso,
sem bil razžalil, oskrnil,
ubil sem jo – o dolg račun,
ki sem ti ga naračunal!

Zdaj prihajam z njim: Plačilo sèm!
Kakor drugim, tako tudi meni!
Zdaj trkam na vrata: Plačilo sèm,
saldiraj račun pošteni. (Cankar, *Zbrano delo* 2 49–50)

Zaključek

Tako kot Prešeren med slovenskimi umetniki paradigmsko uteleša soočenje s preventivno cenzuro prve polovice 19. stoletja, bi lahko rekli, da se na prelomu stoletja protislovja cenzure in sorodnih oblik represije simptomatično zgoščajo ob drugem velemojstru slovenske besede – Ivanu Cankarju. Njegova *Erotika* zavzema markantno mesto v nastopu moderne: ne toliko zato, ker bi bila njen najimenitnejši izdelek, temveč zato, ker je njen izid pospremil odmeven recepcijski škandal. Jegličev poseg, ki ga je liberalni tisk izkoristil za frontalni napad na »inkvizicijsko« mentaliteto klerikalnega tabora, je ambicioznega mladega literata postavil v središče zanimanja – kot znanilca erotične revolucije v slovenski poeziji. Toda razvpitega škofovega posega v resnici ni mogoče označiti za cenzuro v strogem smislu, saj za njim ni (več) stal represivni aparat države: Jeglič se v tej epizodi bolj kot omnipotentni inkvizitor kaže kot cenzorska karikatura brez dejanske izvršne moči. Pač pa je Cankar kot angažirani umetnik v naslednjih letih postopoma prišel tudi v razvid uradne cesarske cenzure: od leta 1908, ko je bil prvič deležen resnejšega posega zaradi ogorčenega uvodnika »Krvavi dnevi v Ljubljani« v socialdemokratskem *Rdečem praporu* do bolečega cenzurnega onemogočenja uprizoritve *Hlapcev* v začetku leta 1910 in naposled skrajnega posega represivnih oblasti – zapornih kazni v letih 1913 in 1914, posledic političnega »verbalnega delikta«. A Cankarjeva soočenja s pravo cenzuro so seveda tema za drugo, obsežnejšo študijo.

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Burning *Erotika* and Ivan Cankar's Revolution in Slovenian Poetry

Keywords: Slovenian poetry / Cankar, Ivan: *Erotica* / “moderna” / decadence / censorship / obscenity / blasphemy

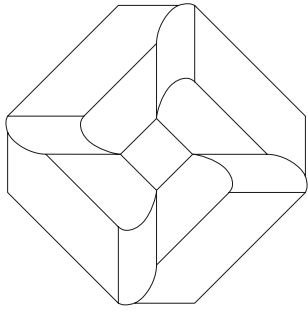
At the end of the nineteenth century, Slovenian literature was shaken by the emergence of the so-called “moderna” generation of neo-Romantic poets and writers, among whom the most famous names are Josip Murn, Dragotin Kette, Ivan Cankar, and Oton Župančič. Among them, Cankar's poetry collection *Erotika* (*Erotica*) stirred up by far the most dust—especially because its publication was accompanied by an infamous reception scandal. Cankar's book debut, the genuine fruit of decadent poetics, was bought up and burned by the bishop of Ljubljana, Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, immediately after its publication in March 1899. This intervention, which the liberal press used for a frontal attack on the “inquisitorial” mentality of Slovenian clerics and conservatives in general, brought the ambitious young man of letters into the limelight—as a harbinger of the erotic revolution in Slovenian poetry. This article begins with an outline of the course of the famous censorship episode and then uses a close reading of *Erotika*—especially the most problematic cycle “Dunajski večeri” (Viennese Evenings)—to show why the collection had to be burned. As a brief comparison with the judicially banned poems from Baudelaire's *The Flowers of Evil* shows, the bishop's intervention cannot really be considered censorship in the strict sense, since it was not (anymore) supported by the state apparatus of repression: Jeglič does not appear in this episode as an all-powerful inquisitor, but rather as a caricatured censor without real executive power. Only a few years later, however, Cankar was also painfully hit by official imperial censorship.

