

## **Rajka Gorup Festschrift**

### **Scholarship As The Art Of Life: Contributions On Serbian Literature, Culture And Society By Friends Of Radmila (Rajka) Gorup**

**Edited and with an Introduction by Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover**

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###### **The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**

In this essay the author, a member of the international Committee of Experts on the Charter, briefly surveys the motives behind this major Council of Europe document, its history and structure, problems in its implementation, and its achievements after 15 years of operation. In accordance with the occasion, a special focus will be on the status of South Slavic and other minority languages in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, nearly all of which have at different times acceded to the Charter.

##### **3. SVETLANA RAKIC (Franklin College, IN)**

###### **Art and Reality in Serbia Now: A Case Study**

The recent history of Serbia has been tragic in many ways, but it has created an environment in which Serbian artists—those who are not interested in the fashion of the day and, for the most part, isolated from the dictates of the art market—struggle to make sense of the largely insane circumstances

and create images inspired by profound suffering, empathy, isolation, and transience, as well as by the deeply felt threat posed by greediness, corruption, and stupidity, all aspects of human nature and the world in which we live.

The article presents six contemporary Serbian artists: Ratko Lalić, Dušan Otašević, Jovan Rakidžić, Todor Stevanović, Milan Tucović, and Milivoje Unković, who have witnessed a fundamental transition from one social context to another, a transformation that happened dramatically and swiftly in Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, and that unfolded into what many feel is the national disaster Serbia experiences today. Paintings will be analyzed as creative responses to exceptionally challenging social circumstances—war, chaos, and instability—which have inspired clarity of perception about human life and the world we live in.

#### 4. MARIJETA BOZOVIC (Yale U)

##### **Towards a Hydropoetics of the Danube River**

The Danube is Europe's second longest river: it flows through or borders ten countries, while its watershed covers four more. Navigable from Bavaria to the Black Sea, the river serves as the unifying artery of a culturally diverse geographic region. Once a frontier of the Roman Empire, the Danube was successfully claimed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867–1918), the spectral multicultural state par excellence, and has been the subject of imperial aspirations by many others: from Ottomans to Soviets; from occupied Europe of World War II to the European Union today. By traversing such a culturally diverse region, the Danube problematizes attempts to divide Europe from non-Europe; it proves West and East to be fluidly connected, and yet has been the site of persistent “nesting Orientalisms,” ethnic hatred and genocide. From its beginnings in the German Black Forest to the Romanian and Ukrainian shores of the Black Sea, the Danube flows through a region that has emerged black and blue from imperial aspirations of domination, hostilities in the wake of the Cold War, and civil war. The southeastern portion of the river constitutes Europe's Other—the “Barbaropa” within the continent's own geographic boundaries—and now faces the expansion of another super-political entity in the European Union.

At a time of tenuous unification in Europe, “Danube studies” seek to remap the region by focusing on the river's peoples and their cultural imaginaries and interactions from antiquity to the present, exposing the Danube as a quintessential site of cross-cultural engagement. By its very character, the Danube also challenges disciplinary divisions and invites multidisciplinary approaches. Through a focus on works of creative and imaginative culture, we

can examine the aesthetic mediation of actual and possible communities, in search of utopian promise even amidst and in the wake of historical atrocities.

## 5. VLADIMIR ZORIC (Nottingham U)

### **Submergent Bridge: Water and Exile in the Work of Miloš Crnjanski**

In a dictionary of the pervasive symbols of the twentieth century literary criticism water would probably figure as a ubiquitous yet a peculiarly undefined entry. Although it proved a stimulus for authors as different as Curtius and Bachelard there has not been any critical consensus as to whether it should be considered as a substance or as a form. In other words, the siren call of water produced many an inspired page of criticism but also led to a methodological impasse in which its symbolism was explained indiscriminately by both mythological and immanent frames of reference. The same mixture of attractiveness and elusiveness applies to exile. In Edward Said's famous dictum, 'Exile is strangely compelling to think of but terrible to experience.' One might add: and difficult to write about, because of its sustained semiotic proliferation that has made it encompass nearly everything from spiritual self-withdrawal and metaphysical alienation to enforced expulsion and economic migrancy. In this paper I will firstly explore the ancient sources in which water and exile coincide and thereby throw a specific light on one another and then I will proceed to examine the literary work of Miloš Crnjanski, in which a similar sort of interaction is evident throughout his career. In the course of the argument, I will make a case for symbolism of water that is specific to practices and perceptions of expulsion and for Crnjanski's prose and poetry as a modern response to the ancient rhetoric code.

