lepčir mašna, leptir mašna, папионка, вратоврска пеперутка, flutur...

the literary journal of students in Balkan studies

Vol. 10/No. 1
Spring 2013
We dedicate this issue to Aleksandar Hemon whose work has instructed and entertained us for a couple of decades.
Here is another modest collection of student’s written work on a variety of topics and from a number of courses taught on Balkan languages, history, literatures and cultures. There are stories, poems, fairy tales, essays, book and film reviews—all born on paper during the 2012-2013 academic year. We saved them from abandonment or expiration after the successful completion of a course, a school year or even graduation. The pieces have not been embellished: we let those timid be timid, the eager remain eager, the concise or discursive stay concise or discursive.

This issue is dedicated to Aleksandar Hemon, internationally acclaimed Chicago author and columnist, whose work has instructed, and entertained us for a couple of decades.

Join us by signing up for courses that are offered through the Department of Slavc Languages and Literatures, and the College. You can find the list and course description for 2013/14 academic year on pages 72-75.

Enjoy!

The Editor
Spring 2013
# CONTENTS

- **WHAT KIND OF STATE WE DESERVE?** .......................................................... 8
  *Aleksandar Hemon*

- **POEM FOR MY FRIEND IN JERUSALEM, MAYBE** .................................... 11
  *Nora Dolliver*

- **EUGENE ONEGIN** .................................................................................. 13
  *Andrew Boshardy*

- **TARANTINO** ......................................................................................... 14
  *Andrew Boshardy*

- **THIS IS A STORY ABOUT ONE TERRIBLE SUMMER** .............................. 17
  *Martin Posthumus*

- **POEM** .................................................................................................. 18
  *Martin Posthumus*

- **TRANSLATING HEMON** ........................................................................ 19
  *Tobi Haslett*

- **THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X** ............................................ 22
  *Sabahudin Redžepović*

- **FILM REVIEW** ...................................................................................... 23
  *Sabahudin Redžepović*

- **VIGNETTE** ........................................................................................... 24
  *Martin Posthumus*

- **BIRDS IN THE TREES** ......................................................................... 25
  *Justin O'Dell*

- **ARAB SPRING** .................................................................................... 26
  *Sabahudin Redžepović*

- **THE PRACTICE OF DEVŞIRME IN THE BALKANS** ................................ 27
  *Zytha Kock*

- **CHICAGO WEATHER** ........................................................................... 32
  *Analyse Markovic*

- **WHAT WOULD I DO IF I COULD...** .................................................... 32
  *Analyse Markovic*
THE MINISTRY OF PAIN .................................................. Bronwyn Koehl

THE MAGIC FLUTE (A SYNOPSIS) ...................................... Erin Franklin

ADAPTABLE FOLKLORE: CHRISTIANITY, PAGANISM, AND MYTH IN GREECE .......... Chiara Graf

MY GRANDMA ........................................................................ Martin Posthumus

MY FATHER ........................................................................... Nora Dolliver

DIESEL-MEN AND SPONSORED GIRLS: ................................ Stefanie Robey

THE GREAT CHICAGO FIRE .................................................. Tanja Alavanja

NARRATION AND BULGARIANIZATION IN TIME OF PARTING ......................... Nora Dolliver

ZDENKO ............................................................................... Analyse Markovic

AN UNSUCCESSFUL JOURNEY ............................................. Martin Posthumus

WHITE CAT (A FAIRY TALE) ................................................ Erin Franklin

FROM HERO TO ZERO TO BACK ........................................ Arielle Moseley

THE PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE STRUCTURAL UNIT .............................. Simo Huang

GLADIATOR: A FILM REVIEW ............................................ Erin Franklin

FANTASTIC STORY ................................................................ Erin Franklin

ANEGDOTA ........................................................................... Katie Tucker
KAKVU DRŽAVU ZASLUŽUJEMO?
Aleksandar Hemon

Vidio sam danas na internetu parolu koji je neki vispreni demonstrant namijenio bosanskoj političkoj bagri: “Sanjao sam noćas da vas nema.” I odmah sam se, iz dijaspore, prepoznao: ne znam otkad već sanjam da ih nema i da ih nikada nije ni bilo. I začas se čovjek zanese i počne da zamišlja život bez njih i tu se nađe na pola koraka do zamišljanja života koji bi imala Berina da se nije desilo ono što se desilo.

Zamišljanje mogućeg ili podnošljivog života nije nešto čime se bakču demokratski izabrani predstavnici vlasti u Bosni i Hercegovini. Čitava logika šejtanskodejtonskečne političkog sistema se zasniva na implicitnom i lažnom obećanju da će se sačuvati i zaštiti ono što je jedino važno: nacija (puta tri). Logika je ratna: žrtvovaće se nebrojeni pojedinci, ali će narod (puta tri) preživjeti—šta je jedna naša beba (baška njihova) u borbi našega naroda da preživi pod udarima mnogobrojnih i raznovrsnih neprijatelja? Vlastima je udobno u uvjerenju da se za par mjeseci ili godinu toj bebi niko ni imena neće sjećati, a kamoli matičnog broja. Berina nikad nije bila ni uvedena u državne teftere, te tako nikad neće morati biti izvedena—što se tiče države, Berina nikada nije ni postojala. Njoj je oduzeta ne samo budućnost, nego i onih nekoliko mjeseci sadašnjosti što je imala.

Ambis između vlastodržaca i subjekata njihove vladavine, između šejtanskodejtonske teorije i svakodnevnog prakse tzv. građana, u ovom je trenutku apsolutno nepojmljiv i nepremostiv: političarima su pojedinačni građani i njihova muka toliko nezamislivi da građanstvo mora protestima da zahtijeva pravo novorođenih na zakonsko postojanje, usput podsjećajući Parlament na vlastito. Čini se da su strukture vlasti još uvijek u šoku nakon suočavanja sa neobjašnjivim postojanjem živih ljudi.

Metastaza

Moralna metastaza dejtonske Bosne i Hercegovine je neizbježni i krajnji ishod ideologije u kojoj je nacija najmanja jedinica ljudskosti. Bosanska politička bagra gradi sebi utopijsku državu u kojoj uopšte neće biti građana--postojaće samo vlast i nacija.

WHAT KIND OF STATE WE DESERVE?
Aleksandar Hemon

I saw a slogan on the internet today that a smart protestor hurled at a bunch of political bastards: “I dreamt last night that you didn’t exist anymore.” And immediately, from the diaspora, I recognized myself: I don’t even know how long I’ve been dreaming that they did not exist and that they had never existed. And one gets carried away quickly imagining life without them, and there he finds himself on the verge of imagining the life that Berina would have had if what happened had not happened.

Imagining that possible and bearable life is not something that democratically elected authorities in Bosnia bother with. The entire logic of the Devilish-Dayton political system is founded on the implicit and false promise that it will preserve and protect what is only important: the nation (times three). Its logic is the war logic: the victims will be innumerable, but the nation (times three) will survive—what is one of our babies (especially theirs) in the struggle of our people to survive under the blows of numerous and various enemies? The authorities are secure in the belief that in a few months or years nobody will remember the name of that baby, let alone her identification number. Berina has never even been recorded in the state’s registers, so she will never need to be removed—as far the state is concerned, Berina has never existed. She was not only deprived of the future, but also of those few months of the present that she had.

The chasm between the power holders and the subjects of their rule, between Devilish-Dayton Accord theory and the everyday practice of so-called citizens, is at this moment absolutely unfathomable and insurmountable. Individuals and their hardships are so unimaginable to the politicians that the population has to demand through protest their newborns’ right to legal existence, in doing so reminding Parliament of their own right. It seems that the structures of power are still in shock from being confronted with the unexplainable existence of living people.

Metastasis

The moral metastasis of Dayton Bosnia and
U ovom trenutku, na žalost, nacija mora da se sastoji od živih ljudskih bića. (Jebem ti biologiju i ko je napravi!) Pa je u prelaznom periodu prihvatljivo postojanje podanika. Od podanika se ne očekuje ništa posebno, osim da se u doba izbora ukažu po nacionalnoj osnovi, a i da tu i ti tamo kupe sebi neki sok ili novine kako bi Milorad, Zlatko i Fahro imali za pogače i palače.

Operativni metodi BiH vlastodržaca podsjećaju na priču o čovjeku koji je učio svog magarca da živi a da ništa ne jede—i taman kad je naučio da živi bez hrane, magarac je umro. Šejtansko-dejtonska Bosna i Hercegovina koju utopijski gradi velika šestorka bila bi bio vlastodržaci koji je učio svog magarca da živi a da ništa ne jede—i taman kad je naučio da živi bez hrane, magarac je umro. Šejtansko-dejtonska Bosna i Hercegovina koju utopijski gradi velika šestorka bila bi samo nepregledni domen vlasti zasnovan na konceptu nacije potpuno lišene ljudskih bića. U toj bi utopijskoj tvorevini svaki čovjek (a i poneka žena) bio minister-effendi, spretni jahač na magarcu koji je besmrtan jer mu nikad ništa ne treba.

Prije par godina, moja gospođa i ja smo izgubili dijete, djevojčicu malkice stariju od Berine, te tako znam da nema ni riječi ni protesta ni svijeća koji mogu ublažiti bol njenih roditelja, kao što znam i da ništa na svijetu—ni nacija, ni ustav, ni država—nije vrijedno jednog jedinog dječijeg života. Štaviše, ni jedna nacija, ni ustav, ni država koja nije u stanju da zaštiti dječiji život nije vrijedna postojanja, a kamoli podančike poslušnosti.

Onomad je John F. Kennedy održao govor u kojem je zahtijevalo: “Ne pitajte šta vaša zemlja može učiniti za vas, nego šta vi možete učiniti za svoju zemlju!” Mladi i zgodni predsjednik je bio potpuno u krivu, samo after he got shot no one questioned this. His rhetorical pirouette became a catchphrase for the war in Vietnam, because of which American children were required to give their lives in vain. The first, and really the only important question that should be posed to a state is what the state does for its children. This question is finally posed.
Devilish-Dayton

It’s difficult to say what, in the end, will come of these painful protests. The ideal outcome is a complete dismantling of Devilish-Dayton Bosnia and the creation of a state that would care enough about its own citizens to at least secure for them a bearable life, and for their children some kind of future. Little is needed to reach this ideal outcome, but to start with it is necessary to never forget Berina. In the same way, one should not forget that her death is not just the consequence of general disorder and bureaucratic negligence. Berina was a victim of a state that hates its own citizens, to the point that this hatred is built into its institutions, where it is bred by politicians, who cultivate it as their most precious spoils of the war.

Like many of us in the far away Diaspora, I was proud of the spirit of protest that was the complete opposite to the hatred of the state. If nothing remains after these protests, that memory of love—that was miraculously born out of rage—will remind me that it is not true that Bosnia deserved the government that it had. It is unbelievable that after the war and all these years of democratic disgrace there is any trace of sympathy and love left in people. The protests showed that Bosnians and Herzegovinians are much better than their own states, and so they deserve a far better state. The state as it is now must be dismantled, and those who found a home in it, like mice in a fur hat, should be sent home—to unholy hell.
Hodanje sa Grantom na Bruklinskom mostu, ja rekoh,
Sigurno neću nedostajati Benu.
Meni hoćes, on je rekao, i mislim da njemu hoćeš takođe.
Grant je uvek bio pametniji od mene, i on je sada u Providence, ja sam u Čikagu, a Ben...
ne znam gde je Ben, možda u Jerusalemu, možda u Tel Avivu, ne znam,
ja shvatam da je Grant bio u pravu,
i nedostaje mi Ben malo, samo malo.

I sada se sećam svih šetnji,
kroz muzej, kroz Harlem, kroz park,
ja se sećam svih kafa
koje smo pili zajedno i odvojeno,
odvojeno u martu, posebno,
se sećam.
Ja se sećam da hodamo zajedno preko Centralnog parka,
kroz sneg, kroz kišu, kroz bare.

Neću da kažem, ipak,
da je uvek bilo loše.
Ponekad je bilo sunca
i cveća, i lišća.
Ponekad on i ja
smo se samo smejali,
ponekad,
ponekad je bilo kao da sam bila sama
sa mojim mislima, sa mojim idejama, sa njim.

A ponekad mi smo se svađali, ne obično,
nebo povremeno,
ponekad se nismo razumeli,
ismo se voleli, povremeno.
A ponekad bilo je tajni
ili samo stvari koje ja nisam rekla
i koje on nije rekao takođe, naravno.
O Ani ili o Naomi ili o nekom
ne znam ništa,
na primer.

Ne nedostaje mi ništa od toga, naravno.

POEM FOR MY FRIEND IN JERUSALEM,
MAYBE
Nora Dolliver

Walking with Grant on the Brooklyn Bridge, I said,
Ben is certanly not going to miss me.
I will, he said, and I think he will too.
Grant was always smarter than me, and now,
now that Grant is in Providence, and I’m in Chi-
cago, and Ben...
I don’t know where Ben is, maybe Jerusalem,
maybe Tel Aviv, I don’t know,
I realize that Grant was right,
and I miss Ben a little, only a little.

And now I remember all the walks,
through the museum, through Harlem, through the park,
and I remember all the coffee we drank
together and separately,
separately in March, especially, I remember.
I remember walking together through Central Park,
through snow, through rain, through puddles.

I don’t mean to say, though,
that it was all bad.
Sometimes there was sun,
and flowers, and leaves.
Sometimes he and I
would just laugh,
sometimes it was like I was alone
with my thoughts, with my ideas, with him.

And sometimes we would argue, not usually,
but sometimes,
sometimes we didn’t understand each other,
we didn’t love each other, sometimes.
Sometimes there were secrets,
or just things I kept to myself,
and things he did too, of course.
About Anna and Naomi or whoever, for example,
I know nothing.

I don’t miss any of that, of course.
It’s just when I’m walking in Chicago
and it’s cold, or it’s overcast, or it’s rainy,
Samo kad ja hodam po Čikagu
i hladno je, ili oblačno je, ili kišno je,
ilizapravokad sve jesunčano i svetlo i sretno,
jamislimda mimoždenedostajemojdrug
kojisadaživi u Jerusalimu, možda,
ali ne znam.

I think that maybe I miss my friend
who now lives in Jerusalem, maybe,
but I don't know.
I don't have a favorite opera. I have not seen many. I only have seen one opera. When I was in Russia, I saw an opera called Eugene Onegin. In this opera, a girl who lives in the countryside. The girl, who is called Tatiana, is a romantic. She wants to love someone. One day a man comes to her house. She falls in love with him. She often reads romantic novels and she sees Onegin as her own white knight. She cannot sleep and writes Onegin a letter in which she lays out her love for him. Onegin come to Tatiana and says to her that he thinks that her love is touching but naive. This aria is my favorite aria in the entire opera. She is devastated and falls into despair. Onegin and his friend, Lensky, later go to a ball at Tatiana's house hosted by her father. Onegin did not want to go to the ball and to spite Lensky, flirts with his fiance Olga. Lensky and Onegin begin to quarrel. Lensky denies their friendship and challenges him to a duel. Onegin is forced to accept. Onegin then kills Lensky in the duel.

Some years later, Onegin is at a ball in Moskow where he sees Tatiana. He reflects on the emptiness of his life. Tatiana to him appears as the most beautiful thing he's ever seen. He finds out that she is married to a prince named Gremin. Out of love, Onegin writes a letter to Tatiana in which he explains his love. They meet in secret. She tells him that she is happy with the prince, although she still loves him. She says that their love is forbidden. She leaves him broken hearted.
I would say that I am not a critic of Tarantino’s films, I would say that I am an admirer. On of my favorite Tarantino films is *Inglourious Basterds*. The film, like always, is full of Tarantino-isms. The film is set during the Second World War in occupied France. An American military unit consisting of American Jews called the Inglourious Basterds is on a mission to kill Hitler. Like he tends to in many of his films, Tarantino changes history. There was no such unit of Jews called the Inglourious Basterds. And, unlike history, this unit kills Hitler in a theater in Paris at the end of the film. Yet this is the film’s plot. The film also tells the fictional story of a Jewish woman named Shoshana who is living secretly in Paris. The main antagonist of the film is the German soldier Hans Landa, also known as The Jew Hunter because of his propensity for finding Jews in hiding.

**Style**

Tarantino’s style permeates the film. Like always, the film is long. There are many scenes in which the dialogue is very intense, and the audience is not certain of the outcome. The film begins with one such scene. Landa is interrogating a man in his house. Landa suspects that this man is hiding Jews. Their dialogue goes on for a very long time, leaving the audience holding their breath, uncertain of what is going to happen. Later in the film, Tarantino holds control over the breath of the audience. The Basterds have managed to meet their contact in a bar in Paris, but they also manage to meet some German officers. The Basterds are disguised as German officers as well. During this time, the audience is not certain whether the officers will find out the true identities of the Basterds. The tension in this scene is excellent and Tarantino’s talent is evident. Tarantino’s influences are also very evident. The film is shot in the style of a genre called grindhouse. The film is full of violence and gore, and Tarantino disturbs the audience with this violence. In one scene a soldier in the Basterds called the Jew Bear kills a German soldier with a
бејзбол. Употреба таквог садистичког насиља је обична у Тарантиновим филмовима.

Тарантино такође има афинитет за филмове унутар филма. Тарантино има два света филма—прави свет и филмски свет. У филму као Петпаратичке приче има филмова које ликови у филму гледају. Филм Kil Bill је један филм из филмског света. У филму Петпаратичке приче, ликови разговарају о филму који се зове Фокс Форс Фајв. Сценарио овог филма је сценарио филма Kil Bill. У Проклетницама, они планирају да убију Хитлера када је Хитлер у театру да би гледао пропагандни филм о немачком војнику који је убио стотине војника. То је пример Тарантинове склоности за филм унутар филма или “метафилм”.