1.01 Izvirni znanstveni članek / Original scientific article

UDK 821.163.6.09-1Cankar I.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3986/pkn.v46.i1.11>

In memoriam



Stoja na glavi: poslovilni govor na pogrebu Lada Kralja

(27. 3. 1938–12. 12. 2022)

Boris A. Novak

Draga Jožica, dragi Miha, Tim in na daljavo Ben, v imenu vseh zbranih Vam izrekam najgloblje sožalje ob Ladotovi smrti. In vem, da bi si Lado bolj kot kar koli drugega želel, da bi med žalujočimi bila tukaj tudi njegova ljuba hči Breda.

Lado Kralj ni bil le eden.
Ladota Kralja sta bila kar dva:
srednjeevropski gospod finih manir
in avantgardni umetnik, ki ga je gnal nemir.

Lado Kralj je živel tri življenja.
Prvo je bilo življenje režiserja,
življenje gledališkega raziskovanja, igrivosti in rádosti.
Drugo je bilo življenje profesorja,
posvečeno razsvetljeni vednosti.
Tretje je bilo življenje pisatelja,
ki je združil gledališko rádost
in akademsko vednost
v umetniško rado-vednost.

Po očetu Slovenec, po materi pa Nemeč.
Oba svetova sta bila njegova
na pristen in ponotranjen način.
In do konca dni ga je preganjal spomin,
kako ga je kot sina antifašističnega očeta
Osvobodilna fronta skrivala v okrilju varnih družin.
Njegovo poznejše znanstveno in umetniško delo
je bila sinteza obeh tečajev njegovega sveta,
obeh tečajev njegovega srca.

Oče je bil interniran v koncentracijskem taborišču Dachau.
Nekoč mi je Lado z bolečino razlagal,
kako so na založbi izgubili oba izvoda tipkopisa

očetove zbirke novel *Mož, ki je strigel z ušesi*,
da bi tako eliminirali pričevanje avtorja, ki je bil
kot dachauski zapornik deležen nezaupanja komunističnih oblasti.
Profesor Vladimir Kralj je nato z nadčloveškim naporom
na podlagi rokopisnih delovnih verzij
ponovno po spominu napisal celotno knjigo.
Umetniški napor njegovega sina
Ladota je tudi bil napor spomina,
napor razumeti strašni morilski stroj ujede, imenovane Zgodovina,
ki se je zmeraj znova spuščala na normalnost vsakdana,
da je ostajala le neznanska in nezaceljiva rana,
napor ohraniti in zapisati konkretne podrobnosti otroštva,
imena ulic iz predvojne, vojne in poveljne Šiške,
imena otroških prijateljev in razkošnih iger sredi splošnega uboštva,
priimke družin, stisnjenih v predmestne hiške,
neznanski napor spomina, da bi vse ljudi, ki so bili nekoč *tam*,
priklical nazaj na otroški kraj in bi slehernega
z magično besedo rešil pozabe in mu rekel *Tu si*,
kot je to storil tudi v zbirki zgodb *Kosec koso brusi* ...

In vidim Ladota, avtorefektiranega, ironičnega intelektualca
in staromodnega gospoda, kako kritično dvigne veko
in se mi nasmehne in dobrodušno pripomni: »*No, no,*
Boris, tole je pa malce preveč patetično ...«
Lado ni maral patetike.
Bil je intelektualec tihe, dostojne etike ...
In bil je gospod.

Potem ko je gosposko in dostojno opravil profesorsko dolžnost,
se je vrnil k mladostni ljubezni, v umetniško prostost,
odprl omaro spomina in s pomočjo zapomnjenih zgodb
zapisal nesmiselno logiko tolikih usod ...

Tako kot svoje znanstvene in pedagoške dolžnosti je Lado Kralj
zvesto opravil tudi svojo umetniško, literarno, pripovedno dolžnost:
po letih ustvarjalnih dilem mu je uspelo, da je tik pred odhodom
dokončal roman *Ne bom se več drsal po bajerju*.