## 6. JOVANA BABOVIĆ (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

### **From Brutes to Caged Beasts: The Domestication of Entertainment in Belgrade's Mali Kalemegdan between the Two Wars**

In the early 1920s, Belgrade's large downtown park was a divided space: the upper section termed *Veliki Kalemegdan* was a bourgeois sanctuary for chaperoned *rendez-vous* and idyllic promenades, while *Mali Kalemegdan's* carousels, freak shows, and counterfeit magicians were the province of the working classes and newly arrived migrants. Under pressure from urban reformers, the city sponsored several renewal projects in the interwar years that first integrated the *Cvijeta Zuzović* arts pavilion on the grounds of *Mali Kalemegdan* in the late 1920s, then displaced the remaining tents and mechanized swings in favor of the Belgrade Zoo in the mid-1930s, and finally

integrated both sections of the park into a democratic urban space. My essay examines how these reforms domesticated urban entertainment, and how the homogenization of the city's leisure spaces changed the way residents encountered one another, how popular culture and European urban trends emerged.

## 7. ZORAN MILUTINOVIC (SSEES, London)

### **What the Dervish Confessed about Death: Meša Selimović's *Death and the Dervish***

Ahmed Nurudin lost his faith in god and justice when his earthly dealings had taken a wrong turn: when his brother had been imprisoned and his efforts to, if nothing else, at least find out why this had happened proved unsuccessful. He regained his faith in god and justice when his social standing had improved— notwithstanding his brother's death, which could not be undone by anyone— and when he himself had become a *qadi*, a judge, an earthly representative of god's justice. At the very end of the novel, Ahmed Nurudin once more loses his faith, and this coincides with his earthly dealings taking a wrong turn again—this time a fatally wrong turn. Although this says something about Nurudin's character, about the source and strength of his convictions, I am not drawing attention to this in order to analyse his psychological motivations, but in order to remind the reader of the framework of Nurudin's confession: *Death and the Dervish* begins and finishes with Nurudin's disbelief in god, and in the metaphysical and ethical order which god's existence guarantees. When as a *qadi* Nurudin regains his faith, it is just a hiatus, a moment of vacillation, comparable to a moment of religious crisis in the life of a firm believer, after which balance is restored: Nurudin goes to his death without any belief in god or justice.

## 8. MARIJA MITROVIĆ (Università di Trieste)

### **Religija kao utočište: da li je Ahmed Surudin tragična figura?**

#### **[Religion as shelter, or should Ahmed Nurudin be considered a tragic figure?]**

Roman *Derviš i smrt* (1966) Meše Selimovića doživio je niz kritičkih osvrtu i analiza koje, uza svu raznolikost pristupa i različitih uglova posmatranja, u osnovi polaze od pretpostavke da roman opisuje tragične događaje i da je njegov glavni junak tragičan, osetljiv, prefinjeni intelektualac, čovek koji se probudio i pobunio. Ako je tragedija moguća samo u zapadnjačkom, demokratskom modelu kulture, onda je tako dosledno islamiziranim ambijentom kakav opisuje u svom romanu, a koji nije istorijski zasnovan, Selimović nudio ključ

za neko drukčije čitanje, a ne ono koje je u kritici prevagnulo: da je pred nama tragedija i da je Nurudin tragični junak. Danas možemo reći da je Selimović, već tada, sredinom šezdesetih, shvatio da je život posvećen ideologiji (duhovnoj ili svetovnoj) poguban i po društvo i po pojedinca.

The novel *The Dervish and Death* (1966) by Mesha Selimović has gone through many interpretations and analyses which are nevertheless based on a similar assumption: namely, that the novel describes tragic events and that its hero is a tragic, sensitive figure of a refined intellectual who has awoken and is rebelling. If tragedy is possible only in the Western democratic cultural model, then the novel offers us a key to another reading, through the islamised (but not historical) milieu in which it is set. This key leads us to the insight—not shared in the criticism of the novel at large—that Selimović saw, even then, in the 1960s, that a life dedicated to ideology (spiritual or secular) is detrimental to both society and the individual.