Тенденција према насиљу

Уочено је већ Тарантинова тенденција према насиљу. Има многе сцена у филму са “убер виоленс”. Коначна сцена филма садржи вероватно највише насиља у филму. У сцени, проклетници, са прикривеним контактим који је позната немачка глумица, покушавају у театр за тријажу пропагандног филма да би убио Хитлера у његовом кабинету бомбом. Ханс Ланда је задужен за безбедност и ухапси Проклетнике. Ланда им омогућава да улазе у театр препознајући њихову намеру. И у сцени непријатног и личног насиље, Ланда хвата глумицу за врат и брутално ју задави. Приказивање дављења је врло лично и посматрач је приморан да гледа из близа смрт глумице.

Убрзо после њене смрти, публика је суочила са смрћу другог лика. Шошана, Јеврејка—жена са почетка филма је власник театра у којем филм ће бити приказан. Звезда филма је војник сам који је убио стотине војника. Он узима наклоност ка Шошани која живи и крије се под лажним именом. Раније, Шошана је сазнала да Хитлер и његов цео кабинет ће бити у театру и решила да их убије. Она планира да запали театар са свим унутра (филмом који је врло запаљив). Током тријаже филма њему постаје досадно и реши да ју посети у соби пројекције када је она на ивици почетка завере.

baseball bat. The use of such sadistic violence is very common in Tarantino's films.

Tarantino also has an affinity for films within films. Tarantino has two worlds of films—the real world and the film world. In a film like Pulp Fiction there are films which characters in the film watch. The film Kill Bill is one of these films from the film world. In Pulp Fiction the characters talk about a film called Fox Force Five. The plot of this film is the very same plot of Kill Bill. In Inglourious Basterds, they plan to kill Hitler in a theater that is showing a propaganda film about a German soldier who killed hundreds of soldiers. This is another example of a film within a film or “metafilm.”

Tendency for Violence

It has been shown that Tarantino has a tendency towards violence. There are many scenes in the film with “üerviolence.” The final scene of the film contains likely the most violence in the film. In the scene, the Basterds with their secret contact (who was a well known German actress) go to the theater for the premier of the propaganda film in order to kill Hitler and his cabinet with a bomb. Hans Landa, who is in charge of security for the event, finds them out and captures the Basterds. Landa, realizing their intention, allows them to enter the theater. In a scene of very unpleasant and personal violence, Landa brutally strangles the actress. This display of violence and strangulation is very personal and the audience is forced to watch upclose the death of the actress.

Soon after the her death, the audience is faced with the death of another character. Shoshana, the Jewish girl from the beginning of the film, is the proprietor of the theater in which the film is being shown. The star of the film is the soldier himself who killed hundreds of men. He has taken a liking to Shoshana who is living under a false name. Earlier, Shoshana had found out that Hitler and his entire cabinet would be in the theater and decided to kill them all. She planned to ignite all the film reels in the theater (these reels are highly flammable). In the course of the premier of the film, the soldier becomes bored and decides to visit Shoshana in the projection.
Када њена порука почне на платну, Шошана га убија. Али он такође убија њу. Када она филм троје чланови Проклетника у публици упадају на балкон и пуцају у Хитлера и његов кабинет и док теарапор го они пуцају у публику док се све бомбе не детонирају. Међутим, Ханс Ланда је заробљен вођа проклетника и још један проклетник. Ланда организује договор са САД-ом и омогућава смрт Хитлера у замену за амнестију. Али после тога, што они улазе у савезничку територију, вођа проклетника користи нож Ланде да га темена скалпира као што су проклетници увек је радили.

Музика

Тарантино међутим користи савремену филмску музику и поп музику из седамдесетих, осамдесетих година. Такође користи музику филмских жанрова који се зове Грајндхаус. Овај жанр је био популаран у седамдесетим годинама у drive-in theaters у Америци. Јасно је да Таранино много воли овај жанр. У интервјуу са критичарем, Тарантино је рекао да је потпуно користио музику из своје музичке колекције. Он углавном тако ради. Он налази мелодије које воли и чека на филм у којем их може да користи.

Публика је поларизована. Обично или воли или његове филмове или их мрзи. Лично, ја их волим, мада је његов стил врло јединствен. Његова тенденција према насиљу и крв је индикативна његовој љубави за Грајндхаус. Његова јукстапозиција прошлости и садашњости је добро примљена. Он користи необичну музику. Све је јединствено код Тарантина.

Music

Tarantino tends to use contemporary soundtracks and pop music from the 70’s and 80’s. He also uses music from film genres like grindhouse. This genre was popular in the 70s in drive-in theaters in America. It is clear that Tarantino loves this genre very much. In an interview, Tarantino said that all of the music he used in this film is from his music collection, and that he usually does this. He finds music from his collection and waits for a film in which he can use them.

Tarantino on the whole is polarizing. Either you love his films or you hate them. Personally, I love them. But his style is very unique. His tendency towards violence and gore is indicative of his love of grindhouse. His juxtaposition of the past and present is brilliantly done. He uses unusual music. All of this is uniquely Tarantino.
ОВО ЈЕ ПРИЧА О ЈЕДНОМ УЖАСНОМ ЛЕТУ
Мартин Постхумус

Управо кад смо намеравали да узлетимо, проблеми су почели. Били смо у Немачкој, ја с мојом мамом, на аеродрому, готови да летемо у Русију да посетимо бабу и деду. Седели смо у авиону и чекали да узлетимо. Али нисмо узлетели. Чекали смо десет, онда двадесет минута, а ништа се није десило. Коначно, пилот нам је објаснио да мотор не ради. Двадесет минута касније су донели електростартер за мотор и искључили су климатизацију (било је лето, 30 степени, и авион је био под сунцем).

Електростартер је био за неку другу врсту мотора. Морали су да нађу прави стартер. У међувремену, унутар авиона је постало веома топло. Двадесет пет минута касније су нашли прави стартер и укључили климатизацију. Коначно, мотор је прорадио и били смо спремни да узлетимо. Нажалост, авион није имао место у реду, и требало нам је да чекамо педесет минута на писти.

Коначно, на нас је дошао ред. Управо кад смо намеравали да узлетимо, мотор се искључио.

И ја још нисам причао о слетању у Русији!

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT ONE TERRIBLE SUMMER
Martin Posthumus

Just as we were getting ready to take off, the problems began. We were in Germany at an airport, my mother and I, ready to fly to Russia to visit my grandparents. We took our seats on the airplane and were waiting to take off. Except we never took off. We waited ten, then twenty minutes, but nothing was happening. Finally, the pilot explained to us that the engine would not start. Another twenty minutes later, they brought a starter engine to jumpstart the plane’s engines and turned off the air conditioning to hook it up. (It was the middle of summer, 30°C out, and the plane was sitting in direct sunlight).

It turns out the starter engine was for another type of plane engine. They needed to find the correct starter. In the meantime, inside the plane, it became very, very hot. Twenty five minutes later, they brought the right starter and turned the air conditioning back on. Finally, the engines started and we were ready to take off. Unfortunately, the plane had long since lost its place in line, and we had to wait another fifty minutes on the runway.

Now our turn finally came. Just as we were about to take off, the engines suddenly quit.

And I haven’t even said anything about the landing in Russia yet!
ПЕСМА
Мартин Постхумус

Пре много година
бака ми је рекла нешто,
причала ми је причу
које се до данас сећам

Била је то прича о давним временима,
о великим херојима
и о бедним просјацима.
Била је прича о сто живота.

О људима, који су путовали широм света
и коју никад нису напустили родно место,
родили су се у сиромаштву, постали су богати,
и живели у богатству, умрли су без ичега.

Питао сам је, одакле је ова прича
и она ми је одговорила
"Пре сто године
нечија бака је нечијем сину причала причу

О великим херојима,
и о бедним просјацима,
о сто живота
да би сада прича била о сто првом."

РОЕМ
Martin Posthumus

Many years ago
My grandmother told me something.
She told me a story,
Which I remember to this day.

It was a story about times long gone,
Of great heroes,
And lowly beggars.
It was a story of a hundred lives lived.

Of people who traveled the world wide,
Of those, born in poverty, who became rich,
And of those, having lived in wealth died with nothing.

I asked her where this story came from
And she replied
"A hundred years ago
Someone's grandmother told someone's son a story

It was about great heroes,
And about lowly beggars;
It was about a hundred lives lived,
So that now it becomes about a hundred and one."
It is hardly novel to suggest that language is moored to the notion of home. In narratives of emigration, both language and home must be sacrificed in the interest of adjustment and assimilation—living in a different country usually means speaking a different language. The immediate reality of emigration involves a literal linguistic translation, of course, but words are not the only things that must undergo this painful conversion. Rather, in Aleksandar Hemon’s “Passover,” the concept of translation blooms into a metaphor for emigration itself: what is the experience of Hemon’s narrator, if not a process of substitution, confusion and frustrated silence? The emigrant, who hopes to cobble together a life for himself in Chicago, speaks a merely serviceable English, but circumstances are such that his last resort is to be an ESL teacher. So in order to make a home for himself—a figurative home, yes, but he also faces quite literal eviction from his apartment—he must teach English to other foreigners, to act out his own comfort within the United States and its language. The peculiar geometry of his circumstance illuminates the illusory and unstable nature of home, how it is enacted in language and relies on a practice of exclusion. Essentialist claims about identity buckle under the weight of Hemon’s story, in which one is never just an English speaker. To be fluent is simply to be more fluent than someone else; to be at home is to be less foreign than the other stammering refugees.

When the narrator arrives for his interview at the language school, he hears voices coming from another room: a classroom of immigrants, “a discordant choir”:

I have never read Moby-Dick.
I have never seen the Grand Canyon.
I have never been in New York.
I have never been rich. (12-13)

The students are likely practicing negation, so they can master a certain grammatical construction and express themselves like the Anglophones they hope to become. But perhaps the content of these rehearsed sentences mirrors their form; in learning a new language, one is already admitting one’s inadequacies, one’s alien status. So to learn English in America is first to confess that one cannot claim to speak—or to live—just as Americans do. They, the “native” speakers, may have read Moby-Dick or traveled to New York, but the immigrants at the language school cannot possibly have done that—and it is unlikely that they have ever been rich. In the students’ effort to assimilate, they are inevitably marked as outsiders; they are only afforded expressive agency in English to the degree that they are symbolically excluded from American culture. Familiarity and comfort are marked by a helpless deferral, such that fluency is still colored by foreignness. The “I have never” carries with it all the repetitive solemnity of prayer, and this “discordant choir” almost seems to genuflect to the language they hope to acquire, dreaming of a kind of migrant after-life in the New World.

Our narrator seems well adjusted by comparison. He need not chant in a room with the students, but instead hopes to lead them in their chants, to enforce their foreignness and therefore to cement his sense of belonging in his new home. But his hopes must brush up against the limits of his own English proficiency. Marcus, an administrator at the language school, insists on brandishing his own facility of expression, exiling the narrator to the linguistic fringe: “‘This job,’” Marcus said, with a scrupulously nasal voice, “‘requires patience. Petulance just would not do it.’” (15). But our narrator “had no idea what ‘petulance’ meant, and the dictionary was out of [his] reach.” On the following page, Marcus describes the students at the language school with the condescension and flowery polysyllables of a scientist observing his specimens—“‘Some of them possess scintillating minds, and some have rather perplexing personalities’”—to which our narrator can only respond, “‘I am sorry…I do not understand everything that you say.’” Hemon’s story seems to languish in the odd asymmetry of dialogue, posing questions about the character of language itself. Is the goal of speech to reveal or to obscure? Does Marcus seek to communicate, or to alienate? Language here is less about conveying a message than it is about the very fact of conveyance.
Fluency is lorded over others, allowing Marcus to contract the scope of “home” to exclude our narrator, if only for a moment. This deferral is enacted several times, as Marcus deploys grandiose expressions like “circumstances too-fatuous-to-detail” and “the trials and tribulations of language acquisition.” Not only does this limn the narrator’s meager English ability, but it also asserts the legitimacy of Marcus’ claim to “home.” He is an American, and can blather on with the ease one might expect of a native speaker, but his verbal pirouettes suggest a complex. Even Marcus, a fluent speaker of English, must constantly prove his own proficiency and banish his interlocutor to the realm of embarrassed confusion. Such garish displays reveal a linguistic insecurity that maps neatly onto the trope of the native’s encounter with the immigrant: the need to exclude others in order to claim a home for oneself.

It seems that only the students at the language school can fully apprehend the flimsiness of such claims. They no longer have a home to feel smug about, nor can they pretend to have adjusted to their new context. Their debased position as functional illiterates in their adopted country precipitates an almost involuntary thoughtfulness, an inevitable sincerity. Their blunders and mistranslations are, in a sense, the most direct instances of dialogue because they express not what the students intend, but rather what they happen to be: emigrants, refugees, outsiders. Their home is nowhere, and their half-fluency asserts identity and belonging much more clearly than all of Marcus’s semantic maneuvers. Mihalka, the resolute but struggling student of English, overuses the Past Perfect—indeed, “Past Perfect” is itself a clever index for emigrant nostalgia—and therefore stumbles into profundity. When they are discussing an article on Siamese twins, Mihalka’s awkward phrasing reveals an indiscriminate compassion and the profoundness of his loss:

“They are humans,” Mihalka said, then lifted his finger, announcing an important statement. “When I had been a little child, I had had a friend who had had a big head.”

“Every child had told him about his big head and had kicked him with a big stick on his head. I had been very sad,” Mihalka said, nodding as if to show the painful recoil of the big head. (21)

The use of the Past Perfect highlights the trauma of emigration, as the brokenness of language implies a severing from home. It is not the past that Mihalka is considering, but rather something that came before. He seems to be unearthing artifacts from a murky prehistory, piling loss upon loss until everything recedes into a dark and irretrievable era, a lost and perhaps imagined point of origin: not the past, but the Past Perfect. And this is only made clear to us by his particular way of not being at home in the English language; his misalignments are in fact telling and productive, laying bare the awkward fact of emigration.

Even when Mihalka reads grammatically correct English, his halting style places a queer emphasis that one cannot help but mine for all of its unwitting insights. How moving it is when he reads the description of the Siamese twins—both the subject and the manner in which he reads evoke the folly of identity, the incapacity of rigid notions of exclusion to encompass the deferral and mixture that define experience:

“It is true,” Mihalka began, “they often have the same—the same—dreams. They also feel the same pain, which is not surprising—surprising—since they share a few internal—internal—organs. The pain, they like to say, is usually—even—doubled.” (23)

The emphasis on “the same” and “doubled,” the mangling of the word “distributed” such that it contains the word “disturb”—these are accidents, the result of his inability to speak fluent English, yet there is something oddly knowing about this, something that dramatizes the experiences of emigration and immigration. Mihalka, as an emigrant, has difficulty pronouncing “the same,” because his life has been marked by radical difference; the notion of distribution and dispersal (“distributed”) manifests itself as disturbance, thereby evoking the trauma of departure; and he pauses before he says “doubled,” because the notion of duplicity and reproduction is at the heart of his present circumstance, the condition of emigration.

We might conclude with our understanding of what he is reading, apart from how he reads it. The image of Siamese twins is an apt metaphor for the very mixing that Mihalka, like everyone in “Passover,” is subjected to. Ronnie and Donnie share some internal organs, so of course their
names rhyme, uniting them on the level of biology and the signifier. Their consciousness is harnessed to their mutant but functional body, just as the émigré experience transforms the subject but does not destroy it. Mihalka’s mutilated English conveys a hybridization that undercuts assumptions about purity and identity. The narrator will be a teacher, yes, but still a learner of English. Marcus’s knowledge of English presupposes and relies on an Other that inflects his identity with meaning. The subject exists in a permanent in-between, as something that is always being translated and mistranslated as it strays further from what it had foolishly thought to be its stable “home.”

*Entrance door, TUTA Theater*

My favorite book is The Autobiography of Malcolm X. Malcolm X lived in a time of constant racism in New York. He was born as Malcolm Little. He changed his name when he was released from prison. Elijah Muhammad saved him from reverting to his old ways when he was released because he was arrested for criminal activities. When X got out of jail, Muhammad mentored him in a life guided by the Nation of Islam. When Malcolm was young, he was a fast learner and when he took upon Muhammad’s beliefs, Muhammad often thanked him for his help. For longer than ten years, Malcolm stood with Muhammad's beliefs. But when he heard that his mentor was not following his own teachings, Malcolm separated from the Nation of Islam. He began to study real Islamic beliefs and learned that the Nation was a misguided sect of Islamic enlightenment. When he wanted to preach the true essence of Islam, Muhammad wanted him gone. For a year and a half, Malcolm received death threats. At the end, they killed him while he was delivering one of his speeches.
Preko proljećnog raspusta, gledao sam film Nepoznati. U ovom filmu se radi o petorom ljudima koji se bude u skladištu. Nijedan od njih ne zna ništa o sebi, o ljudima oko sebe, ni kako su dospeli u to skladište. Jedan čovek se probudio vezan za stolicu, drugi zavezan s liscama, i druge tri osobe na podu. Kroz film, svih pet osoba se polako prisećaju kako su stigli u tu situaciju. Ispada da su svi doživjeli amneziju zbog kemikalija u skladištu. Takođe, oni shvataju da su dvojica od njih petorice bogati i da su kidnapovani. Onda, neki čovek pozove skladište i ispada da će ubiti tu dvojicu ljudi kad se vrati za četiri sata. Sada imaju problem da razumiju koji čovjek je žrtva a koji je zločinac. Ipak, oni odluče da rade zajedno na tome kako da pobegnu iz skladišta bekstvu iz skladišta u kojem su zaključani kada stigne taj čovek koji je zvao telefonom. Dok taj nije stigao, ljudi u skladištu su se setili svega što se desilo--celu situaciju. Oni se potuku i na kraju, prežive samo jedna žrtva i jedan zločinac, koju su u međuvremenu započeli prijateljstvo.