Lado Kralj, ki je postal pisatelj že po poklicni upokojitvi,
je izkazoval več odkrivaljskega umetniškega žara
kot velika večina mladih umetnikov, ki se življenje odpira pred njimi.
Njegova pripovedna osredotočenost pa je nemara izvirala prav iz
dejstva,

da je začel svoje zgodbe pripovedovati pozno
in da se je bolj kot vsega drugega bal, da bi ne bilo prepozno,
saj je bilo njemu, prav njemu usojeno, da ovekoveči staro Šiško, ki
je ni več,
in lepoto ljudi, ki jih ni več, in večno zgodovinsko grozo ...
Usoda je bila tu milostna z njim: bilo mu je dano,
da zapiše točno tiste zgodbe, ki jih je moral zapisati,
ker jih je zmogel zapisati le on ...

V najbolj resni, prijateljski polemiki, ki je med nama trajala
v letih 2003–2005 in se je začela ob izletu Oddelka za primerjalno
književnost
na devinski grad in Rilkejevo stezo, mi je Lado pojasnil svoje
izhodišče,
bolečino otroka, ki so mu očeta odpeljali v taborišče,
in je moral stran od matere, in se, ves izgubljen, naveže na družino,
ki mu je dajala zavetje, in se po vojni čuti krivega,
ker je zapustil to svojo drugo družino, in živi, razpet
med domotožje in znova najdeni dom,
med čustveno navezanost in naraščajoči intelektualni dvom,
ki ga je gnal, da je postavil pod vprašaj
politični sistem, ki je bil sposoben dachauske internirance
poslati nazaj, nazaj, nazaj
v socialistični zapor
in tolike spodobne ljudi na Goli otok ...
Zato je za naju oba bil tako pomemben lep in strašen izlet
komparativističnega oddelka na Goli otok.
Prav tu, na točki Nič jugoslovanskega komunizma,
je Lado našel pomembno zgodovinsko sled, znamenje,
kje je skrivni grob Leva Premruja, zbrcanega do smrti
v zaporniškem špalirju, tragičnega moža tragične Milene Mohorič,
ki ju je Lado romaneskno prebudil iz pozabe, najbolj ledene oblike
smrti,
in njunima usodama dal posmrtno življenje v romanu *Če delaš omleto*.
Jaz pa sem romal pod senco bora, ki ga je v kamenje
dobesedno Golega otoka zasadila moja na devet let peklà obsojena
teta ...

Z odhodom Lada Kralja se je poslovila zadnja priča
ene izmed največjih uporniških zgodb v slovenski zgodovini –
bil je eden mlajših članov uredništva disidentske revije *Perspektive*,

točneje: zadnje redakcije, tiste, ki je bila l. 1963 odstavljena in
inkriminirana.

Eksekutor *Perspektiv* je bil tedanji sekretar partijske celice Univerze v Ljubljani Stane Kavčič. Zadnja številka *Perspektiv* vsebuje Kavčičev pogovor z redakcijo, pravzaprav konfrontacijo, v kateri so se člani uredništva, med njimi tudi Lado Kralj, pogumno zoperstavili Kavčičevim grožnjam.

Vse se vrača, vse se plača: devet let pozneje je Stane Kavčič kot liberalni predsednik vlade Socialistične republike Slovenije doživel podobno usodo, kot jo je sam v svoji pravoverni fazi pripravil skupini nadarjenih in pogumnih pesnikov, pisateljev in mislecev.

Lado Kralj je l. 1970 skupaj z režiserskima kolegoma Dušanom
Jovanovićem

in Zvonetom Šedlbauerjem ustanovil eksperimentalno gledališče
Glej;

prva predstava je bila *Kaspar* Petra Handkeja v režiji Iztoka Toryja ter v prevodu in dramaturgiji Lada Kralja ... rojstvo novega, iščočega, sebe raziskujočega gledališča, ki še zmeraj živi, išče in raziskuje naprej ...

ki pa za Ladota ni bilo dovolj – iskal in gledal in raziskoval in gradil je tudi naprej od *Gleja*, onstran vseh mej ...