Key Words : *Derviš i smrt*, čovek pobune, Đurđevdan

## 9. Александар Бошковић (Columbia U)

### ЧИТАЊЕ СТРЕПЊЕ КАО СТРЕПЊЕ ЧИТАЊА

Апстракт: Текст се бави питањима традиционалног тумачења и модерног читања песме „Стрепња“ Десанке Максимовић. С једне стране, традиционално тумачење у Десанкиној „Стрепњи“ не види никакве недоумице, те тече здраворазумски, истичући да је реч о „програмској љубавној песми“ у коме су „твоја ока два“, којима се лирско „ја“ обраћа, неко ко је, опет здраворазумски, супротног пола, дакле, мушкарац. Таква интерпретација ће (опет са оним *common sense*) препознати патријархалну плашљивост жене пред остварењем љубави са мушкарцем. С друге стране, пак, модерно читање нипошто неће пристати на то да је такво (или било које тотализујуће) читање једино могуће, исправно и једино постојеће. Другим речима, модерно читање ће се питати о нечитљивости текста Десанкине песме: прво, откуда то да је лирски субјекат нужно женско? Друго, откуда то да су „твоја ока два“ нужно очи мушкарца пред којим лирско „ја“ осећа патријархалну плашљивост? Зар „твоја ока два“ не могу да представљају очи жене, или да имају значење нечег сасвим апстрактног, дакле да буду песничка метафора за нешто што, рецимо, не мора уопште да буде особа, биће, већ нека апстрактна појава као што је, на пример, (именица) смрт? У кругу ових питања, аутор интерпретира односе традиционалног и модерног тумачења, увиђајући у којој мери је могуће говорити о новим, неоткривеним значењима песме „Стрепња“.

## 10. SLOBODANKA VLADIV-GLOVER (Monash U)

### Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* (1927): A Close Reading through the Psychoanalytic Model of Consciousness

Literary texts of the 20th century are not about the world "as it is." They do not "mirror" an assumed "reality." They are, like the "new art" or "new drama" in the words of Konstantin Treplev, the young playwright in Chekhov's *Seagull*, embodiments of "dreams." This is nowhere better illustrated than in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. To the Lighthouse is constructed by or as a giant gaze or by/as myriads of gazes which are embedded in each other, in endless perspectival repetition—en abîme. There is no "central" narrative perspective, no narrator to guide the reader through the maze of imagined scenes, emotions, inner monologues and pictures evoked before him or her. The text is like a giant weave, which generates itself, self-propagates, is fecund—like Mrs Ramsay.

This self-propagation of the text is contrasted with the labours of the artist, Lily Briscoe. She finds it difficult to extract meaning from her material—colour and paint—and labours to fashion her thought into form. She succeeds only at the end of the novel, in Part III, simultaneously with another story-line which is being accomplished: the oedipal rite of passage of James Ramsay, now 16 years of age. By contrast with Gayatri Spivak's feminist reading of Woolf's novel, this essay presents a view of the novel as a model of meaning and the creative process, in which all the characters—male and female - have a metaphoric dimension, even if they are constructed out of fragmentary and allusive socio-historical material.

## 11. DRAGAN KUJUNDŽIĆ (University of California at Irvine)

### Cinders and Ashes: The Holocaust in the Works of Aleksandar Tišma

A much interpreted, and often criticized statement by Theodor Adorno, claims that "[T]o write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric" (Adorno 1983, 33). Without entering into the long-standing debate about this assertion, one can retain from it at least that the event, denominated rightly or wrongly by the name "Auschwitz" as a designation for the Holocaust of European Jewry, has brought about a singular crisis of representation. This crisis came to expression as the impossibility of writing "poetry" or, to generalize, "literature," after

this event. More precisely, this event marks an irreversible *caesura* (Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's thesis), after which there is an impossibility of writing and reading literature in the manner done up to that point. This impossibility is countered by an immense ethical demand to testify about the event, which, as many have argued, defies any representation, testimony and even language itself. After Auschwitz, literature is facing this impossible demand formulated by Maurice Blanchot in *The Writing of Disaster*: "We read books on Auschwitz. The wish of all, in the camps, the last wish: know what has happened, do not forget, and at the same time never will you know" (Blanchot 1995, 82).