Over spring break, I watched the movie Unknown. This movie is about five people who wake up in a warehouse. Not even one man knows his own identity, the identity of the others, nor how he arrived in the warehouse. One man wakes up tied to a chair, another handcuffed, and the other three across the floor. Throughout the movie, all the people slowly remember how they arrived to this situation. It turns out that they all experienced amnesia because of the chemicals in the warehouse. Also, they remember that two of the five men are wealthy, leading to their kidnapping. Then, someone unknown calls the warehouse and it turns out that those two wealthy individuals will be murdered when the man on the phone returns to the warehouse around four o’clock. Now they have a problem of figuring out which ones are volunteers and which ones are criminals. Nevertheless, they all decide to work together in order to escape from the locked warehouse when the unknown man arrives. Until that man arrives, the people in the warehouse regain their full memory. By the time he gets there, a fight ensues and by the end, only one victim and one criminal are alive, whom develop a friendship.
One day when I was little I remember that a bunch of snow had fallen overnight. It was below freezing, so the street in front of my house froze over. My house was on a hill, and I remember that it was very fun to watch cars on the road the following morning. The words were so slippery that no one could make it up the hill. Each car skidded off the road (slowly, without any damage) into the snowbanks alongside the street, and then couldn't move. Then another car would stop, the driver would get out and help push the first car. Finally, the first car would start to move, but the second car would get stuck in the meantime! This cycle repeated itself many times that day. Eventually the sun came out from behind the clouds and the ice melted, so that by noon everyone could drive their cars once again.
PTICE U LIŠĆU
Justin O’Dell

Ptice u lišću
Toplota u noći
Cveće na livadama
I leto dolazi

U selima
Usevi se odgajaju
Oko ljudi
Oni stoje

Trava od sunca
Ribe u vatri
Zdavlje od vazduha
I leto dolazi

U gradu
Ljudi se guraju
Na ulicama
Buka se uvećava

Izmaglica oko gora
Ljudi donose mošti
Kroz maglu oko reke
Ali leto još dolazi

BIRDS IN THE TREES
Justin O’Dell

Birds in the trees
Heat in the night
Flowers on the meadows
And summer is coming

In the villages
The crops are growing
Around the people
They stand

The sun in the grass
The fish in the fire
The healthy air
And summer is coming

In the cities
People are crowded
On the streets
The noise is increasing

The mist around the mountains
People bring relics
Through the mist about the river
But summer is still coming

Harvest

Early in the year 2011, there were big problems in Tunisia and the Arab world in general. People felt dissatisfied with the government’s actions. Tunis had a lot of corruption and unemployment because Tunisian police had crushed the spirits of the Tunisian people. One day, when one man was punished for nothing, he’d had enough of that country and set himself on fire. With this there began demonstrations throughout the country because the whole population felt they were living under tyranny in the midst of the freedom of countries outside the Arab world. For these very reasons, demonstrations spread throughout the Arab world. Unfortunately, this country has never experienced democracy. Arab leaders have always considered only their own interests. It is very sad because now, Arabs are fighting with their own brothers instead of instilling unity in the whole Arab world. But the only big obstacle is that they cannot agree upon their religious beliefs.
The system of devşirme, for which many synonyms exist such as ‘the Christian levy’ or ‘blood tax’ was practiced in the Ottoman Empire for almost three centuries, from the 14th century to 17th-century.¹ Under the Ottoman Empire, although Islam was seen as the religion of the “true believers” there was a conditional acceptance of other religions.² The accepted religions, besides Islam, were Christianity and Judaism. The followers of these religions were grouped as the zimmi under the Ottoman Empire. The zimmi were allowed to practice their own religion, under the acceptance of the superiority of Islam and thus, their own inferiority. Furthermore, there were other restrictions that the zimmi were subjected to such as the ownership of horses of weapons, which was forbidden, although exceptions were made. The zimmi also had to pay taxes; cizye, poll tax, and devşirme, blood tax. Cizye was a tax that had to be paid every year by all able-bodied adult males. Devşirme was considered a blood tax, because it was the payment of taxes through giving up one’s son to the Ottoman Empire. This tax only applied to the Christian populations, this is why it can also be called the Christian levy, which explains why it mostly affected the Balkan region. The boys taken through the Christian levy were taken to Istanbul where they were, after being converted and educated, installed in the Ottoman army, ranging from assistant cooks to janissaries, who could rise to the position of viziers during their career. This paper will explore the concept of devşirme in the Balkan region. Firstly, I will explain the practice itself followed by an exploration of its origins, how it was practiced and its effect on the Balkan populations and the janissaries themselves. Lastly I would like to discuss the representation of the devşirme in Ivo Andrić’s The Bridge on the Drina, a novel which tells the story of the bridge for which the construction was ordered by the Grand Vizier Mehmed Paša Sokolović, one of the boys taken through devşirme.

Although many facts remain unknown about the practice of devşirme, historians have been able to reconstruct a relatively clear image of the process, partially as a result of the accounts of the abducted children themselves. It is unclear when the first levy took place, but it seems that the first records of a taking of children originate from 1438, when the Metropolitan of Thessalonika wrote a letter of complaint regarding “the kidnapping of some boys by pirate crews sent by the emirs of the Anatolian coast.”³ This kidnapping sounds peculiar as levies were rarely imposed on cities. Furthermore, the kidnapping of boys by pirates does not appear similar to the regular devşirme which was a very detailed and careful process. However, this occurrence could signal that devşirme was not the first practice by which children from the Balkans were taken to work in Constantinople, a system that had been started “long before the Ottoman period.”⁴ It is possible that devşirme stemmed from older systems like these to recruit boys.

The preparations for a devşirme started months in advance. According to Goodwin, for each devşirme “each district had to supply forty boys.”⁵ It seems that parents knew ahead of time when a levy would occur, since boys would have the brought to the village square. “At a fixed date, every father had to gather his sons in the main square of the local village and allow the authorities to select the best to be sent away.”⁶ The authorities were constituted by the yayabaşı, the janissary officer in charge of selecting, and the süürüçü, the drover who took the boys to Istanbul. The forced recruitment of boys was a detailed process. On the day of the devşirme all fathers with their sons, women were supposed to stay home, gathered on the village square. The priest was also present with the baptismal rolls of all boys of the village. All boys were carefully inspected, both physically and mentally, after which 40 boys were selected. Boys were chosen based on their

⁶ John Schindler, “Unholy Terror” (Zenith Press, St. Paul, 2007), 23
beauty and intelligence, which was judged by the shape of the boy’s head. It was a requirement that all boys who were selected had to choose to be converted to Islam ‘by his own free will’, although a refusal of conversion lead to death and thus it is questionable how ‘free’ this choice really was. Once the boys had been selected, a roll with two copies was drawn up, one for the yayabası and the other for the sürüçü. After this the authorities would travel to the next district, with a train of the previously picked boys until the sürüçü had collected a herd of about 100 to 120 boys after which he would march them to Istanbul.\(^8\)

As previously mentioned, the devşirme only applied to the Christian zimmi. This was because members of the Muslim faith could not be enslaved and because the other members of the zimmi, the Jews mostly resided in cities and worked directly under the pasha, managing their estates. Levies were also not imposed on gypsies, as the Ottomans loathed them. Next to the restriction of devşirme to Christians (Orthodox or Catholics), there was also an age range for the selected boys. It is not very clear what the age limits were and several sources mention different limits: “ages between 10 and 20,”\(^9\) “fourteen to twenty,”\(^10\) “nine and twelve”. Comparing these sources it seems as if most of the youths recruited were between 12 and twenty, although there must have been some exception which lead to the discrepancy among these sources. Next to the stipulation regarding the age of the recruits, only a percentage of the children, most of the times one-fifth of the boys, could be taken into levy. This was not done out of compassion, but rather to prevent the deterioration of Balkan agriculture. It is unknown how often a levy took place, although some estimate that it was a 7-year cycle. However, it seems that this cycle was not always followed, and the frequency of devşirme depended largely on the need for new recruits. “The levy... was more frequent in the sixteenth century since recruitment was inevitable related to the high command’s hunger for heads in a period of great military activity.”\(^12\) This period of ‘great military activity’ points to the Ottoman period of expansion, from the late 15\(^{th}\) century to the 17\(^{th}\) century, during which the Ottoman Empire largely extended in the East. Besides the religious and age restriction there were multiple other regulations regarding the selection of a boy. For example, the son of a widow could not be taken. Levies were only imposed in the countryside, and not in the cities. This was because townsmen were regarded as “soft”, when compared with countrymen, and were needed for their skills. An example of this are the Jews who, as mentioned earlier, were mostly townsmen employed as doctors, accountants or as other essential professionals. Another restriction was that married men could not be taken, as janissaries were not allowed to marry until retirement.

All these regulations were followed to select the brightest and most talented boys, who could then be educated and form an essential part of the Ottoman system. However, there are many questions that arise from this process. Many reasons have been given for the origin of the devşirme system. The Ottomans largely relied on slaves for their military. The preference of slaves was based on their obedience, “a quality less likely to be found among freeborn volunteers or even among conscripts.”\(^13\) Freeborn Muslims could disturb the advancement of the sultan’s power, as they had their own interests to pursue which could collide with the sultan’s. Thus the inclination for slaves came from the need of an army “which would support and maintain their rule yet neither limit it with intermediate powers nor threaten it with the challenge of opposing loyalties.”\(^14\) The sultan could easily acquire slaves, as he had the right to 1/5 of all prisoners made during a war. Yet, this seems not to have been enough, as slaves still had to be bought. The period during which devşirme commenced coincides with the period during which slaves were very expensive as well as in short supply, which could explain the establishment of the devşirme system.\(^15\) As

\(^{7}\) Godfrey Goodwin, “The Janissaries” (Saqi Books, London 1994), 34
\(^{10}\) John Schindler, “Unholy Terror” (Zenith Press, St. Paul, 2007), 23
\(^{11}\) Michael Mitterauer, “A History of Childhood: Research and Teaching in South Eastern Europe” in Childhood in South Eastern Europe, ed Slobodan Naumovic and Miroslav Jovanovic, 18

\(^{13}\) Bernard Lewis, “Race and Slavery in the Middle East”, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1990),64
\(^{14}\) ibid
\(^{15}\) Peter Sugar, “Southeastern Europe Under Ottoman Rule”, (University of Washington Press, 1993), 57
the boys acquired through the devşirme system were free it seems as if this could have been the solution to the shortage of slaves, which the Ottoman Empire faced at the end of the 14th century. The policy also aided the Ottomans in avoiding political unrest in the Balkans, by taking the brightest boys. “By selecting the best of boys, the natural leaders of a community were taken, leaving only the less spirited youths behind.”

Although the boys acquired through devşirme were placed in a large range of positions, many were educated as janissaries and, thus, formed a part of the new military corps, the janissary corps. These janissaries had many opportunities for promotion, and some of the most powerful viziers of the Ottoman Empire, where originally Christians taken through devşirme. The fact that so many janissaries occupied important positions in the Ottoman Empire follows the same logic as why slaves were preferred over regular soldiers. Although the Ottoman Empire was united under one sultan, many princes, who still ruled their own states, tried to regain their independence or challenged the authority of the sultan in other ways. Thus the replacement of freeborn Turks with the janissaries fulfilled the sultan’s wishes of gaining full power and eliminated obstructions to this power due to self-interest. This is also why janissaries were not allowed to marry as long as they were in service, because this might create loyalties that could conflict with their dedication to the sultan.

Since janissaries could reach such powerful positions in the Ottoman Empire, it is interesting to consider the effect the removal of the children had on their parents. Many describe the practice of devşirme as “the most hated aspect of Ottoman rule” and the one “whose memory lingers most sharply even today.” This is visible in the methods the families used to try to prevent the kidnapping of their sons. To prevent boys being enrolled into the janissary corps, families tried finding substitutes, send their sons away or bribing the local priest to remove their son’s name from the parish registers. Since married men could not be taken, this led to some families marrying of their sons at the age of 12, before they could be taken. Also, since the boys were selected based on their beauty, some parents even went so far to disfigure their sons to prevent their “enslavement.” The cruelty of this policy can also be seen in the reaction of parents after which the children had been taken away, which Goodwin describes as “the time for tears.” However, it seems that this could not have been the only reaction to devşirme as there are records of bribing to select one’s children even if they did not meet all requirements for selection. There was also a trade in Muslim substitutes by the mid 16th century. As these boys were already Muslims, and therefore circumcised, there was no way in which this could not have been noticed or known by the authorities. Thus, for some parents devşirme was seen as a desirable future for their sons, as it guaranteed them a life of wealth and prosperity. This is also where the decline of devşirme stems from, as “Muslim parents and their sons soon grew jealous of these Christian converts” and this led to the conflicting interests which was why slaves were preferred in the first place. By the 17th century sons of janissaries and Muslims were openly admitted to the janissary corps. Rules were bent to allow the admission of Muslim children from the Balkans, as their fathers were often not freeborn Muslims and so Muslim children would be admitted to the corps, as long as they were the first generation of their family born into the Muslim faith.

Similar to the first described reaction of the parents, the reaction of the children would logically thinking be one of sorrow and agony as they were separated from their parents, family and land. Yet, this seems to not have been the case with Goodwin describing their departure as “the boys tramped the dusty roads side by side with friends and all had the excitement of starting out a new adventure. They could dream of promotion and future.” Unfortunately, I could not find any accounts of the janissary’s personal experience of devşirme except for an attempt at escape in 1455. This was after the capture of Novo Brdo, where 19 boys, including Konstatin Mihailović, 19 John Schindler, “Unholy Terror” (Zenith Press, St. Paul, 2007). 23
17 John Schindler, “Unholy Terror” (Zenith Press, St. Paul, 2007), 23
tried to escape but were soon recaptured and severely punished. Mihailović, who converted back to Christianity when his garrison was captured by Hungarian troops, wrote a memoir with accurate explanations of how the Ottoman army and system functioned. However, he makes no mention of his personal experience. However, the fact that he wrote this book and converted back to Christianity meant that he had not forgotten his origins and was not faithful to the Ottoman Empire. There are many examples of the remaining loyalty that janissaries had to their own people and land, of which one is the grand vizier Mehmed Paša Sokolović. Sokolović, who was grand vizier from 1564 to 1579, fought for the re-instatement of the Metropolitanate of Peć, which was headed by his own brother. Next to this practice of nepotism, of which there are multiple occurrences, he commissioned the construction of various bridges and other buildings in Bosnia, his region of origin. This could explain why parents bribed the yayabaşi to pick their inadequate sons for the janissary corps, as both their sons and they themselves could have possibly benefited from it.

Returning to Sokolović, the Višegrad Bridge one of the bridges for which he commissioned the construction is the subject of Andrić’s *The Bridge on the Drina*. The novel is an epic providing the reader with a full account of the bridge from its inception to its destruction. The scene that I will use to explain the representation of devşirme in the book, are the couple of pages which describe Sokolović’s departure from Višegrad after being selected to serve in the janissary corps. In this novel it seems that being taken through devşirme was in the least desirable as many methods are described by which parents tried to prevent this from happening:

“...the necessary number of healthy, bright and good-looking lads... had been found without difficulty, even though parents had hidden their children in the forests, taught them how to appear half-witted, clothed them in rags and let them get filthy, to avoid the aga’s choice. Some went so far as to maim their own children, cutting off one of their fingers with an axe.”

Contributing to this description are the portrayals


The unwillingness of the children to be taken as janissaries was also visible, as “some of them [the children] gazed calmly across the horses’ cruppers, looking as long as they could at their native land.” Although these children were very young, according to Andrić, between the age of 10 and 15, they had some idea what was happening to them. This can be interpreted from the staring at ‘their land’, depicting some sorrow in leaving it. Sokolović’s separation is described as a “sharp stabbing pain” which seemed to “suddenly cut his chest in two and hurt terribly.” Although it is later described that he did not remember his past, “this new man that he had become ... must have forgotten all that he had left behind in the country whence they had once brought him”, this pain “had remained in him and had never completely disappeared.” This pain he experiences symbolizes his separation from his roots, which he has forgotten. Later in the epic, he believes he can cure this pain by building a bridge over the Drina, but he is mistaken and the pain never leaves him. I believe that this represents the harsh separation between him and his origins and the cruelty of the practice of devşirme that can never be overcome. Although Sokolović tries to heal himself, the wound caused by the inhuman devşirme is one that cannot be cured.
Comparing the representation with devşirme in Andrić’s novel, it is evident that although some of emotions described correspond with our current understanding of devşirme, it provides a very one-sided image of devşirme and the suffering that it causes. From historical facts it is clear that although devşirme carried many negative and inhuman consequences with it, some also saw it as desirable. The Bridge on the Drina represents the loss of a son through devşirme as the worst form of suffering, leading to despair and pure misery. This fear of having their children stolen was so great, that they were willing to disfigure their children. Although this also seemed to be a practice that did indeed occur, the description provided in Andrić’s novel is very tangible and unpleasant. This gory description makes the cutting off of one’s finger seem as this horrible sacrifice, but still better than being taken by the Turks which makes devşirme seem as an even more brutal crime. The fact that Sokolović forgets his origins is a confirmation of a nationalist’s worst fear since he becomes a Turk, the enemy of the Balkan population. The fact that he is haunted by this pain, however, signals that one’s roots can never be completely forgotten but the damage can never be undone because of the terrible wrongdoing of devşirme. In reality, there are plenty of cases in which janissaries remembered their origins and helped their family and/or village after rising to power, of which Sokolović himself is an example.

The discrepancies between The Bridge on The Drina and the historical accounts are largely due to the language of nationalism resonating in it. Devşirme is represented as the worst form of suffering the Balkan people were subjected to by the Ottoman Turks. Thus, the manner in which devşirme is described in The Bridge on the Drina says a lot about the way devşirme is perceived nowadays and how it was used in the construction of a national narrative. Rather than taking this as the full truth, other sources have to be consulted to reconstruct a realistic image of how devşirme was perceived. The national narrative favours to present devşirme as this devilish act, since it meant the loss of one’s identity. But people’s perception of nationality was generally not this strong and just as many people converted because of social and economic benefits, the janissary corps carried the same advantages. Although the emotions and consequences associated with devşirme are, just as in Andrić’s novel, largely negative, in reality some found devşirme desirable as it improved the boy’s prospects of a better life and could maybe even improve their own life.