... in l. 1971 ustanovil eksperimentalno gledališče *Pekarna*, ki je delovalo v stari, opuščeni pekarni na Tržaški 15, ki je ni več, v mojem spominu pa še naprej trepetajo podobe najbolj radikalnih, radikalno obrednih predstav tistega časa, *Potohodca* Daneta Zajca v Kraljevi režiji, *Gilgameša* v režiji Iva Svetine, *Ali naj te z listjem posujem?* po proznem besedilu Rudija Šeliga, spet v Kraljevi režiji ... V prvi zasedbi *Pekarne* je kruh igralskega izraza pekel tudi

Janez Vrečko,
poznejši kolega na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost,
ki je bil zmeraj tudi Oddelek za komparativno estetiko ...

Lado me je prvič navdušil z intervjujem v Mladini jeseni l. 1971, po vrnitvi z raziskovalnega bivanja v ZDA s štipendijo *IREX* (*International Research & Exchanges Board*), kjer se je udeležil znamenitega protestnega pohoda na Washington zoper vietnamsko vojno in kjer je delal kot asistent Richarda Schechnerja,

režiserja prodornega eksperimentalnega gledališča *The Performance Group* iz New Yorka. Skupina je l. 1970 s predstavo *Dionysus* gostovala tudi na beograjskem *Bitef-u*, mednarodnem festivalu eksperimentalnih gledališč. Še zmeraj mi je žal, da nisem, gimnazijec, prišel na ustanovni sestanek novopečene, gledališke *Pekarne*, kamor je Lado v *Mladini* povabil mlade navdušence za gledališče. Imel sem tremo. Bilo me je strah.

Vse to sem več kot kompenziral na seminarju o sodobnem gledališču, ki ga je Lado, tedaj še asistent, vodil na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost.

Tu smo izvedeli ključne in najnovejše informacije o eksperimentalnem gledališču tistih norih in prelomnih let, v svetovnem merilu. Lado je bil mentor naše eksperimentalne intermedialne gledališke skupine *Nomenklatura*, kjer smo raziskovali razmerja med zvokom, besedo in gledališkim prostorom.

Od njega smo dobili knjigo Michaela Kirbyja o happeningu, ki nam je pomagala pri koncipiranju našega prvega, veličastnega, veličastno spodletelega happeninga *Zvok, ne jezi se*. V fazi, ko smo se približali fizičnemu teatru, kakršnega je uprizarjala tudi *Pekarna*, nam je dal knjigo Viole Spolin o igralskih vajah, utemeljenih na sistemu Stanislavskega in tehniki joge. Večina kolegov s Filozofske fakultete je profesorja Kralja poznala kot resnega, profesionalnega, nadvse solidnega pedagoga meščanskih manir, jaz sem pa videl Ladota, kako je delal stojo na glavi in sem ga veselo posnemal ...

In prav to, stoja na glavi, je bila ob vsej profesorski avtoriteti Ladotova zmožnost videti in razumeti literarno zgodovino in sodobni svet. Bil je strokovnjak za ekspresionizem in je utemeljeno trdil, da Slavko Grum ni bil ekspresionist, kot se je glasila ustaljena sodba literarne zgodovine, ampak – simbolist. Lado Kralj, urednik *Zbranih del Slavka Gruma*, mi je razložil, kako je v to kanonično zbirko

vključil tudi čudovito, čutno, strastno in bolečo Grumovo
korespondenco
z ljubeznijo njegovega življenja, gospo Josipino Debelak,
prvo Slovenko z diplomom elektrotehnike praške univerze.
Gospa je Ladu Kralju, uredniku Grumovih *Zbranih del*, resno
predlagala,
naj vključi tudi ljubezenska pisma, ki jih je pisatelj pisal *ljubi Joži*
PO SVOJI SMRTI, kajti smrti itak ni, ljubezen je večna.
In me je kot umetniški vodja Drame poslal k tej véliki, čudoviti
gospe,
v Rdečo hišo na Poljanski cesti, da bi jo prepričal, naj dovoli
gledališko uprizoritev njune ljubezenske korespondence,
napisane v najbolj norih letih njunih življenj,
in mi je gospa Joži pokazala tudi Grumova posmrtna pisma
in je bilo nekaj mojih obiskov pri tej véliki, čudoviti duši
izjemna učna ura o književnosti in gledališču, ljubezni in smrti,
ki je ni ...
In je prišla na premiero dramatizacije Grumovih *Pisem Josipini*,
ki jih je na odru Male Drame režiral mladi Janez Pipan,
in ko je na odru zagledala igralca Braneta Grubarja, me je prijela za
roko
in začela jokati in se tresti in jecljati: »*Saj to je Slavko ... saj sem vedela,*
da je živ ...«
Po predstavi nas je častila in v Grubarjevi garderobi na pamet
zrecitirala 300 verzov Goethejevega *Fausta* v nemščini ...