## 12. RADOJKA VUKČEVIĆ

### **Bosnian, Serb-Krajina and Kosovo Children: Individuals Versus Masses**

The paper will deal with some aspects of the war waged in some areas of former Yugoslavia, more specifically with children as its most innocent victims. There exists a body of literature by the children of Bosnia, Serb-Krajina, and Kosovo, their experiences, and their view of the conditions in which they found themselves without any personal impute. How these children, each of them as an individual, perceived the war in the relation to the masses is revealed in this poignant body of literature.

The paper will also put into focus how these children express their deeply lived experiences regarding true events, such as a father leaving for war, meeting other refugees, village attacks, from which they learned that war is the biggest evil. A question asking whether these experiences can be fully expressed by words will be raised. Some other questions dealing with the psychology of these children will be discussed as well, such as impossibility of their feelings to be transferred on a global level (for instance, children living in war vs. those living in peace; refugees vs. who those remained in their homes; the children close to the front line vs. those in the rear). The analysed corpus consists of a number of original children diaries. In the conclusion it will only be possible to agree with Adorno and his belief that after Aushwitz it is impossible to raise children as it was done in the past.

**Key Words:** Yugoslavia, war, children's diaries, individual, masses

## 13. TOMISLAV LONGINOVIĆ (Wisconsin U)

## **The Sense of an Ending: Children of Yugoslavia Looking for Home**

The post-Yugoslav intellectual environment has continued to emerge through a variety of cultural rhizomes into the global cultural landscape, especially through the work of those writers, filmmakers, musicians and visual artists who trudged along the same paths as the anonymous multitudes whose destinies were determined by the forced movement that pushed them outside their native realm. This process of nomadic transplantation was followed by the translation of an affective tenor that used to belong to the previous habitus, as a narrative guided by the trope dominant since the Homeric times: looking for home. This search for a location that is no more is often written upon the surface of an adopted language, as this is the necessary condition in which the new culture can be territorialized as a symbolic domain of identity. It is hardly unexpected that the new territory will be that of the city, an imaginary space of modernity that makes itself much more available to translation due to its tendency to homogenize experiences across the divides of languages and cultures.

### **14. OLGA NEDELJKOVIC (Affiliation?)**

#### **The Mythicization of the Kosovo Battle and the Historicization of the Kosovo Legend**

The Kosovo Battle which took place in historical reality in 1389 was evaluated as the most decisive event which determined the fate of the Serbian medieval state and its people. Thus, it was immediately subject to the processes of revaluation, transforming itself into a foundational myth of the Serbian nation. Since the Ottoman occupation lasted c. 500 years, the Kosovo Legend had enough time to be elaborated as the central event of mythicized Serbian history. As the foundational story of the Serbs, it developed its mythical realm in the succession of generations. Constantly remembering the glory of the Serbian medieval state, the Kosovo Legend constituted and preserved Serbian national identity throughout the many centuries of Turkish yoke. It not only promoted the early creation of the Serbian national consciousness, but it was essential for the religious and political constitution and social integration of the Serbs under the leadership of the Serbian Orthodox Church within the Ottoman millet system. As the foundational myth of the Serbian nation, the Kosovo Legend is grounded on mythical discourse and represents one of the best examples of the creative power of myths in the history of humanity.

At the same time the Kosovo Legend is an excellent example how complex the relationship between myth and history can be, when after many centuries

of the processes of its mythicization, in new political circumstances of the end of the twentieth and the first decades of the twenty first centuries, the Kosovo Myth has been subject to the reversal process of historicization. After the annihilation of Tito's Yugoslavia and the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999, the problem of Kosovo not only has ominously shaped the political culture of the Serbs, but it has also historicized their Kosovo Myth, transferring the Kosovo territory into a war-zone, then into the territory occupied by the foreign troops, thus becoming a foreign military base, in order to finally proclaim Kosovo's independence from Serbia. In contemporary political climate, the Kosovo Legend seems to be transformed into an ugly historical reality, which has to be separated from Serbia at any price. Thus, in the twenty first century, the Serbs who have been denied their past have become exceptionally nationalistic and defensive.