Bibliography

Schindler, John “Unholy Terror” (Zenith Press, St. Paul, 2007)
Sugar, Peter “Southeastern Europe Under Ottoman Rule”, (University of Washington Press, 1993)

I love Western and Eastern Europe, but with $5000, I would go to England and France. In England, I would visit my friend Zarah. Zarah is from Manchester (we met each other five years ago at Lollapalooza.) England is rainy and cold, but I would love to see London and all the hills and fields of England. I would see castles! Then, I would travel by train to Paros, under the English canal! In Paris, I would eat expensive macarons and buy pretty, elegant dresses. I have never traveled outside of America, but I would love to see the world one day.
Dubravka Ugrešić’s novel, *The Ministry of Pain*, follows the story of Tanja Lucić, a literature professor from the former Yugoslavia who, like many others, fled to Amsterdam due to the war. Citizen of a country that no longer exists and professor of a literature that is being hacked into pieces and fought over by politicians, she escapes into the past with her students (and fellow immigrants) by using their classtime for exercises in “Yugonostalgia.” Throughout the novel, the concept of language is a constant presence that permeates many of the narrator’s descriptions. This alone is unsurprising, as the trial of language loss and the acquisition of a second language is shared by most immigrants. Ugrešić’s focus on language is especially meaningful, however, when considering the linguistic and political situation in former Yugoslavia. Not even addressing the other languages present in former Yugoslavia and focusing on the language formerly known as “Serbo-Croatian,” nationalism caused ‘languages’ and ‘ethnic dialects’ to be politicized and often manipulated “in order to emphasize ethnic identity and define the ethnic boundaries” (Bugarski and Hawkesworth, 4). By using language as a central aspect of her narrative, Ugrešić can explore the universal trauma of exile, while simultaneously depicting the unique aspects of the Yugoslav experience. From the very first pages of *The Ministry of Pain*, Tanja insists on calling what was formerly known as “Serbo-Croatian,” “our language.” She refuses to refer to the various dialects/languages by their separate names, reserving those titles for the “stuffy” and artificial standard languages. She also scoffs at “the language called ‘Croatian/Bosnian/Serbian’” (Ugrešić, 139-140) and, when forced to use some sort of official name for the language, will refer to it by the Dutch term “Servo-kroatisch” (Ugrešić, 33). In her classroom, the haven “Yugonostalgia,” it is always referred to as “our language,” in order to avoid uncomfortable and politically incendiary labels and, furthermore, to avoid the uncomfortable reality that those labels imply. Words from “our language” become “a kind of intimate password” that connects them to a common past and “a country no longer in existence” (Ugrešić, 9). Tanja even tries to use their common language as her main tool in the classroom. Just as she tries to unite all of her students under the common banner of “our people,” she tries to undermine the barriers and “checkpoints” that had been erected by the new governments, citing the adage “A language is a dialect backed by an army”(Ugrešić, 35). By connecting her students with this common language and gathering them all under the title of “our,” Tanja can continue to live in their common, but inaccessible past, just as she tries to do with the various exercises in memory (i.e. Yugonostalgia).

When Tanja describes her students, however, she calls attention to – and often mocks – their linguistic differences. Laki, the anti-communist, anti-Yugoslav, who refuses to play into their memory game and use the “password” of *drugarice* is scorned outright: “He had a Zagreb way of talking that got on my nerves – the la-di-da stress on the last syllable, the constant use of reflexives, verbal forms referring to the self, that made him sound intimately related to everything on earth....” (Ugrešić, 11). While she obviously dislikes Laki and holds his social and political views in contempt, the first part of him that she addresses when describing him is how he speaks. Additionally, every other aspect of him is with reference to what “the kids” say about him: that he was a paid police informer, that he’s working on a dictionary that, essentially, already exists (although he refuses to admit it). The only part of him that has any sort of personal evaluation from Tanja is his dialect. Additionally, Nevena, who had had a multitude of linguistic influences as a child (a Serbian father, a Croatian mother, and a grandmother in Bosnia), is described as having “linguistic schizophrenia” and a “use of the tonal system that made her sound like an autistic child” (Ugrešić, 37). Neither Nevena nor Laki should be judged for their dialects (or, in Nevena’s case, mish-mash of dialects), which were acquired in childhood. Due to their mutual intelligibility and her own worldviews, Tanja classifies all the various dialects as “our language,” yet she still uses the differences in speech to distinguish dialects and, moreover, to distinguish between which dialect are acceptable to her and which ones are not. She might label them all as “ours,” but her value judgments suggest otherwise. Tanja’s
just as the students are aware of the peculiarities in each other’s dialects, they are also aware that their own language sounds peculiar to others and, furthermore, can be used against them. Boban, for example, describes a dream in which he is looking for a street in Zagreb, but won’t ask for directions because he was afraid that people would know he was Serbian and spit on him. Tanja, downplays her contempor of the Diaspora speak, she goes so far as to label it “their language” (as opposed to “our language”) and condescendingly refers to it as “more babble than talk” (Ugrešić, 18). Tanja also points out their habit of using derogatory names for the Dutch, neglecting to realize that she herself is also partaking in this practice, insulting her fellow countrymen to make herself feel more important. Tanja’s attitudes are especially ridiculous and possibly unhealthy because she initially refuses to identify herself as a member of the Balkan/Yugoslav Diaspora community and resists all forms of integration into either her new homeland or the Diaspora community that lives there. Tanja goes so far as to claim that while she had “seen émigré fever symptoms in others,” she “thought [she] was immune to them” (Ugrešić, 189). She does not even attempt to learn Dutch and does not plan beyond her temporary stay at the university. Her attitudes towards her environment, her situation and her fellow immigrants show that Ugrešić’s narrator is so caught up in the past and her own nostalgia that she is unable to come to terms with the reality of her situation. Tanja is not the only character who reacts strongly to differences in others’ dialects. The students themselves are very aware of (and occasionally intolerant of) the differences and peculiarities in each other’s speech. Selim, for example, “couldn’t stand Boban’s Serbiansmisms,” most likely due to his hatred of Serbs and extreme Bosnian nationalism. He would, in retaliation to Boban’s natural speech, which he found so offensive, “go heavier on the Bosnianisms” (Ugrešić, 37). His choice to accentuate the differences in their dialects serves to differentiate them culturally and show his contempt for Boban (and by extension, all Serbs). The entire class, including Tanja herself, finds Uroš’s use of “an inordinate number of diminutives” to be amusing and mock him for it (Ugrešić, 37).

Just as Ugrešić’s characters fled from the former Yugoslavia to escape the trauma inflicted by the war, many of them also flee to the safety of other languages to escape the trauma and/or stigma associated with their own language. For example, to Igor “Dutch meant freedom” because “his mother tongue had become a burden” (Ugrešić, 38). Even when he is speaking “our language,” he often code-switches into English to make it “more tolerable for him” (Ugrešić, 38). Nevena, whose relationship with the language is, admittedly, more complicated than the others’, finds Dutch more comfortable, like a “sleeping bag” (Ugrešić, 37). Even for those students whose command of English and Dutch “left much to be desired,” Tanja finds that they have “an easier time saying what they had to say in languages not their own” (Ugrešić, 41).

For those that cannot escape into other languages, Ugrešić’s narrator claims that they “took spontaneous shelter in dialects... or retreated into more personal speech.” Ugrešić’s use of military terms to describe language use continues as she calls these previously stigmatized forms “temporary refuges from the official language that
had come with the war, spreading everywhere, polluting everything” (Ugrešić, 39). Her use of imagery and focus on language as weapon stems specifically from the Yugoslav experience. While immigrants from other backgrounds certainly have to deal with the trauma of separation from their native language, they rarely feel under attack from their native language. For many authors who write in exile, including Norman Manea, their native language itself serves as home, a sort of shelter for the author even as they are physically separated from their homeland. To have your mother tongue feel like an enemy, a weapon, a tool for suppression; to feel forced to change the way you speak or to abandon your native language altogether – these are traumas specific to situations like the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the wars that preceded it. For example, Ivo Žanić claims that a modern Croatian is “virtually unaware of what it means to speak freely, to choose one’s words exclusively in relation to what he is seeking to convey and in relation to the meanings he wishes to articulate” without having to worry that the constructions or words that he is using will label him as being a “good or bad Croat, a good or bad Yugoslav, a Serbophile or a Serbophobe” (Bugarski and Hawkesworth, 286). When the form and structure has been so highly politicized, it becomes nearly impossible to speak without fearing that your words or grammar will betray you in some way.

Although Tanja is at least peripherally aware of the trauma and difficulties caused by language, she remains concerned by and does not understand her students’ unwillingness to speak “our language,” preferring instead to use “half-baked English” and “half-baked Dutch” (Ugrešić, 35). Her concern can stem from at least two sources: her denial of the trauma inflicted in relation to language and her fear and discomfort with abandoning the past and her Yugoslav identity in favor of adopting of a new “Dutch,” “European,” “international” or “exile” identity. Her fear for the future of Yugoslav (or Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian) identity is again apparent when Tanja encounters Laki at the university. She is disturbed by his “mishmash of “now” urban speech, dialect, and literary affection (it was as if grandfather and grandson were speaking out of the same mouth), the ever so forced ‘Mrs. Lucić’” and says that “it was all vaguely nauseating, like a premonition of something unpleasant” (Ugrešić, 187). His style of speech represents not only a break from the past, but also his acceptance and compliance with the political change, both of which disgust and terrify her.

Tanja’s attitudes change somewhat, however, in response to Igor’s brutal confrontation, in which he airs his grievances and claims that she is living her life as if it were a vacation and that, once it’s over, “everything will be back to normal” (Ugrešić, 206). After her encounter with Igor, however, Tanja accepts her identity as a Yugoslav émigré and no longer indulges in her “Yugonostalgia,” refusing to live in the present. She no longer excludes herself from her descriptions of the Balkan community abroad. While she still often speaks with an attitude of contempt and derision, she now extends these feelings to herself, as well. When she describes former Yugoslavs, it is no longer simply they, but we. “We are barbarians. We have no writing; we leave our signatures on the wind: we utter sounds, we signal with our calls, our shouts, our screams, our spit” Ugrešić, 228). Ugrešić makes this transformation especially clear at the end by repeating a paragraph that appeared at the beginning of novel with only a few minor changes. Whereas she initially says that her “fellow countrymen” “half-swallow their words” and “utter semi-sounds” (Ugrešić, 4), at the end she focuses on herself, saying “I swallow words, regurgitate vowels and consonants” (Ugrešić, 246). Her attitude towards the language itself also changes. She initially regards the language as being inherently deficient, wondering if “a language that hasn’t learned to depict reality, complex as the inner experience of that reality may be, is capable of doing anything at all – telling stories, for instance” (Ugrešić, 4). At the end, Ugrešić’s narrator mirrors the wording almost precisely, but adds the phrase “a language thus maimed,” acknowledging the damaged done to and by the language in a way that she neglected to at the beginning of the novel (Ugrešić, 246-247).

In addition to specific Balkan traumas with language, Ugrešić also addresses the universal trauma of the futility of language to express ineffable human experiences or emotions, such as the trauma of exile. The newly minted official languages present the ultimate disconnect from reality. The standard Croatian that had been developed and, to a certain extent, constructed since the war was full of “stiff, dry platitudes” that “depersonalized the speaker, put a shield around him” and try to express “something that couldn’t be put into language anyway” (Ugrešić, 38). Additionally, the Croats who were “eager to
make Croatia as Croatian as possible" introduced new words and constructions, either from other Slavic languages (like Russian) or from the past, claiming that they were more native (Ugrešić, 35-36). As stated by Žanić above, modern Croatians can barely pay attention to the meaning they want to convey because they are so caught up in how they are saying it.

Ugrešić also illustrates how formulaic or, to an extent, even narrative language can not only fail to express the truth, but can also dehumanize or depersonalize the speaker. The first and most striking example of this is the woman who was raped and managed to retell the story of her trauma in a coherent manner. She tells her story again and again, even memorizing it in English, until it is "several times removed from its content" because "reeling off the painful tale like a machine was her way of deadening the pain" (Ugrešić, 39). The defendants in the political trials also rely on this mechanical speech in order to disconnect themselves from their actions and, more importantly, any possibility of feeling guilt. "By speaking Robot rather than Human, they turned evil into a mechanical plot line, as mechanical as any other" (Ugrešić, 141).

Then there are simply some experiences, some events that are too surreal, too vast to be expressed in language. When watching the trial of Uroš's father, Tanja and Igor occasionally switch from the Croatian/Bosnian/Serbian channel to the English, French and Dutch channels. They find that it doesn't matter in which language they are listening; the words are "in any case unreal" (Ugrešić, 141). The event itself is "unreal" and the experience is beyond any description or narration of it.

From the beginning of the novel, we see Tanja's struggle to put meaning into language. She claims that she "experience[s] my native language as an attempt by a linguistic invalid to convey even the simplest though through gestures, grimaces, and intonations" (Ugrešić, 4). Is this inability to convey meaning inherent to the language itself or is it a reflection of Tanja's personal trauma – first from the war and then through the experience of exile? With foreign languages, one expects a certain difficulty in communication, a certain disconnect with meaning. The mother tongue is supposed to be the easiest means of communication. When her experiences and pain go beyond the capacity and scope of language, it is unsurprising that speech seems to no longer be conveying meaning, but "stroking each other with words, spreading a soothing, sonorous saliva over one another" (Ugrešić, 4). The narrator herself struggles with inability of language to express truth or true meaning: "I fail to convey what I want to say, and what I do say sounds empty. I'll come out with a word, but can't sense its substance, or I'll sense a certain substance, but can't find the word for it" (Ugrešić, 246-247). Tanja faces this dilemma at the beginning of the novel (Ugrešić, 4) and at the end (Ugrešić, 246-247). When faced with the failure of language, Tanja suggests that there are "only two options: to keep an honest silence or to speak and thereby lie" (Ugrešić, 38). At the end of the novel, her solution seems to be the former, to adopt the Dutch manner of only speaking "when they have something to say" (Ugrešić, 254).

Using language as a focal point throughout the novel allows Ugrešić to depict both the universal struggles of immigration, emigration and exile as well as the specific traumas caused by the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Tanja's views about her situation, herself and others are all given to the reader through the lens of language. Her conflicted opinions towards "our language" show her denial about the socio-political linguistic situation, but, ultimately, her participation in it. Her trauma from her exile has caused Tanja's own native language to become foreign to her. Whether this is due to politicization of language in the War or simply due to its inability to express the truth of her experiences as a result of exile is unclear. Regardless, when faced the failure of language on so many different levels, is it any wonder that the narrator abandons writing in the end and retreats into near silence?

Works Cited

Three women, servants to the queen, save the life of the Prince Tamino from a snake. When they leave to report to the queen, the birdcatcher Papageno tells the prince that he killed the snake. When the women return, they give him a picture of the queen’s daughter, Pamina, who is being held captive by the evil Sarastro and then lock the mouth of Papageno because of his earlier lie. Tamino falls in love with Pamina. Suddenly, the queen appears and demands that he save Pamina. The women give to Tamino a magic flute, and to Papageno, a set of silver bells in order to ensure their safety. They also give them three spirits to aid them.

The slave of Sarastro, Monostatos, chases Pamina until Papageno scares him away. Then Papageno tells Pamina that Tamino loves her and that he will save her. With the help of the spirits, Tamino finds a the temple of Sarastro, where he finds out that in reality, it is the queen who is evil, not Sarastro. Tamino and Papageno save Pamina from Monostatos with the silver bells. After Sarastro returns and promises Pamina freedom and punishes Monostatos. At the same time, Pamina falls in love with Tamino.

The Queen of the Night finds Pamina and gives her a knife with the goal being for her to kill Sarastro and flee. However, Tamino passes the three challenges but the magic flute saves him. In the end of the opera, Tamino and Pamina are rejoined, and Papageno finds Papagena. They, along with Sarastro, defeat and expel the Queen of the Night, her ladies in waiting, and Monostatos.
Orthodox Christianity and vestiges of Classical antiquity have long coexisted within Greek culture. Greek folk tales are no exception, with single tales often featuring both the Christian God and a magical character of ancient pagan origin. In this paper, I will examine the way in which ancient Greek pagan characters and stories, still decidedly alive in modern folklore, are modified so as not to overtly oppose the tenets of Orthodox Christianity. Lawson has claimed that Christianity and ancient Greek polytheism can be combined relatively smoothly in a single culture because the former relies upon orthodoxy and the latter on orthopraxy, and because the former conceives of a distant and humanly inconceivable god and the latter many anthropomorphic gods who frequently commune with humans. These two religions therefore rival each other relatively little, allowing, for example, for the simultaneous maintenance of pagan practices and Christian beliefs. I will apply this concept to modern modifications made to the ancient pagan Cupid and Psyche story, showing how the Lawson's observed syncretism of Christianity and paganism allows the core structure of the story to remain intact despite the widespread adoption of Christianity in Greece.

Greece, a predominantly Orthodox Christian country, is nevertheless heavily invested and imbued in its pagan past, creating a paradox in modern Greek identity. As Herzfeld puts it, “the choice lies between ancient pagan glories on the one hand and the more immediate and familiar attractions of Orthodox Christianity on the other.”1 Herzfeld understands the “Hellenic” impulse to appeal to the ancient Greek past as a response to Western European expectations, ultimately for external approval. On the other hand, Herzfeld identifies the “Romeic” draw of Christianity as “internal,” relevant to the quotidian lives of Greeks themselves.2 Reacting against the fallacious tendency of Greek nationalists to assume that “whatever was good in the vernacular culture was but resurgence of antique values,”3 Herzfeld seems to imply that all ancient pagan traditions alive in modern Greece have been purposefully and disingenuously revived in order to gain approval from Western European countries.

While such constructed appeals to modern Greek connections with ancient Greece are certainly prevalent and egregious, it would be unfair to claim that “genuine” modern Greek culture is tied solely to the Orthodox Christian tradition. Lawson4 points out the many vestiges of pagan symbols and deities that abound in Greek folklore. For example, Lawson cites a tale heard in both Zacynthos and Chios concerning giants who once rebelled against God, climbing a mountain and throwing rocks at him. God emerged victorious by striking them down with his thunderbolts—this story is “another but the old myth of the war of the Titans against Zeus with the names of the actors omitted.”5 Lawson recounts another folk tale in which a priest’s son meets a curious rural character named “Panos,” who gives him a gold-skinned kid, which the young man sacrifices to God, receiving a magical flute in return. Adventures ensue, and the story concludes, “The whole business... was arranged by Panos to cleanse the world somewhat of evil men.”6 Panos is not strictly a pagan divinity—in fact, the Christian God is featured in this story; however, Panos is clearly an agent of magic.