Lado Kralj, umetniški vodja Drame SNG v Ljubljani v letih
1978–82,
me je povabil v Dramo za dramaturga. Bila je to moja prva služba,
bila je to pogumna, očarljiva, navdihujoča gledališka združba,
ki sta jo Lado Kralj kot umetniški vodja in Polde Bibič kot ravnatelj
po dolgi krizi Drame ponovno peljala iz provincialne zatohlosti
v mednarodno odprtost in v uprizarjanje družbenokritične domače
dramatike.

Lado je v umetniškem vodstvu zbral ekipo, polno entuziazma:
lektorico Nado Šumi, za urednico gledaliških listov Nino Kovič,
za stike z javnostjo Iztoka Premrova ... Živelimo Z vsako predstavo,
ZA vsako predstavo, študij vsake predstave je bil avantura,
v tistih letih sem v najlepšem smislu doživel velikodušno igralsko
naravo,
osvajajočo zmeraj nove like, razdajajočo se za drugega, za oder kot dar,

dar občinstvu, dar trenutku, ki po padcu zavese potone v Nikdar ...
Še posebej rad se spominjam gostovanj Drame – na Dubrovniškem
poletnem festivalu,
na Sterijevem pozorju v Novem Sadu, najvišji instanci
jugoslovanskega gledališča,
v beograjskem *Jugodrpju* (**Jugoslovanskem dramskem pozorištu**),
na Poljskem ...
Na sarajevskem *MESS-u* (Festivalu malih in eksperimentalnih
scen) smo l. 1980
nastopili s poetično dramo *Voranc* Daneta Zajca v režiji
Mileta Koruna
ter z absurdno tragedijo Petra Božiča *Komisar Kriš* v režiji
Boža Šprajca,
na stopnišču avstrijske Vijećnice, Narodne biblioteke Bosne in
Hercegovine,
ki je 12 let pozneje pogorela pri bombardiranju Sarajeva,
l. 1981 pa z inscenacijo pesmi Daneta Zajca v predstavi *Ogenj v ustih*,
kjer sta pod režijsko taktirko Iva Prijatelja blestela igralca
Rudi Kosmač
in Iva Zupančič. Vse te umetniške prodore je omogočila vizija
Lada Kralja.
Kar je na zgodovinskem prelomu 70-tih in 80-tih let tako lepo zraslo
na plodnem odru ljubljanske Drame SNG, je bilo Ladotovo maslo
...
a je Lado glede svojih zaslug bil zmeraj gosposko diskreten in tih.
Na gostovanjih je bil osredotočen na obveznosti in obenem
sproščen, komunikativen in kontemplativen, s širokimi očmi
se je oziral naokoli in se poglobljeno pogovarjal. Hranim nekaj foto-
grafij, kjer je zapisana svetloba tistih lepih dni,
ki so se ponavadi končali šele sredi noči
ali zjutraj naslednjega dne ali zjutraj naslednje noči,
po vseh okroglih mizah in praznovanjih uspešno odigranih predstav
in strastnih pogovorih o gledališču kot svetišču in igrišču in osebnem
pristanišču,
o gledališkem odru kot odprtosti, o dramskem tekstu kot poetiki
in etiki in kritiki ...
Vrhunec te usmeritve je bila premiera drame *Disident Arnož in
njegovi* Draga Jančarja
v režiji Zvoneta Šedlbauerja januarja 1982. A to smo zmogli le še
z zadnjimi močmi. Po izteku direktorskega mandata Poldeta Bibiča,
ki je s svojimi širokimi rameni, odprtostjo ter igralsko priljubljenostjo

ščitil Ladotovo gledališko poetiko, so se stare sile spet zbrale in šle v ofenzivo, da bi ponovno ideološko zaprle in zatrle odprtost odra. Lado se je pokončno držal, a je bil čedalje bolj osamljen, mene so zdriblali iz teatra ... Prelomen trenutek zatrtja Kraljevega umetniškega koncepta je bila prepoved igre *Jaslice* Zdravka Duše, ki naj bi jo v Mali Drami režiral mladi

Vinko Möderndorfer.