## 15. TATJANA ALEKSIĆ (University of Michigan)

### **Masculinity, Sacrifice, and a Legacy of Violence: The Male Collective in Serbian Film**

The not so distant Yugoslav dissolution wars were eponymous with the consolidation of the male pact that utilized the sacrificial logic in the name of this or that ideological construct (nation, religion, tradition, honor, etc.—all symbols of patriarchal continuity and synonymous with the name of the dead father). As Tatjana Rosić notes, post-socialist societies see the “rehabilitation of wounded masculinity [as] the rehabilitation of the entire community, whose crisis is evident and whose consolidation is possible [...] primarily through the rebirth of the old gender regime, traditional masculine identities and their values.”

At the time, the representation of this spectacle in the media and academic production sought to answer the question of the apparent discrepancy between the socialist period of gender emancipation and corresponding pacification of masculine aggressiveness (typical of the Balkans, it was understood), and the contemporary return of vengeance by “wounded masculinity” which was swearing in the process of renewal of its lost vitality. Within the context of Serbian cinematography, brotherhood assumes a triple meaning: of the Yugoslav ideology of (multi-ethnic and multi-confessional) brotherhood and unity, supported by a personality cult; of the nationalist 1980s-1990s anti-Yugoslav and war decades; as well as the subsequent post-Yugoslav period in which “brotherhood” is still militant, although its regrouping is not necessarily on a military basis. Using Serbian films, representative of the social shifts that informed them, I discuss the deeply oedipal dynamics of “brotherhood” and its underlying sacrificial economy. These films offer a

view of how the sacrificial economy modified the kind of victim capable of absorbing brotherhood's raw aggressiveness, which mutates from one period to the next: the Black Wave films of the 1960s and 1970s pose the death of the feminine principle as the failure of (sexual and political) emancipation and ultimate freedom of the human (socialist) subject—hence their victim is usually female. In the films of the nationalist and war decades (1990s), such human and sexual liberation is already blocked, the victimized ones are (among other invisible victims) under-age children not even allowed to reach maturity and challenge the old order, but already sacrificed to the impotence and incompetence of their fathers.

## APPENDIX I: INTERVIEWS AND CREATIVE WRITING

### 1. MASHA UDENSIVA-BRENNER (Columbia U)

#### **Radmila Gorup: From Belgrade to Columbia University**

*“I still do not feel retired,” said Radmila Gorup, senior lecturer, emeritus in Slavic languages, who taught in the Columbia University Slavic Department from 1980 until last spring. Though she is currently not teaching classes (but hopes to do so occasionally), she continues to participate in the University community, returning to campus every second Friday to co-chair a University Seminar and staying active in the Njegoš Endowment at the East Central European Institute.*

### 2. Ograničenost Izбора: Razgovor sa Radmilom Gorup

[“Američki susreti”, (Razgovori sa Lorensom Sterlingom, Zorkom Milić, Aleksom Jovićevićem i Radmilom Gorup), Ovdje, 367-368-369, 1999, 90-100.]

Nedavno ste zajedno sa Nadom Obradović objavili antologiju savremene srpske priče „The Priest of Fire“. Zanima me koji su bili osnovni kriterijumi koji su vas rukovodili pri izboru pisaca, priča koje reprezentuju našu savremenu priču.

Došli smo na ideju da prikažemo prozne pisce koji su rođeni između 1930-1960. godine. Htjeli smo da damo jedan presjek savremene srpske proze. Međutim, nismo mogli da uključimo sve one pisce koje smo htjeli. Željeli smo da ova knjiga bude nastavak slične knjige, Džonsonove antologije The New Writing in Yugoslavia, koja je izašla 70-ih.

3. **NINA ZIVANCEVIC (Sorbonne VIII, Paris)**

**The Island**

4. **Rajka Gorup—CV and Publications**

5. **TABULA GRATULATORIA**