1 Herzfeld (1986), 20
2 Herzfeld (1986), 19-20
3 Herzfeld (1986), 31
4 Lawson’s work, published in 1910 in a culture that perpetuated certain offensive stereotypes about the Balkans, contains some unfortunate, ethnically insensitive phrases, such as a reference to “the frailties of the Greek character” (40). Nevertheless, Lawson refrains from editorializing during his classification of mythic/folkloric tropes—for this reason, I have treated Lawson as a legitimate source for parallels between ancient mythology and modern folklore. Furthermore, Lawson collected his examples before much of the 20th Century political strife that encouraged nationalism in the Balkans, possibly reinforcing the idea that these parallels between ancient and modern do not exist purely for nationalistic purposes.
5 Lawson (1910), 73-74
6 Lawson (1910), 78
descended from the Greek god Pan. According to an Attic story, two kings were once smitten with a beautiful queen of Daphni named Aphrodite. Preferring one of the kings over the other, she presented them with a contest and proceeded to distract the king she did not prefer with beguiling caresses until her preferred suitor completed the contest.\(^7\) Of course, this queen shares the seductive powers of her ancient mythological namesake. The examples abound, with vestiges of ancient Greek deities sometimes presented side by side with the Christian God. Two mutually exclusive religious systems seem to coexist paradoxically within the modern Greek folk tale.

Lawson sees ancient paganism and Orthodox Christianity not as two opposing forces in Greek culture, as Herzfeld does, but rather as two ultimately compatible aspects of folklore. According to Lawson, ancient Greek religion lacked the uniform ethical mandates and codes of Christian orthodoxy, but rather relied upon orthopraxy, or strict adherence to the correct execution of rituals.\(^8\) These religious rituals aimed at achieving a state of ecstatic elevation, but, unlike Christian religious elevation, this ecstasy was not contingent upon adherence to any universal code of ethical day-to-day behavior or personal level of faith and devotion.\(^9\) After all, the gods themselves bickered, engaged in adulterous affairs, and exhibited vanity and jealousy. The lack of a uniform ethical code in ancient Greek religion emerges most clearly in the fact that the same individual could be favored by some gods and despised by others—for example, Athena protected Odysseus, whereas Poseidon pursued a vendetta against him. Because no competing system of religious morality existed beforehand, Lawson claims that Greek folk culture was able to adopt Christian ethics while still adhering to pagan practices, making sacrifices and consulting oracles.\(^10\)

Lawson also points out the frequent communion of gods and men in ancient polytheism, whereas the Christian tradition generally contains little direct communication between God and laypeople. As Lawson understands it, “Humility and self-dissatisfaction were and are qualities foreign to the ordinary Greek. He observed the wide gulf that separated him from those whom he worshipped, but without any sense of unworthiness, without any depression of spirit.”\(^11\) Generalizing ethnic language aside, Lawson’s main point still stands: the goal of ancient Greek worship was not self-abasement, but self-elevation, underlining the close connection between pagan gods and men compared to the gulf separating humans from the Christian god.\(^12\) For this reason, vestiges of pagan deities such as Panos survive as worldly magical agents who act in accordance with the higher, supreme God. Furthermore, each ancient god or goddess represented aspects of the human and material world and thus maintained a certain proximity to humans. For example, grain embodied Ceres, horses Poseidon, and the sun Apollo—every god and goddess had tangible and ubiquitous aspects.

Lawson’s interpretive claims provide a possible explanation for how vestiges of paganism can flourish within the folklore of a Christian society. Because the ancient Greek religion relied heavily on ritual and less on an internal engagement with faith, some pagan practices, such as the offering of sacrifices and celebration of traditional festivals, could be retained while adopting a Christian moral code.\(^13\) Similarly, because the ancient gods and goddesses held close connections to the earth and everyday existence, they could easily be used as accessible representatives of material aspects of a world created by a less tangible Christian God. We will now test this theory by examining a pagan and a modern version of the Greek story “Cupid and Psyche” with an eye to the mechanisms by which the basic structure of the ancient myth remains intact despite the removal of overt pagan deities.

Dawkins documents a modern Greek folk tale that he calls “Cupid and Psyche” based on its resemblance to the ancient Greek myth of the same name. In order to trace the similarities and differences between the ancient and modern

\(^7\) Lawson (1910), 79-80
\(^8\) Lawson (1910), 38
\(^9\) Lawson (1910), 38
\(^10\) Lawson (1910), 47
\(^11\) Lawson (1910), 294
\(^12\) Lawson (1910), 295
\(^13\) Lawson (1910), 47
versions, I must examine each version of the story. According to Apuleius,\(^{14}\) Psyche was one of the king’s three daughters, and her beauty rivaled that of Aphrodite, who, feeling threatened, sent her son Eros, or Cupid, to kill her. Instead, Cupid fell in love with her and decided to take her to his palace to be his wife. There, Psyche lived a luxurious life and grew to love her husband, abiding by his one condition that she never see him: he speaks to her during the day as a disembodied voice and makes love to her at night in complete darkness. One day, Psyche’s sisters visit her and, jealously cajoling her, convince her to steal a glance at her husband, because he could be a frightful snake. Psyche resists at first, but eventually yields out of fear. At night, she lights a candle and holds it to her sleeping husband, whose beauty she glimpses for a moment before the wax from her candle drips onto his body and wakes him. Betrayed, he returns to his mother, who tests Psyche with a number of arduous trials before allowing the two to reunite. First, she is whipped and tortured by incarnations of Worry and Sadness. Surviving their brutalities, she must sort an impossibly enormous mass of grains, cross a river to retrieve a golden fleece from violent sheep, and collect water from the rivers Cocytus and Styx, in the underworld.

According to the modern fairy tale,\(^{15}\) a childless woman wishes that she could bear a child, even if that child were a crab. Upon hearing this, God grants her request, and the woman does indeed give birth to a crab, inciting the mockery of others. One day, she comes home from church to find that in her absence her crab child has transfigured into a beautiful young man. Her son entreats her to tell no one, but to ask for the princess’ hand on his behalf. The king mocks the suppliant mother, presenting the crab with a series of impossible tasks before he will grant him his daughter’s hand, but the crab fulfills them magically. The princess obediently marries him and enjoys the private beauty of his human body, which she must keep secret. Her sisters scorn her marriage to a crab. She keeps her husband’s secret as long as she can, but reveals it in a moment of boastful weakness. Her husband instantly disappears.

Dawkins considers these stories to be parallel because they share the following template: “A girl wins the love of a mysterious husband from Fairyland who warns her that she must never reveal their marriage. The girl’s jealous sisters tease her into letting out the secret, whereupon the husband disappears and is won back only by much toil and after many painful wanderings and expiations.”\(^{16}\) To Dawkins’ similarities I would add that both stories contain strong parallels between the figures of mother and wife: in Apuleius’ account, Aphrodite and Psyche vie for Cupid’s attention, and, in the modern tale, wife and mother are the only two characters to know of the crab’s beauty. Furthermore, both the brides in the stories are princesses, contrasting their husbands’ vague, mysterious origins with their concrete position of political importance. Finally, in order to win back their husbands, both heroines must perform traditionally feminine chores: Psyche’s trials are ostensibly fantastical, but they make reference to cleaning, spinning wool, and fetching water, respectively.

Of course, the stories differ in many ways as well: for the purposes of this paper, I will examine the way the pagan elements of the original myth are modified in the modern-day fairytale. The ancient deities at the center of Apuleius’ myth are Aphrodite and Cupid, both representing love. These erotic deities lend meaning to the myth, which centers on a girl’s first sexual experiences and married life. The presence of Aphrodite and Cupid is easily supplanted in the modern fairytale by the crab’s physical beauty, which is made even more erotic by its hidden, private nature, and which provides the story with the same sexual overtones without making reference to pagan deities. This story illuminates the way in which the pagan gods’ close connection to worldly realities allows them to be replaced by said realities in modern Greek folk tales.

Next, I will examine the identities of the husbands.

\(^{14}\) Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, 4.28-6.25
\(^{15}\) As told in Dawkins (1953), 56-60
\(^{16}\) Dawkins (1953), 55
In the Greek myth, Cupid is an ancient Greek god with a vaguely humanoid appearance and lifestyle: he lives in a house and makes love to human women, for example. The identity of the crab-man is more ambiguous. His mother conceives him by praying to the Christian God, and the crab has some supernatural characteristics, such as his tendency to change from crab to man. However, both of his forms (man and crab) individually exist as earthly species. We may therefore understand him as some sort of human and animal agent or reflection of the Christian God. In this sense, he differs fundamentally from a straightforward pagan god such as Cupid, but retains the same functions within the story: his connection with God allows him, for example, to pass the tests necessary to win over the princess, just as Cupid is able to effortlessly whisk Psyche off to his heavenly palace. Thus, the Christian earthly but blessed men are interchangeable in folklore with ancient Greek divine but anthropomorphic gods.

When the heroines betray their husbands, they must both prove themselves through successfully passing household-related trials: however, Psyche must pass fantastical tests for her goddess mother-in-law, whereas the unnamed heroine of the modern Greek folk tale must simply sweep the halls for an ogress, whose exact identity and relation to the crab youth is unclear. Because Aphrodite, typically of ancient Greek divinities, is anthropomorphized and lives in a world with clear referents to our own, her tasks for Psyche can easily be converted into earthly tasks: sorting a boundless heap of grains is not a far cry from sweeping the ogress’ palace. The ogress is a convenient replacement for a goddess, because, though she clearly has some sort of supernatural powers and abilities, their source and nature is ambiguous. It is unclear whether the ogress is supernaturally powerful by nature, making her semi-divine; is able to channel supernatural powers through a higher divine entity, Christian or not; or carries out her magic through the use of potions or special trinkets. Thus, the idea of magic is sufficiently ambiguous to retain and explain the basic format of pagan stories without explicitly violating clear tenets of Christianity.

Folklore reflects a melding of ancient Greek paganism and modern Greek Orthodox Christianity. As Lawson has described, in many fundamental ways, paganism and Christianity do not overlap: Christianity emphasizes the importance or orthodoxy and features a God whose form and existence cannot be grasped by humans, whereas ancient Greek paganism emphasizes orthopraxis in the worship of its anthropomorphic gods. In folklore, these gaping differences do not pit Christianity and paganism even more harshly against each other, as one might expect, but rather allow the stories from the latter religion to exist in the world of the former. As we have seen in the story of Cupid and Psyche, the human forms of pagan gods makes pagan stories easily convertible into versions inoffensive to Christianity.

Works Cited

Apuleius, The Golden Ass.


Ona ima slabe noge i kolena, tako da ne hoda puno. Uvek ima zavoj oko noge.

Baka nosi naočare za čitanje, i to ih nosi samo ujutru kad čita novine ili uveče da gleda tleviziju.

Nora Dolliver (left) and Katie Tucker (right) at TUTA Theater in Chicago, IL.
In the 2003 documentary *Whose is this song?*, Bulgarian filmmaker Adela Peeva travels throughout southeastern Europe in an attempt to uncover the origins of a popular folksong she remembers from her youth—a song which appears in some form or another in Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Turkey. As the film progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that no consensus will be reached regarding the answer to the titular question. Each group in turn claims the song as their own— as a love song or a religious hymn, as a revolutionary anthem or a military march—often becoming upset and even violent in response to any suggestions contradicting this claim. When Peeva plays a Bosnian version for a group of Serbian men relaxing in a pub, they react with suspicion, blocking the camera lens and demanding Peeva show ID while one remarks, “If I hit you, you will be flat on the floor.” In rural Bulgaria, Peeva mentions the song’s possible Turkish origins, to which one man responds, “I’ll hang the one who says this song is Turkish on that oak tree... To hang until his bones dry out” while another threatens stoning. In both cases, the folksong clearly signifies more to those present than simply a popular melody. Rather, both the ownership claims and the angry outbursts represent part of a pervasive process of appropriation through which articles of folk culture are co-opted—by the public or by governing bodies—and recast as symbols of national identity, indicative of the authentic and original shared cultural past of the nation and its inhabitants.

The origins of this process of appropriation date back to the conception of romantic nationalism by Johann Gottfried Herder during the late eighteenth century. Even today, however, this process—as well as romantic nationalism itself—remains extremely relevant to the contemporary socio-political situation in the Balkans. In fact, these appropriations of folk culture have not only continued into the present, but, beginning in the latter half of the twentieth century, they have often done so in new and novel ways. In particular, this description applies to the conflation of folk culture with more commercialized pop culture that began in the 1960s in Yugoslavia and culminated in Serbia in the 1990s with the advent of “turbo-folk,” a fusion of old folk tunes with contemporary dance music. Throughout its popularity as a genre, beginning on the eve of the fall of communist Yugoslavia in the late 1980s, turbo-folk served as an avenue through which national identity could be performed on the public (national) stage. As such, this genre, much promoted by the Milosevic regime, constituted one of the chief forces behind the shift from the ideology fostered prior to the break-up of “brotherhood and unity” to the post-break-up emphasis on Serb nationalism and the establishment of a distinct Serbian ethnic identity. Through promoting turbo-folk, the Milosevic regime endeavored to construct a nationalist movement that fit into the existing framework of romantic nationalism and thus justified itself by establishing Serbs as a distinct, homogenous ethnic group; however, rather than building “on the traditions and myths of the past,” a prerequisite for true romantic nationalism (Wilson 23), this particular brand of quasi romantic nationalism relied instead on the manufacture of a new folkloric heritage—one which manifested primarily in turbo-folk.

The ideology of romantic nationalism maintains a long-standing association with the Balkans. Certainly this particular brand of nationalism is significantly more prevalent within the region than any other. During the rise of nationalism that characterized the late eighteenth century, while nationalist movements in Western Europe and the US tended towards centering on the liberal and humanitarian philosophies of the Enlightenment, those in Central and Eastern Europe developed instead in the direction of romantic nationalism. In these regions, national boundaries—or the geographic contours of particular, cohesive national groups with a shared national or ethnic identity—were less likely than those in the West to coincide with political/state boundaries. As such, the form of nationalism that rose to popularity here was distinct from that in the west, having as its central goal, not protecting the individual, but rather reworking political boundaries to match up with those of the appropriate ethnic groups (Wilson 22).
This form of nationalism, unlike that in the west, emphasized “passion and instinct instead of reason, national differences instead of common aspirations, and, above all, the building of nations on the traditions and myths of the past—that is, on folklore—instead of the political realities of the present” (Wilson 23). Thus it was in the wake of romantic nationalism that the practice of collecting and studying folklore rose to prevalence in this region, resulting in the flurry of folklore collections conducted by “zealous scholar-patriots” throughout Central and East Europe that occurred during the early nineteenth century (Wilson 22). These “scholar-patriots” included in their numbers the Brothers Grimm in Germany, P.C. Asbjornsen and Jorgen Moe in Norway, and Vuk Karadzic in Serbia, to name a few (Wilson 31-33). In the Balkans in particular, the relationship between folklore and nationalism frequently contributes to fierce disputes over the origins and ownership of particular articles of folk culture, as demonstrated by Peeva’s documentary.

The pre-cursor to turbo-folk, however, emerged during the 1950s and 60s, at the peak of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a period marked by an ideology of Balkan “brotherhood and unity” rather than by emphasis on “national differences” or by the post-conflict animosity that hangs over Peeva’s film. Folk culture at the time was in theory “depoliticized”—e.g. stripped of its original nationalist messages (Hudson 160). In reality, however, the genre still functioned as a political tool, but rather than emphasizing national or ethnic difference amongst the component republics, it served instead as the foundations for the soon-to-be-constructed backbone of a pan-Yugoslav identity.

Following World War II, Yugoslavia underwent a period of Communist-led urbanization that resulted in an influx of villagers into the republic’s cities and a split of identities within these cities between the rural newcomers and the pre-existing urbanites. Newcomers became part of a new working class and were expected to urbanize and adapt to the standards of the city. However, this was easier said than done, and the rural-urban split persisted within Yugoslavia’s urban spaces, a constant reminder of a less than cohesive national identity. In order to smooth over this split, it was necessary to establish a shared Yugoslav cultural identity that transcended the rural-urban divide. This was partially accomplished through the development of “novo komponovana narodna muzika,” or “newly composed folk music” (Blagojevic 156).

The phrase itself seems almost oxymoronic at first, given the strong associations between folklore and the past—prior to the coining of the word “folklore,” the common expression was “popular antiquities” (Wilson 22). However, while itself “newly composed,” the genre constituted an urbanization of traditional folk music through its integration with more contemporary musical styles and influences, including “Greek and Turkish traditional and popular music, Gypsy music, Russian and Hungarian romances,” “western pop music” and “rock-n-roll and disco sound” (Kronja 103). Thus, “newly composed folk music,” in its implication of the existence of a shared folkloric past, effectively took a page out of the book of romantic nationalism. At the same time, the construction of national identity on the foundation of what is technically a contemporary genre constitutes a clear deviation from the framework of romantic nationalism.

However, out of this integration of traditional, rural folk music with contemporary, urban musical styles emerged a genre that, unlike more traditional folk music, could and did flourish in faster paced urban environments, receiving frequent play on television and in nightclubs (Hudson 166). It therefore not only established common ground between the urban and rural inhabitants of the republic, but also addressed the issue of maintaining a strong pan-Yugoslav national identity in a period of urbanization. Through the development of “newly composed folk music,” folk culture—or, at least, a version of it—was given a new life in Yugoslavia’s urban spaces.