Na prvi bralni vaji, ko sem ob Kraljevi navzočnosti kot dramaturg razlagal besedilo, je igralska ekipa izvedla udar zoper nemoralnost teksta.

Lado je mirno, a odločno zagovarjal kvaliteto tega dramskega besedila

in Vinkovega režijskega koncepta. Neimenovana igralka je nato izjavila:

»Jaz nisem kurba, ne bom igrala kurbe!« – Odvrnil sem: »*Kolikor mi je znano, morilka tudi niste, Lady Macbeth bi pa igrali!*«

Zbrana igralska ekipa, okrepljena s predstavniki nove direkcije, Delavskega sveta in sindikata, je izbruhnila v strastno, strašno, samoupravno zaklinjanje zoper družbene sovražnike, čarovnice in črne mačke ...

Nato je preiskovalni sodnik povabil na zaslišanje Kralja kot umetniškega vodjo,

Petra Božiča kot člana Programskega sveta Drame in mene kot dramaturga.

Tisto jutro sva z Ladotom šla k mojemu očetu Anteju, ki je imel bogate izkušnje s policijo, sodišči in zapori, saj je bil kar 23-krat zaprt. Po navodila. Moj oče je kritično premeril Ladota in pozorno poslušal njegove besede

ter z odliko ocenil Ladotov umetniški vtis. Moja ocena je bila nezadostna,

saj sem oblekel napačen kostum – maturantsko obleko, ki je sicer nikoli

nisem nosil. »*Čuk na palici,*« mi je s kritičnim smehom rekel, »*nikar ne dovoli*

nobene prednosti sodniku! Zanj ne smeš obleči te šik obleke,

če je sicer ne nosiš. Če boš pred njim slavnostno oblečen,

boš njega počastil, sebe pa ponižal. Nisi v šoli! ...«

»*Ali je potemtakem revolucija samo vprašanje kostumografije?*«

sva se z Ladotom spraševala, ko sva v skladu s kostumografskimi

napotki

prakomunista Anteja šla k preiskovalnemu sodniku, v Srce Zveri,
na Miklošičevo,
Lado in jaz. Lado oblečen gosposko, ker je bila to njegova naravna
drža,
jaz pa v strganih kavbojkah in puliju iz stare volne. In ko se nama je
pridružil še Peter Božič, ki je bil zmeraj in povsod Peter Božič,
preiskovalni sodnik ni imel nikakršne šanse, da bi nas naprej
preganjal.
Cinično se je smejal in ustavil kazenski postopek. *Jaslice* Zdravka
Duše
pa so ostale neformalne prepovedane, čez čas jih je Vinko režiral v
Gleju ...
Veliko smo se tistega sodnega dne presmejali, ko smo z obilico
vina in pira
proslavljali zmago. Pirovo ... Na dnu smeha smo čutili senco
strahu in nemira.
Vedeli smo, da se je Ladotova umetniška usmeritev Drame
nepovratno iztekla ...
Po tem junaškem porazu, ki se je v zgodovinski perspektivi izkazal
kot moralna in umetniška zmaga, sem se jaz vrnil med verze,
Lado Kralj pa na večno neдрje matere Univerze.
Dokončal je doktorat in nadaljeval prekinjeno univerzitetno kariero
na Oddelku za primerjalno književnost in literarno teorijo
Filozofske fakultete,
kjer sem se mu čez čas pridružil tudi sam. Seveda je ostal povezan z
gledališčem,
saj je predaval gledališko zgodovino in teorijo, s tem pa nadaljeval
pionirsko delo
svojega očeta Vladimirja.

Lado Kralj je bil osebnost vélike sinteze umetniške prakse in teorije.
Sledeč dramaturški teoriji svojega očeta je uvajal v teatrologijo
sodobne teoretične impulze strukturalne lingvistike, semiologije in
psihoanalize.
Spominjam se gostovanja Anne Ubersfeld, avtorice prelomne knjige
Lire le théâtre,
na Filozofski fakulteti in nadvse plodnih diskusij ob bogato obloženi
večerji.