The most recognizable figure of the “newly composed folk” genre—and arguably the most popular artist of former Yugoslavia— is Lepa Brena. Lepa Brena epitomized the ideology behind novo komponovana narodna muzika, not only in terms of her music, but in terms of her personal life as well. Having grown up in the rural town of Brcko in Bosnia before rising to fame as a Yugo-folk star, Lepa Brena was herself urbanized. In her, this process of urbanization is somewhat idealized, to the point that she served as a template for feminine sexuality “based in the nexus of rural origins, beauty and urban style” (Cvoro 126).
Furthermore, although a Bosnian Muslim, Lepa Brena settled in Serbia and had a very public relationship and marriage to Serbian tennis star Slobodan Živojinović (dapitamozajedno). Thus, she acts as a symbol of both the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia’s shared folkloric heritage and its ideology of pan-Yugoslav unity and brotherhood.

During and after the fragmentation of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991, however, nationalist politicians in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia began to employ mass media in a campaign to shatter this same ideology of “brotherhood and unity” and to encourage in its place “national and religious hatred, intolerance, violence, war and fear” (Kronja 104). Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic was no exception to this rule, and perhaps the clearest examples of such media manipulation appearing during his regime are those of the state television station, Radio Television Serbia (RTS) and TV Pink. Under the control of Milosevic, RTS painted an idealistic picture of Serbia as prosperous, popular and blameless, the latter by neglecting to include footage or accurate accounts of Serbian-committed atrocities in broadcasts while constantly displaying images and accounts of those committed by non-Serbs in an effort to garner support for the war (Perlez).

Meanwhile, throughout the 1990s, TV Pink, the highest funded private television station in the country and an “omnipresent media giant which monopolized the media space,” was under the political patronage—and at some points quite possibly ownership—of Milosevic’s wife and leader of the Yugoslav Left party, Mirjana Markovic (Kronja 105). Although much of TV Pink’s content has been criticized for being vapid or dumbed-down, the channel nevertheless constituted an important platform from which to further broadcast the nationalist ideology of the Milosevic regime. This was accomplished largely through the channel’s promotion of turbo-folk, which emerged in the early 1990s as a descendant of the newly composed folk of the S.F.R. Yugoslavia. If newly composed folk music was instrumental in the generation of a pan-Yugoslav identity, through which it strove to foster a sense of brotherhood and unity. In contrast, turbo-folk backed up the blatant Serb nationalism broadcast on state television to the point that enjoyment of the genre quickly came to signify a pro-Milosevic political orientation, as evidenced by the common anti-war expression, “Don’t listen to the folk music – Die a natural death!” (Slavkova). Through broadcasting turbo-folk, then, TV Pink participated in the dissemination of nationalist ideology throughout Serbia.

Three central processes combine within turbo-folk to create the particular form of nationalism expressed through the genre. The first is the appropriation and inclusion of aspects of folk culture that are “either implicitly or explicitly ethnically Serbian” (Hudson 172). This includes use of traditional instrumentation in general and the gusle in particular, the dancing of the kolo, and the incorporation of musical elements from Serbian folksongs (Kronja 108). In that it is a fairly straightforward appropriation of folk culture, this process is reminiscent of both the scholarly collections of folktales during the nineteenth century and the modern day disputes over folklore ownership and authenticity exemplified in Peeva’s documentary. In other words, this constitutes a relatively direct application of the basic ideology of romantic nationalism.

The second process is the development of an instantly recognizable turbo-folk style—communicated largely though music videos broadcast on TV Pink—that celebrates “materialism, luxury, and sexual innuendo” and “present[s] an escapist, rosy picture of reality” (Cvoro 127). Through both their music videos and their personal image, turbo-folk stars during the 1990s glorified unrestrained and gendered consumption—and audiences followed suit. Male turbo-folk fans—known as “diesel-men,” after Diesel brand jeans—wore gold chains, displayed aggressive attitudes and often engaged in criminal activity to finance their expensive lifestyles. Meanwhile, female fans, nicknamed “sponsored girls” due to their use of blatant sex appeal to ingratiate themselves with men, wore
expensive brand-name clothing and garish make-up and jewelry (Cvoro 129). Within the turbo-folk scene, engagement in this kind of excessive consumption became an expression of patriotism, in that participants effectively bought into the manufactured image of a prosperous and popular Serbia (mentioned above) broadcast on RTS, and thereby aided in “providing a perfect cultural backdrop for Milosevic’s ideological project” (Cvoro 127).

Here, unlike in the previous example, it becomes impossible to rationalize even a tentative alignment with romantic nationalism. Neither the emphasis on consumption nor the constructed identities of “diesel-men” and “sponsored girls” maintain any origins in folklore. Rather, both are rooted firmly in a particular historical moment and the socio-political conditions that surround it, as exemplified by the fact that both vanished fairly quickly during the post-conflict period (Cvoro 131). In other words, contrary to the requirements of romantic nationalism, Serbian nationalism in the 1990s necessitated the building of national identity, at least to some extent, on the “political realities of the present” rather than “the traditions and myths of the past” (Wilson 23). Furthermore, although efforts are made to embed folk culture into turbo-folk via the process described above, this does not negate the fact that turbo-folk itself does not count among the “traditions and myths of the past,” but rather constitutes an attempt at counterfeiting folk culture for largely nationalistic purposes.

The third process participating in the production of a “turbo-folk nationalism” is the mythicization of historical and contemporary realities within the actual semantic content of turbo-folk songs. According to Marketa Slavkova, “Many songs accompanied by the gusle (at least the more contemporary ones) are often inspired by actual historical events, but, when sung, they acquire mythical form” (Slavkova). A prime example of this can be heard in Gordana Lazarevic’s “Vidovdan,” a turbo-folk song which recalls the battle of Kosovo – an important moment in Serbian history and one which has frequently acted as a marker of Serbian identity – and thus demonstrates the process through which turbo-folk “reflects on historical events and transforms them into myth” (Slavkova).

This process does not apply solely to historical events, as demonstrated by Robert Hudson’s recollection of a number of recent examples of guslari singing about and mythicizing “the death of promising young footballers, the progress of the war or the careers of notorious Belgrade gangsters” (Hudson 167). Furthermore, while the content of the majority of turbo-folk songs focuses on generic love stories rather than specific historical events, even these incorporate folkloric gender roles, thereby creating the impression of tragic romantic myth. Such is the case in, for example, turbo-folk star Ceca’s 1996 hit song, “If You Were Wounded” in which Ceca professes her love for a young male warrior and offers to give him her blood and eyes (Cvoro 128). Here, love for men is conflated with love for the homeland, and imagery of female acts of sacrifice and male acts of strength call to mind similar themes appearing in the region’s folklore, as in, for example, the ubiquitous immurement myth. Once again, turbo-folk songs are – to some extent – embedded with appropriated folk culture and history. This constitutes yet another attempt to align the Serbian nationalism of the 1990s with the framework of romantic nationalism; however, the products of this process of mythicization – the “myth” account of the war progress and the pop hits produced by Ceca—are contemporary and, if not themselves political, then at the very least politically charged. In other words, this constitutes yet another example of national identity being constructed around contemporary political concerns, and thus outside of the framework of romantic nationalism.

Just as Lepa Brena exemplifies the genre of newly composed folk music, so Ceca is the undisputed queen of turbo-folk. Thus, just as turbo-folk emerged out of newly composed folk music, so Lepa Brena is in many ways Ceca’s predecessor. Both share the same rural origins, adhere to the same standards of beauty and cultivate a similar urban style – which is to say that both follow the same basic model of feminine sexuality (Cvoro 126). In terms of their symbolic significance for nationalism, however, the two artists – like the two genres they represent – are polar opposites. As a Bosnian Muslim living in Serbia and married to a prominent Serbian Orthodox athlete, Lepa Brena represents ideologically the “brotherhood and unity” of the S.F.R. Yugoslavia. Ceca, meanwhile, has spent the entirety of her career based in her native Serbia and, after catching her big break on the eve of the fragmentation of Yugoslavia,
rose to prominence almost in parallel with the Milosevic regime, with which she is frequently associated (Ćvoro 126). Ceca is therefore a much more politically charged figure than Lepa Brena Ceca's marriage to Željko Ražnatović, or Arkan, a Serbian career criminal and paramilitary leader during the Yugoslav wars, only bolstered her association with Milosevic, setting her even farther apart from her predecessor. Ceca met Arkan while performing for troops on the front lines, and they married in 1995. The wedding was a publicly broadcast “national event” and a clear example of a staged performance of national identity. The wedding itself “combined displays of Serb nationalism with material excess and kitsch” (Ćvoro 128), the latter two of which, as has been demonstrated, constitute expressions of Serbian nationalism in their own right. Dina Iordanova provides a detailed account of the wedding day events in an article on the subject. The wedding Iordanova describes bears no real resemblance to the number of actual traditional Serbian weddings caught on tape. Ceca is clearly a modern, confident woman – not one of folk culture's “mournful,” “innocuous virgin[s]” (Iordanova 8). However, the wedding is nevertheless granted an aura of the folkloric due to inclusion of traditional ritual elements.

In fact, many of the traditional elements of a Serbian wedding are intact in the wedding of Ceca and Arkan, but marked by the same emphasis on lavishly excessive consumption that defines the turbo-folk aesthetic. A prayer is held at the groom's house prior to the collection of the bride, as would occur in a traditional ceremony, however with the addition of a “massive golden cross.” The procession to the bride's house similarly mirrors a procession from a folk tradition; however, in another demonstration of excess, Arkan rides a limousine and is followed by a cavalcade of forty cars – mostly all-terrain vehicles – decorated with Serbian flags and flowers (Iordanova 8). Upon arrival at the bride's house, Arkan shoots an apple from a tree with his rifle, as tradition dictates, but also carries with him a Heckler & Koch machine gun (Slavkova). Inside the house, Arkan pays his way to the bride, but does so with a briefcase full of cash and gold jewelry. Throughout this whole process, the couple wear traditional Montenegrin folk costumes (Iordanova 9).

In its combination of traditional folkloric elements indicative of an authentic and original Serbian cultural past with displays of excessive consumption that mirror the image of Serbian prosperity and popularity constructed by the state media, Ceca and Arkan's spectacle wedding serves a similar function to turbo-folk as a genre. Both appropriate aspects of folk culture and tie these through performance to images of excessive consumption in an attempt to consolidate these two distinct aspects of 1990s Serbian nationalism under the category of romantic nationalism. However, while the incorporation of folkloric elements might fall into this category – if one ignores the fact that Herder would likely not have appreciated the fusion of these folk elements with Greek, Turkish, “Gypsy,” Russian, Hungarian and Western influences – the emphasis on consumerism as patriotism is drawn, not from an authentic Serbian cultural past, but from contemporary Serbian state propaganda, and thus is decidedly not an example of romantic nationalist ideals. By attempting to brand it as such, Milosevic and other Serbian nationalists of the period hoped to grant their cause an aura of authenticity and validity, to say, “We Serbs are an ancient people and a prosperous nation, and we must preserve this greatness in the face of the Other who would tear it down.” The “one people, one nation” rhetoric of romantic nationalism suits such a cause in its emphasis on national differences, and so the Milosevic regime attempted to implement it as a tool for their cause; however, romantic nationalism requires that these national differences be rooted in a cultural past rather than, as is largely the case here, a politicized present.

Works Cited

Blagojevic, Gordana. “Turbo-folk and ethnicity in the mirror of the perception of the YouTube users.”

Ćvoro, Uros. “Remember the nineties?: Turbo-folk as the vanishing mediator of nationalism.”


Iordanova, Dina. “Balkan Weddings Revisited: Multiple Messages of Filmed Nuptials.” Center for
Austrian Studies.


In the Summer of 1871, there was a immense drought in Chicago. According to reports, there was less than eight centimeters of rainfall. A majority of the buildings in Chicago were made of wood, and this wood dried out without the rainfall. The fire began on October 8, 1871 in a barn belonging to O’Learies, an immigrant family from Ireland. The legend says that the fire broke out when one of the O’Leary cows knocked down a kerosene lamp, and the hay caught fire. The fire department was not able to put out the fire, and the fire spread from the O’Leary barn to the center of the city. Because of the drought, the fire spread faster than the firemen were able to put out the fire. Luckily, rain began to fall the next day, and that was the only thing that was able to put out the huge fire in the city of Chicago. Close to 100,000 people were left without houses, and close to 17,000 buildings burned to the foundation. The Great Chicago Fire was one of the most catastrophic events in the 19th century.
Throughout *Time of Parting*, the two narrators work in tandem to produce a powerful effect on the reader. While the narration of Father Aligorko situates the novel in history—albeit one of dubious accuracy, effectively mythologizing the action as he creates an epic-style narrative—the Venetian's narration provides a more relatable point of reference for modern readers. As an outsider arriving in Bulgaria, he narrates the powerful effect the land and language have on his own psyche; in essence, he is narrating his own Bulgarianization, the process by which he becomes authentically Bulgarian. To Father Aligorko, by contrast, this Bulgarianness is inherent, as it is to the Bulgarian land that is vividly described throughout the novel. Father Aligorko, rather than acquiring Bulgarianess, acquires a more “modern” understanding of Bulgarian identity, coming to the realization that Muslims can also be Bulgarians. While this idea could be seen as threatening to Bulgaria’s national identity, the Venetian’s narration serves as a testament to the power of Bulgarianness that renders this new understanding of Bulgarian identity non-threatening.

Father Aligorko begins his narrative with a historical account that makes him seem authoritative, trustworthy, and truly Bulgarian:

> In the year 1668 of Our Lord Jesus Christ, two years after the Grand Vizier Ahmed Kupruli had laid siege to Candia, in the month of grass, which is the fifth month after the beginning of the year, the holy Christian forest called Rhodopa suffered a terrible fate. And in the preceding year there had been omens which we, in our blindness, were unable to divine. (17)

The historical details that follow lend an authority and authenticity to the rest of Father Aligorko’s narration not only because of the specific and accurate-sounding facts he presents, but because of the way these facts relating to Ottoman conquest participate in one of the most dominant national myths in Bulgaria. By beginning this way, Father Aligorko assures the reader that both he and they partake of the national memory of Ottoman conquest. This immediately establishes him as authoritative and trustworthy, though not necessarily as relatable to the modern reader as the Venetian, whose more modern style creates a connection between him and the reader.

The Venetian begins his account with an image of conquest: “When Karaibrahim had reached the crest of the hill, he stopped his horse. At his feet lay the valley.” (11) The image of Karaibrahim, the Muslim conqueror, is closely followed by the first of many sweeping descriptions of the beauty of the Bulgarian land:

> The sun appeared for a moment on the snowy ridge opposite and illuminated his face. Then I saw that the mountain was alive, and its tremor pierced me like a sudden chill. A rock rose at Karaibrahim’s back. [...] When the sun shone forth, the

Taken on its own, this idea of Bulgarianness could be seen as threatening the dominant and Christianity-based conception of Bulgarianness that much of Donchev’s audience held. But because the rest of the text serves as an exaltation of Bulgarianness and as a testament to the power of Bulgarianness, the idea of Muslims as true Bulgarians is rendered non-threatening.

Today, we know that *Time of Parting* was commissioned by the Bulgarian government as part of a campaign to encourage the Bulgarian nation to perceive Muslims living in Bulgaria as Bulgarians first and foremost. While parts of this Bulgarianization were codified, much of the work to be done was the much more nebulous work of altering a national mentality. With this in mind, Father Aligorko’s interaction with the Bulgarian Muslims and the epiphany he arrives at are central to the aims of the Bulgarian government:

> The earth could be divided. But the fruit of the tree remained common property. And Christians and Moslems all ate of it. The fruit of the mountain was not divided, it fed them all equally.

> And when I had met the man, I had not known whether he was a Moslem or a Christian. I realized he was a Bulgarian. He spoke Bulgarian, he wore Bulgarian garments, and he lit his fire in a Bulgarian house. (304)
rock began to shimmer in a myriad of tiny sparks, as though the whole mountain were shaking. The transparent robe shimmered and shook with a blinding thread of gold in each fold, and each spark no longer flowed downwards, but seemed to echo like a cord in the same place. Karaibrahim's face remained immobile and concentrated amid the radiance of the shimmering mountain.

(12)

In the Venetian's depiction, Karaibrahim stands out as almost a blemish on the land, present on it but far from a part of it. The Venetian, on the other hand, presents himself as awed and stunned by the beauty of the land and the life that he sees it contains. Although he is a total outsider in Bulgaria, he is still susceptible to the extraordinary power of the Bulgarian land, unlike Karaibrahim, who seems completely unmoved by it. In this way, his narration serves as a testament to the power of the Bulgarian land that has such an immediate and profound effect on him. Not only is the Venetian awed by the land itself, he also perceives a Christianness in it that deeply moves him:

The tones of the bell were borne over the mountain, pure and transparent like the distant peaks, falling in folds like them, now darker, now lighter. The tones met their echoes, and the echoes returned to a new tone, while the spruces rose like the spires of a cathedral, and their tops were outlined against the sky like slender, black crosses. A sob rose in my breast, and I bent my head lower still, while my lips repeated the words of the Mohammedan prayer. Neither mockery, nor despair, nor resignation had succeeded in uprooting the old faith. (13)

The Venetian's narrative focuses extensively on his own mental processes and emotions. One prevalent theme in this narration is the sheer joy of life, which he often connects to the Bulgarian land. In one example, he writes:

Life breathed in my face like a wind, it flew over me like a cloud, it flowed at my feet like a river. Can you catch the wind, a cloud and a river in your hand? Can you hold them? So they won't slip away from you? To live meant to have and not to have. And not to want to have. […] I said to myself: “Rejoice! You are alive!” (36-37)

The authenticity of this joy to be alive is indisputable—nowhere does the narrative sound more honest and sincere than when the Venetian rhapsodizes about the joy of living. But despite its authenticity, it does not only come from within the Venetian himself. Instead, it is a product of his environment, the Bulgarian land, which affects him to the extent that it imposes itself upon his very thoughts. Another manifestation of the profound effect that Bulgaria has had on the Venetian's mentality is seen in the way he discusses translation throughout the novel. Since learning Bulgarian from an “unknown oarsman,” (185) the language has impinged upon his mind to the extent that he translates to and from Bulgarian involuntarily: “Twice I heard every word of Karaibrahim’s. In Turkish and in Bulgarian. Without wanting to, I translated them to myself.” (209) The Bulgarian language is an integral part of Bulgarian national identity, and now it has become an integral part of the Venetian without him even intending it. He has acquired a earmark of authentic Bulgarianness by dint of the incredible potency of that Bulgarianness.

Indeed, Bulgarian identity becomes an ultimate destination for a character who has gone through so many different identities: “My name is Slav. Before that it was Abdullah, but I was called the Venetian. Still earlier, I was a count and bore the name of a famous French family.” (185) The Venetian muses that his acquired identity of “Slav” is not just a name like Abdullah or the French name he previously bore, but his life’s ultimate purpose: “When I was young I thought that I was predestined to become a great man, perhaps the King of France […] I am now inclined to think that the aim of my life was to write this chronicle of the greatness and fall of Elindanya Valley.” (187)
Again, the Venetian’s narrative emphasizes the potency of Bulgarianness: the draw of Bulgarian national identity is so strong that he now feels that the aim of his life was to be Bulgarian.

The Venetian’s narrative functions as a testament to the power of Bulgarian identity. In combination with Father Aligorko’s, which presents a radical and potentially threatening notion of Bulgarianness, it also testifies to the durability of Bulgarianness: just as his own Christianity could not be eradicated by the Ottomans, neither will Bulgarian Christian identity be threatened by the inclusion of Muslims in the notion of what it means to be Bulgarian. Father Aligorko’s narrative, powerful though it is, could not do the work it accomplishes here on its own; the Venetian’s narrative provides a strongly pro-Bulgarian framework that make Father Aligorko’s idea much more palatable to the contemporary Bulgarian reader.
Zdenko Mandušić is my TA for Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian language. He is 30 years old, but he looks younger. Zdenko says that he is not tall, but he is tall to me because I am short. He has brown wavy hair. That is a great style. Very neat! He also has brown eyes. Zdenko has black glasses that he wears every day. He dresses nicely. He often wears button-up shirts and jeans. He is very intelligent. In class, Zdenko always wants to help us. He is proud of his knowledge but very pleasant. Students do not feel stupid in his class. Sometimes Zdenko dances when he teaches. Zdenko also is very witty. He is sarcastic about everything and always jokes, and he always gives us good advice. Zdenko loves films, literature, and politics. Zdenko is from Bosnia. Now he lives in Chicago, in Logan Square. Recently, his wife gave birth to their first child. His son is named Walter. Every day after class, Zdenko puts on his black coat and goes home to be with his family. Zdenko Mandušić is a good man, and I am happy that he is one of my professors.
НЕУСПЕЛО ПУТОВАЊЕ
Мартин Постхумус
Путовао сам једне године са својим татом у Швајцарску. Ми смо живели тамо кад сам био мали, пре него што сам могао да се сетим ичега. Тата је хтео да видим место где смо раније живели. Били смо у малом граду на југу, и хтели смо да возимо у други град који се налази између планина. Тата је изнајмио ауто, а ја сам купио карту да одлучим маршруту.

Међутим, пре него што смо могли да кренемо, почео је да пада снег. Много снега. Било је пролеће, и нико није могао да га предвиди. Упркос томе, кренели смо како смо планирали.

После једног сата, били смо у планинама и нашли знак. На њему написано је било: "Приступ у следеће градове је забрањен због снега". Пут је био затворен. Извукао сам своју карту и нашао сам други пут. Вратили смо се до раскрснице и возили смо пола сата дуж новог пута, а онда смо нашли још један знак: "Пут је затворен; нови тунел је у изградњи".

Само једин пут нам је остао. Нисмо могли да возимо кроз планине, тако смо морали да возимо око њих. Друм око планина је био веома дуг, вожња је трајала више од пет сати. То је, пет сати ако ништа не пође наопако! Били смо високо у планини, а шта смо тамо нашли? Велик застој у саобраћају. Неки аутобус је скинуо са друма и други аутомобили нису могла да га прођу.

Следећи пут ћемо ићи возом!

AN UNSUCCESSFUL JOURNEY
Martin Posthumus
One year I traveled with my father to Switzerland. We lived there when I was little, before I could remember anything. My father wanted me to see the place where we lived earlier. We were in a small city in the south, and we wanted to drive to another city which was located between the mountains. My dad rented a car, and I bought a map in order to figure out the route.

However, before we could get going, it began to snow. It snowed a lot. It was spring, and no one could have predicted such weather. Despite the fact, we set off on our journey as we planned.

An hour later, we were in the mountains and found a sign. On this sign was written: “Entering the following cities is prohibited because of snow.” The road was closed. I pulled out my map and found another way. We went back to the crossroads and drove half an hour along a new road. Then we came across another sign: “The road is closed; the new tunnel is under construction.”

We were left with only one more road. We could not drive through the mountains, so we had to drive around the mountains. The road around the mountains was extremely long, and the ride lasted over five hours—five hours, if nothing goes wrong, that is. We were high up in the mountains and what did we find there?—A big traffic jam. A bus had skidded off the road and the other cars could not pass it.

Next time, we’ll take a train!
Био једном један Краљ, који је имао три сина, и пошто су они били тако добри и тако лепи, није могао да одлучи који од синова ће бити следећи краљ. Зато је Краљ одлучио да синовима задатак, и да син који буде најуспешнији, ће бити краљ. Краљ је мислио дуго о задатку и коначно им је рекао да је страшно желео врло лепог малог пса и требало је да крену да му га нађу. Дао им је годину дана и тражио да се врате у дворац истог дана и да представе псе у исто време истог сата.

Три принца су били изненађени што је отац желео пса, а када су чули да ће следећи краљ бити онај који донесе најлепшег пса, нису хтели ништа да кажу зато што су у том случају и два млађа сина имали шансу да буду краљ, коју нису имали раније.

Следећег јутра, три сина су кренули у различитом правцу. Два најстарија сина су имали многе авантуре а најмлађи син је видео најдивније призоре.

Он је био млад, и леп, и паметан, и храбар. Где год је ишао, купио би псе....велике, мале, ловачке, шпанијеле, и овчаре. Скоро је имао петдесет или шестдесет паса, од којих, он је мислио, један ће освојити награду.

Једне ноћи је изгубио пут у шуми. После дугог времена, углавуо је светлост кроз дрвеће и ускоро је нашао диван дворац. Он је био прљав и уморан и изгубио је све псе у шуму. Када је покуцао на врата одмах су се отворила и много белих руку се појавило и довело до велике дворани. Он је био прљав и уморан и изгубио је све псе у шуму. Када је покуцао на врата одмах су се отворила и много белих руку се појавило и довело до велике дворани. Овде је нашао велики камион са упаљеном ватром и удобну столицу и нову одећу. Када је био спреман, довеле су га у трпезарију у којој је била велика гозба и много мачака, које су свирале инструменте.

Принц је мислио да је сањао када су се врата отворила и лепа, мала, Бела Мачка је ушла носећи црни вео. Она је поздравила принца и они су почели да једу. После вечере, рук кон врата су га довеле до собе за спавање. Принц је остао са белом мачком неколико дана.

Once upon a time there was a King who had three sons and, because they were all so good and so kind, he could not decide which should be the next king. Therefore the King decided to give his sons a task and the son who was most successful would be the next king. The King pondered the task for a long while and finally said to them that more than anything he desired a beautiful little dog and demanded that they set off and find him one. They had one year; each must return to the palace on the same day and the same hour to present their dogs.

The three princes were surprised to learn that their father desired a dog, but when they learned that whoever brought the most beautiful dog would be the next king, no one said anything because the two younger sons had a chance to be king which they didn't before.

The next morning, the three sons set off in different directions. The two older sons had many adventures but the youngest son saw the most wonderful scenes.

He was young and handsome and clever and brave. Where ever he went he bought dogs... large, small, greyhounds, spaniels, and sheep dogs. Soon he had fifty or sixty dogs, one of which, he thought, would win the prize.

One night he lost his path in the forest. After a long time, he caught sight of a light through the trees and soon found a beautiful palace. He was dirty and tired and had lost all of the dogs in the woods. When he knocked on the door, it immediately opened and many white hands appeared and led him to a great hall. There he found a large fireplace with a fire already lit, a comfortable chair, and some new clothing. When he was ready, the hands led him into the dining room, in which was laid a great feast and many cats playing instruments.

The Prince thought he was dreaming when the door opened and a beautiful, small, white cat entered wearing a black veil. She welcomed the Prince and they began to eat. After dinner, the hands brought him to his room to sleep. The
Једног дана, Бела Мачка је рекла да за три дана Принц мора да буде у дворцу Краља. Принц је био страшно узнемирио зато што није имао шансе да буде краљ без пса. Но Бела Мачка је рекла да ће све бити добро и дала му је један жир.

Принц је мислио да му се она подсмева а када је му она ставила жир близу ува, он је могао да чује пса. Бела Мачка је рекла, “унутар жира је најлепши и најмањи пас. Но не отварај док не будеш у присуству Краља.”

Принц јој се захвалио и вратио се у дворац. Када је био близу дворца, он је срео браћу, који су га исмевали зато што није имао пса. Када су стигли у дворац, сви су много хвалили псе које су старија браћа донела. Но када је најмлађи син отворио жир и могли су да виде сићушног пса који је лежао на белом сатенском јастуку, сви су схватили да је то најлепши пас на свету.

Међутим, Краљ није још желео да се одрекне престола и одлучио је да браћа треба да отворе други задатак. Они су му донели веома леп и танак муслин, који је тако танак да је могао да прође кроз иглене уши. Принц јој се захвалио и вратио у дворац Беле Мачке.

Опет су браћа кренула и најмлађи син се одмах вратио у дворац Беле Мачке. Он јој је рекао о новом задатку. Рекла је, “Не брини се, имала сам много добрих ткалаца, направићу муслин.” Тако је Принц остао у дворцу годину дана док му један дан Бела Мачка није рекла да три дана од тога дана Принц мора да буде у дворцу Краља. Опет му је дала жир и рекла је, “унутар жира је најлепши и најмањи муслин на свету. Но не отварај док не будеш у присуству Краља.” Принц јој се захвалио и вратио у дворац.

Муслин старије браће је било врло леп и танак и лако пролази кроз уши игле за крпљење али кроз уши мале Краљеве игле, не пролази. Потом је најмлађи син отворио жир. Унутар је био лешник и унутар њега је била коштица од вишње, и унутар ње је било зерно пшенице, и унутар њега је било семе проса и коначно унутар семена проса је било муслин, који је био дуг 400 лаката и који лако пролазио кроз уши најмање игле у краљевству. Принц је мислио да је награда била његова.

Но, Краљ још увек није желео да се одрекне свог престола и одлучио је да браћа треба да Принц стајао са Белом Мачку најмање годину дана док му један дан Бела Мачка није рекла да три дана од тога дана Принц мора да буде у дворцу Краља. Опет му је дала жир и рекла је, “унутар жира је најлепши и најмањи муслин на свету. Но не отварај док не будеш у присуству Краља.” Принц јој се захвалио и вратио у дворац.

The Prince thanked her and went back to the castle. When he was near the castle, he met his brothers, who ridiculed him because he had no dog. When they arrived at the castle, everyone praised the dogs that the brothers presented. But when the youngest son opened the acorn and they could see a tiny dog lying on a white satin pillow, everybody realized that it was the most beautiful dog in the world.

However, the king still did not want to give up his throne and decided that the brothers should perform another task. They had to bring a muslin thread, which is thin enough that it could pass through the eye of a needle.

Again, the brothers set out and the youngest son returned immediately to the palace of the White Cat and told her of the new task. She said, "Do not worry, I have many excellent weavers who can create muslin." So the Prince remained in the castle for the year until one day, the White Cat said that three days hence Prince must return to the King. Again she gave him an acorn and said, "Inside the acorn is the world's thinnest and most beautiful muslin. But do not open it until you are in the presence of the King." The Prince thanked her and went back to the castle.

The older brothers' muslin was very nice and thin and could pass through the eye of a darning needle however, the eye of the King's smallest needle, it could not. Then the youngest son opened the acorn. Inside was a hazelnut and within that was the stone of a cherry, and within that was a grain of wheat, and within that was the seed of millet and finally within that was the muslin, which was 400 cubits long, and easily passed through the eye of the smallest needle in the kingdom. The prince thought that the prize was his.
обаве трећи задатак. Они су морали да му донесе лепу принцезу, који ће бити жена сина и следећа краљица.

Наравно, Принц се одмах вратио у дворац Беле Мачке и рекао јој о том новом задатку. Рекла му је, "Не брини се, када треба да се вратиш у дворац, ја ћу те упознати с најлепшом принцезом на свету. Тако је принц провео још једну годину у дворцу Беле Мачке. Једног дана, Бела Мачка је рекла да три дана од данас Принц мора да буде у дворцу Краља. Принц се бринуо зато што он још није упознао принцезу. Но Бела Мачка му је рекла, "ако радиш оно што ти кажем, имаћеш своју принцезу." Наравно, Принц се сложио. "Узми свој мач и одсеци ми главу."

Принц је био ужаснут. "Како могу одсећи главу најдраже пријатељице?" Бела Мачка је одговорила: "Обећао си да ћеш учинити оно што ти кажем. Веруј ми. Све ће бити добро. "Са дрхтавом руком и сузама у очима, Принц је одсекао главу Беле Мачке. Истог момента, Бела Мачка је ишчезла и на њеном месту појавила се најлепша принцеза на свету. "Хвала ти што си ме спасио од мојег проклетства!”, рекла је. Принц и Принцеза су се вратили код Краља. Када је Краљ видео Принцезу, рекао је његовом сину, "Ти си победио сва три задатка. Претпостављам да сада морам да те прогласим Краљем. А Принцеза је рекла: "Ох, не! Драги Краљу, ја сам веома богата и имам шест краљевства. Ја ћу дати Вама и вашој двојици синова царство и још ће остати три за нас. И сви су живели срећно до краја живота.

But the king still refused to give up his throne and decided that the brothers should complete a third task. They had to bring him a beautiful princess, who will be that son’s wife and the next queen. Of course, the Prince immediately returned to the castle of the White Cat and told her about this new task. She told him, "Do not worry, when you need to go back to the castle, I will introduce you to the most beautiful princess in the world."

So the prince spent another year at the castle of the White Cat. One day, the White Cat said that three days hence the Prince has to return to the King. The Prince was worried because he had not yet met the princess. But White Cat told him, "If you do what I tell you, you will have your princess." Of course, the prince agreed. "Take your sword and cut off my head."

The Prince was horrified. "How can I cut off the head of my dearest friend?" The White Cat replied, "you promised to do what I said. Trust me. All will be well." With a trembling hand and tears in his eyes the Prince cut off the White Cat’s head. Immediately the White Cat disappeared and in her place was the most beautiful princess in the world. "Thank you for saving me from my curse!" she said. The Prince and the Princess returned to the King. When the King saw the Princess, he said to his son, “You have won all three tasks. I suppose I must now make you king.” But the Princess said, "Oh no! Dear King. I am very rich and have six kingdoms. I will give you and your two sons each a kingdom and there will still be three for us. And everyone lived happily ever after.
Perhaps more than any other literary genre, the heroic epic is one of the most easily-recognizable and beloved narrative forms in the entire world. Popularized by such works as *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, and *The Aenid*, the canon of heroic epic poems and ballads has endured for countless generations as living relics of heroes and battles of yore. The genre’s prolific nature can most readily be credited to the familiarity and consistency with which most of them are told. As characterized in the works of such writers as Homer, good always triumph over evil, the valiant hero fights nobly to save the kingdom, and the war-lorn but triumphant protagonist marries a beautiful, virginal princess and lives happily-ever-after. However, in some rare cases, this narrative structure is overturned and transformed into something that might more closely mirror Sophocles’ pathetic titular character’s suffering than the valiant exploits of Homer’s narratives. In the former author’s prose, heroes and protagonists are denied a dignified and noble existence in lieu of intense suffering and humiliation; in the latter, characters are valiant and daring and fight against the odds in order to either win or lose nobly.

In *King Vukasin’s Wedding*, the heroic epic takes on a less-conventional tone and form as the idea of cathartic death, the binary juxtaposition between good and evil, moral posturing of characters and honor are all interrogated and transmogrified. Similar to that of the Sophoclean tradition, characters are subjected to immense suffering and the strict moral standard of Homer’s prose is almost wholly abandoned. Momcilo, the story’s implied protagonist, and his compatriots endure insurmountable obstacles and fail to achieve any semblance of satisfying triumph over evil. His antagonist, the evil and calculating King Vukasin still overthrows the kingdom and triumphs over Momcilo. Although his small stature makes him unfit to take the protagonist’s place in the kingdom, no real retribution, in the Homeric sense, is ever made against Vukasin. Women, who typically are characterized as doting and loyal helpmates in traditional epic poems, are reduced to less-complex caricatures of themselves. This portrait allows no room for female autonomy and frailty- the story’s only female characters (Momcilo’s wife and sister) are the archetypal image of evil and good, respectively. The Homeric standard is further abandoned by the story’s continual reference and interrogation of the typical heroic epic’s structure and paradigms. However, what is most interesting about *The Wedding of King Vukasin* is that the story’s macabre tone, unique structure, and Sophoclean narrative structure posit an interesting, inextricably Balkan, conception of the heroic genre. The characterization of the hero within this piece, as both epic and tragic in nature, straddles the terse nexus between traditional epic prose and the somber ballads of the avant-garde literary canon. The notion of the Balkan hero as simultaneously noble and pathetic, is a theme that is explored by the King Vukasin narrative and deserves closer study because of what it implies about Balkan literature as a stylistic form and an articulation of Balkan selfhood.