Lado je bil radoveden v izvornem, etimološkem pomenu besede:
rado-veden,

rad je vedel, tako na polju literarne vede kot literarne besede. In vedel
je celo več:
da je prava vednost prav v čudenju, v radovednosti, v uvodni besedici
RAD.

Z gledališčem je bil Lado vse življenje povezan tudi osebno, tako
rekoč intimno.
V mladosti sta prijateljevala z Dušanom Jovanovićem in sta veljala
za najbolj radikalna režiserja eksperimentalnega gledališča v njegovi
pionirski fazi.
Poročila sta se z dvema sestrama Zei – Lado z Lado in Dušan z Vido.
Zmeraj sem bil ganjen ob znamenjih Ladotove navezanosti in
nežne skrbi za oba otroka.
Brede žal ni več med nami. Je pa tu Miha s svojima sinovoma,
Ladotovima vnukoma Timom in Benom.
Zgodba Kraljev, kraljevska zgodba gre naprej.

Bila pa je v Ladotovem dramatičnem življenju tudi naravna in višja
sila,
ob kateri je v drugi polovici svojega življenja našel pristan in
nebesno smer.
Tej naravni, višji sili je ime – Jožica Avbelj, ta igralski čudež,
osrednja interpretinja eksperimentalnih odrov od začetka 70-tih let
dalje,
od *Spomenika G* po motivih Bojana Štiha v Jovanovičevi režiji v *Gleju*.
Z nostalgijo se spominjam naših prijateljskih druženj, tistega daljnega
avgusta širokih, smejočih se ust v Dubrovniku, ko smo skupaj
hodili na predstave,
družinskih obiskov, ko je Ladota in Jožico pogosto spremljal Miha,
izletov v naravo ...

Naj na tem sklepnem kraju izrečem, da sta bila Lado in Jožica lep par.
In taka bosta ostala. Ker prav je imela gospa Josipina Debelak,
Grumova Joži:

smrti ni,
naše ljube duše se le preselijo v ljubeč spomin.
In tam bo v nas še naprej žarel Ladotov obraz:
obsijan s prešernim smehom, z ironičnim smehljajem,
s kritično distanco rasnega intelektualca, z rahlo solznimi očmi
literarnega in gledališkega zgodovinarja in teoretika in pisateljskega
praktika,
ure in ure, dneve in noči in leta sklonjenega nad knjige in rokopise,

s široko razprtimi očmi začudenega dečka, navdušenega umetnika,
z bogato dušo, ki ljubi svoja otroka ter eno in edino Jožico
in mi zdaj kritično šepeta: »*Hahaha, Boris, ti si pa res majestetično
patetičen ...*«

Tu si, Lado, lepa, radovedna, vélika duša,
ki nas zdaj gledaš in nas poslušáš
in se nam smehljaš
s stojo na glavi!

Tvoj Boris A.,
iz srca

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PRIMERJALNA KNJIŽEVNOST ISSN (tiskana izdaja/printed edition): 0351-1189
Comparative literature, Ljubljana ISSN (spletna izdaja/online edition): 2591-1805

PKn (Ljubljana) 46.1 (2023)

Izdava Slovensko društvo za primerjalno književnost
Published by the Slovenian Comparative Literature Association
https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/primerjalna_knjizevnost/index

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Letna naročnina: 20,00 €, za študente in dijake 10,00 €.

TR 02010-0016827526, z oznako »za revijo«.

Cena posamezne številke: 10,00 €.

Annual subscription (outside Slovenia): € 40,00.

Naklada *Copies:* 350.

PKn je vključena v *PKn is indexed/abstracted in:*

Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Bibliographie d'histoire littéraire française,
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Oblikovanje *Design:* Narvika Bovcon

Stavek in prelom *Typesetting:* Alenka Maček

Tisk *Printed by:* VB&S d. o. o., Flandrova 19, Ljubljana

Izid številke je podprla *This issue is supported by:*

Agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost RS.

Oddano v tisk 10. maja 2023. *Sent to print on 10 May 2023*