In order to fully examine how the King Vukasin narrative presents a partial departure from the Homeric heroic epic, one must first identify what, exactly, Homer’s conceptualization of a ‘hero’ is. As typified by the valiant heroes of such works as *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, the Homeric hero is a figure who encapsulates the very essence of nobility, strength, and honor. More than any other character in the narrative, the hero possesses an almost God-like moral code, physical stature, and sense of honor. As he is subjected to intense moral and physical tribulations, sometimes resulting in death, the character of the Homeric hero is constantly enhanced and strengthened. Though subjected to an often relentless onslaught of physical, mental, and moral pain, the hero retains a strong sense of purpose and resilience- a characteristic that separates him from other characters within the epic. A picture of archetypal virtue and strength,
the hero is made to inhabit a sphere above his fellow characters and consequently, his actions and motives serve as poignant examples of moral and physical excellence for the reader.

However, while a hero’s own moral and physical fiber are what characterize him as such, other key markings of social and tactical rank also confer this heroic status upon him. Despite his impressive physical and moral fortitude, no hero is complete without a loyal band of followers and compatriots to facilitate and assist his efforts. These individuals, as typified by Homer, often inhabit roles of an intrinsically romantic, fraternal, and political nature. These duties are usually performed by his virtuous wife or love interest, family and friends, and army/subjects, respectively. Each of these characters and groups assist the hero by attending to each of his very unique needs— the wife tends to his personal insecurities and provides the domestic symbol that he fights for, his family and friends provide invaluable emotional and hubristic support (the safety and status of his family often inspires his fervor to fight), and his empire provides both the means and reason for fighting the external enemy who threatens to destroy each part of the hero’s existence. In some ways, it can be argued that the hero’s ‘support system’ is the true hallmarks of the epic because it is through them that all of the protagonist’s actions, exploits, and triumphs are accomplished and mitigated.

But the hero’s social support system only provides one more piece of the Homeric epic’s conception of the hero. In addition to this, the hero also is imbued with a set of more readily useful and tactical tools that allow him to transcend other characters and enemies’ physical and military prowess. Often times, as seen in the traditional Greek epic ballad, the hero is gifted with a peculiar talent or implement that sets him apart from other people in his narrative universe. Whether it is superhuman strength, incredible stature, or an invisible cloak, all heroes possess a certain quality or tool that endows them with quasi-mystical powers.

In many ways, The Wedding of Vukasin’s hero, Momcilo directly mirrors and perpetuates the Homeric hero-ideal; he has a strong network of familial, fraternal, and political followers and special physical and tactical tools that make him superior to his many rivals and enemies. One of the main things that separates Momcilo from his foes and rivals is that he has a loyal band of supporters, comprised of “his sister Jevrosima [who] prepares food fit for a duke for him” and “nine loyal brothers and twelve cousins (Karadzic, 89).” This is significant because these individuals, symbolically, represent the ideal of familial and generational wealth and affluence. The presence of such numerous male heirs, of patrilineal kinship, shows a clear continuation of the hero’s bloodline and perpetuity. Because of the mass of men in his presence, it is assumed that his genetic lineage will continue for years to come and, because of their clearly-stated moral virtue, their offspring will continue to fulfill the legacy established by the hero. The sister, too, acts as a status marker for the hero because she acts as the physical embodiment of feminine virtue and loyalty. When compared to the objectively evil and fickle nature of Momcilo’s own wife, the sister’s value is derived from her ability to aid and inspire the hero. Her selflessness and honor are not for naught because, even in death, Momcilo ensures that she is married and that her traits, too, will pass on to the next generation. In addition to the people that comprise Momcilo’s heroic support system, an even more helpful arsenal of tools helps to endow him with the archetypal Homeric characteristics. Momcilo’s flying horse, strong blade, and uncanny ability to foresee his demise help inform his heroic persona. With these tools, as well as his aforementioned human network, Momcilo is, at first, able to thwart the calculated attack of King Vukasin’s army. The combination of these heroic traits and capabilities in The Wedding of King Vukasin help to convey Momcilo’s nobility and honor, in the Homeric sense, within the text. However, in several ways, the piece represents a complete shift from this standard and format.

In several key ways, The Vukasin narrative distorts the notion and conceptualization of the hero as posited by traditional heroic tales. The removal of the romantic interest as a reliable, faithful, and honest component of his familial structure and the murder of his fraternal allies signal the
work’s departure from the typical epic structure to that of a less-conventional one. As previously stated, Homer’s prose rested upon a frequent and profound link between the hero and his family. However, in the Vukasin narrative, this line is compromised in all way and the support structure loses its efficacy and meaning. On the one hand, Momcilo’s wife, unlike the wives of Homeric heroes like Achilles and Odysseus, is portrayed as a fickle, evil, and childish woman. Given Momcilo’s seemingly impenetrable empire and personage, it is made obvious to the reader that removing him from power would be no easy feat. This being the case, it makes sense that the protagonist’s untimely end would be brought about by someone in his close circle. The posturing of the wife in this role narratively makes senses because Momcilo’s other relatives (his cousins, sister, and brother) are so loyal that a plot against him, by them is unfathomable. However, the wife is a prime subject of such grand betrayal because she is an outsider to the family, both genetically and relationally- she is the one thing that the hero can live without and doesn’t have a biological tie to. Logically, this portrait of the wife also makes sense because of the implicit notion that women are inherently fickle and disloyal. The fact that she would be so naive to fall for King Vukasin’s advances plays on a self-effacing tendency that many people have to discount female authority and intelligence. As Momcilo falls victim to his wife’s vindication, at King Vukasin’s urging, he is subjected to an endless onslaught of suffering of both a physical and emotional nature.

However, the fact that Momcilo’s wife only acted in such an underhanded way after being persuaded by Vukasin highlights an interesting paradox within the tale- what, exactly, is the value of good and evil? In the traditional Homeric structure, good would triumph over evil and, even if the protagonist was injured or killed, reach a transcendent catharsis through this conflict. However, in The Wedding of King Vukasin, it is unclear what the author is trying to imply about the nature of good and evil. On the one hand, Vukasin escapes any real retribution, such as murder or torture, and is only emasculated slightly by his physical ineptitude. Whereas in Homer’s works his punishment would have been harsher, the text avoids any significant punishment or explanation for Vukasin’s deviance- he is simply evil and hates Momcilo for no apparent reason besides a passing desire for his wife. Some might even argue that Vukasin’s avoidance of any true revenge by Momcilo and proposed marriage to his virtuous ad honest sister can be viewed as just the opposite, a reward. While this would be a bit far-fetched given the fact that Vukasin’s position as an unsavory character is never called into question by the novel, the lack of any significant suffering on the part of King Vukasin highlights several significant characteristics of the heroic epic as presented in the text.

First this suggests that the strict binary between good and evil, as posited by Homer, is more readily likened to an ever-moving continuum within this story. Morality and character statuses are in a constant state of flux as close allies (his wife) can easily become enemies and mortal nemeses (Vukasin) can quickly become semi-decent human beings. The transient and fluctuating nature of ethics in this tale lies in stark contradiction to the rigid moral structure that is asserted by Homer’s prose. Another implication of the text’s absence of true, Homeric retribution is that the immense suffering that is endured by the narrative’s ‘good’ characters seems unnecessary and gratuitous. Momcilo, after being betrayed by his very own wife, is then subjected to a series of physically and mentally torturous conditions. His loyal brothers and cousins are killed, his sister is forced to rip out her hair to come to his aid, and he is killed on the battlefield in an extremely gruesome and painful way. In this way, The Wedding of King Vukasin preserves the Homeric standard because in many of the poet’s tales characters are forced to endure immense tragedy and strife. But while the extent and nature of character suffering within The Wedding of King Vukasin can be easily understood as a test of the hero’s moral, physical, and emotional fortitude, the gratuity of it within this text suggests a much deeper meaning for such suffering and turmoil.

The intricate connection between emotional and physical suffering and the heroic epic, as told by the King Vukasin narrative, suggests that pain and tribulation are a necessary component of
the hero's evolution. The complex nature of the hero—asso noble, valiant, and strong in the Homeric sense—is implicitly interwoven with a tragic element. Using biblical language, the strong and noble hero's nature is the silver picture frame, but the suffering and emotional vulnerability he displays are the golden apple around which all else is formulated. The conception of the ancient folk hero, as both tragic and epic, helps to simultaneously add dimension and humanity to a character that, otherwise, appears infallible. It is this portrait of the hero that works like Sophocles and The Wedding of King Vukasin further, not that of Homer's simpler design.

The heroic narrative, as posited in “The Wedding of King Vukasin”, augments and distorts traditional, structural tropes that are prevalent in ancient heroic epics in many key ways. The idea of cathartic death, binary juxtaposition between good vs. evil, moral posturing of characters, and honor are all interrogated and transmogrified in this piece. The narrative’s macabre tone and literary development more closely mirror the work of Sophocles than that of Homer. In the former author’s prose, heroes and protagonists are denied a dignified and noble existence in lieu of intense suffering and humiliation; in the latter characters are valiant and daring and fight against the odds in order to either win or lose nobly. In the King Vukasin narrative, Momcilo, the story’s hero is characterized by a number of factors that are also present in Homeric epics such as a loyal following and superhuman abilities. However, the heroic epic is revitalized by the inclusion of intense suffering as a key component of the hero's narrative development.
The expressive nature of folklore allows it to function as a medium to address social problems. William Bascom lists one of the four functions of folklore as “reveal[ing] man’s frustrations and attempts to escape in fantasy from repressions imposed upon him by society.” Thus, the folktale becomes a mechanism for releasing repressed feelings and addressing social anxieties. By functioning as a release mechanism for these social problems, folktales can help maintain social order and also derive pleasure for the audience by acting as a projective system for culturally unacceptable and repressed themes. While the importance of the classical Freudian interpretation of what folklore does – liberating and mitigating psychosocial anxieties – should not be understated, it is equally important to address how folklore accomplishes its functions. Similar to how Lévi-Strauss used a paradigmatic system to describe patterns, especially with binary principles of opposition, I will use the same type of structural analysis to reveal how repression through the societal structure is mitigated by folktales utilizing a specific morphological structure involving a passive and neutral main character responding to an aggressive foil character (usually an authoritative figure). Thus, I will purposefully neglect to go into an in-depth analysis of what these folktales do, but will instead focus on how the folktale’s morphological structure enables it to address societal issues. The passive-aggressive structural unit serves two purposes that I will outline:

1. It portrays the plight of the main character in a sympathetic light, which I will demonstrate by using the well-known Cinderella fairy tale structure as an exemplary model.

2. This morphological unit is part of an overarching theme of how contrived story structures and specific, familiarized genres are aptly used in folklore to criticize social problems. I will use the specific example of Bosnian folksongs to show how this is used to address the social antagonism between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law.

The first step that must be taken in order for folklore to function as a release mechanism for addressing social issues is character identification with the self (the audience). Without a feeling of association with the characters in the story, the audience fails to follow psychologically with the story’s plot and how the content deals with societal themes.

Consider the story of “The Old Man’s Daughter”, one of the many variations on the widespread Cinderella fairy tale. The pattern to take note of here is that the old man’s daughter is a passive main character – her actions are a response to the dreadful situation she is put in, that of an abusive stepmother and stepsister. “While the old man’s daughter was still a child everything was all right but when she grew older she was so beautiful and industrious that the old woman and her daughter became jealous.” Never is there any indication of the daughter asserting an initial action to precipitate the chain of events in the story. Instead the change in treatment towards her is catalyzed because she simply “grew older,” clearly a passive action on the daughter’s part. Even later on in the story, all of the daughter’s actions are never initiated by herself – they are all a consequence of others’ actions. For instance, her magic cow, Fairywhite, constantly instructs her throughout the story: “Don’t cry, little one; spin away and you’ll finish it all and will still have time to tidy up and cook.” In addition, the secondary characters of the story, the aforementioned stepmother and stepsister, are authoritative figures whose aggressive actions towards the daughter - “they

---

4 Sturdza, p. 107.
kept on beating and scolding her” – catalyze the movement of the story. Thus, we see the structural pattern that forms the basis of the story: a passive, neutral main character responding to the malicious actions of an authoritative figure.

This passive-aggressive structural pattern plays on the ethos and pathos of the audience in order to elicit pity and sympathy for the main character. This is such a strong emotion that the audience can automatically identify with the character. The ethos here is that it is morally and ethically wrong to enact unjust punishment on someone – this is emphasized by the passiveness of the old man’s daughter, which symbolizes innocence, and the overly hostile actions of the stepmother and stepdaughter. Likewise, the pathos, or emotions, elicited here are of sympathy for the daughter’s plight based on the aforementioned ethos – that it is unjust for her to be treated in this manner. The themes of ethos and pathos rely on the idea of ‘balanced reciprocity’. Balanced reciprocity is the “interplay of intentions and actions in which a sense of justice as fairness is at work redressing the imbalance of the ‘goods’ that each party deems necessary for its very Being.” That is, there is a human recognition that the injustice of the daughter’s abuse must be redressed. The daughter’s actions are a reciprocal response to the actions of the authoritative figures, and they are justified given the initial imbalance in treatment. Thus, the audience initially feels a sense of sympathy for the daughter and later a strong sense of fairness when the daughter achieves a happy ending.

Having established how the structural pattern elicits sympathy from the audience, the next step is to identify how this can lead to an audience association with the character, which ultimately facilitates the folktale’s function as a release mechanism for repressed social feelings. In Bettelheim’s psychoanalysis of the Cinderella motif, he states that “when a story corresponds to how the child feels deep down – as no realistic narrative is likely to do – it attains an emotional quality of “truth” for the child.” Whether a story provokes a direct connection with the character, as with a child according to Bettelheim, or provokes a feeling of sympathy for the character, as long as the emotion is positive and strong enough, the audience will identify with the character and root for his/her success. By becoming emotionally invested in the character, the context of the plot through which the character moves through becomes real for the audience, taking on the aspect of “truth” that Bettelheim mentioned. As a result, a bridge between the fantasy realm of the story and the reality of the societal world is created. This connection allows the audience to bring any social anxieties from the real world over to the fantasy world and address them there, away from the acceptable boundaries of reality. This transfer of social anxieties to the fantasy realm gives free reign to how the characters can act. The pleasure derived from acting out socially unacceptable situations can then be transferred back from fantasy to reality, ultimately resulting in the mitigation of anxiety that the audience started out with. By this manner, strong feelings of sympathy elicited by the passive-aggressive binary system allows for a medium by which social issues may be addressed.

The next issue is analyzing how morphological structures in general, beyond just the passive-aggressive structural unit, are used in folktales to help criticize societal problems. For instance, dramatization is a common device seen throughout all of folklore and aids the passive-aggressive structural unit in addressing social problems. In the book Folkloristics: An Introduction, Robert Georges emphasizes that in folktales addressing social class distinctions, “story characters dramatize the status differences.” He then gives an example of how authoritative figures like the “royalty, the clergy, and rich freeholders” (authoritative figures) often appear “as repugnant or hateful villains.” Dramatization, or exaggeration of character types, helps to focus on key issues in the story while simultaneously arranging characters and actions into well-defined categories. This categorization makes characters and events more memorable for the audience.


5 Sturdza, p. 106.


7 Bettelheim, Bruno. The Uses of Enchantment: The
which further facilitates audience identification with the story. As mentioned previously, identification and association with the story is an important part of how folklore completes its function as a social stress relief valve.

Consider the exemplary case of folksongs in Bosnia that address the topic of the mother-in-law. I will use the passive-aggressive structural unit in these folksongs to underline how dramatization functions to make the structural unit more effective. Firstly, it must be explained why at first glance these folksongs appear to reverse the pattern of a passive main character and an aggressive antagonist. For instance, the line “I will slaughter my mother-in-law, I will have the meat canned” clearly portrays the main character, the daughter, as the hostile antagonist. However, while the songs referring to the mother-in-law can be highly aggressive and even violent in nature, the social context of the entire situation portrays the daughter-in-law as a passive, victimized character, and the mother-in-law as the aggressive, malicious villain. In fact, the folksong is entirely based on this assumption of the passive-aggressive opposition of characters. The societal context “reinforces the fears of maidens, emphasizing that with marriage they can expect the worst. The most anxiety-producing aspect of marriage, the maiden's pending relationship with her future mother-in-law, is expressed, reinforced, and perpetuated in her lyric songs.” As it is the maidens who perform the songs (thereby being the target of sympathy), it is clear how society portrays the daughter-in-law/mother-in-law dynamic as a passive-aggressive antagonism respectively.

Dramatization portrays the authoritative figure of the mother-in-law to be excessively malicious, sometimes to the point of irrationality – how could anyone act the way that she does? Actually, the acts do not need to stem from reality. “Not every bride is exploited and unhappy […] Nor are all mother-in-law beasts.” However, the folksong absolutely necessitates the exaggeration of a passive-aggressive dynamic in order to perform its function – helping maidens deal with social anxiety – and to justify its sometimes hostile and violent content. Without the irrational dramatization, the folksong would lose its appeal as there would no longer be a clear and definite problem. By exaggerating actions, folktales are able to highlight specific feelings of the repressed group (the daughter-in-law). Through an emphasis on the pathos of the repressed, whether or not the repressed may actually recognize the irrationality of how the authoritative figures in folktales act, the repressed can connect to the story better because it singularly highlights the point of aggression. Furthermore, portraying characters as dramatically one-dimensional prevents the clouding of the repressed group’s feelings of connectedness with other emotions and complexities of human nature. Thus, simplicity and exaggeration is often the route taken in folktales when addressing how social characters act.

In addition, the dramatization of the authoritative figure’s actions represents a scenario of how much worse the repressed group’s situation could be. This serves to further comfort the repressed group’s feelings by relative comparison. For instance, “in reality, the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship is not as conflict-ridden as is believed […] the mother-in-law in Bosnian Muslim society is a point of tension in the social structure that this generation of maidens attempts to deal with in song performance […] here folklore serves to mitigate that stress point to make society function more smoothly.” While the reality of the living situation of newly wedded women is often much less severe than portrayed in folk songs, the dramatization of this situation serves to mitigate anxiety and comfort the women partly by projecting their feelings through a relative comparison of scenarios.

The exaggeration of the passivity of the main character and the aggression of the foil character serves to increase the stylization of the folktale

---


10 Lockwood, p. 493.

11 Lockwood, p. 493.

12 Lockwood, p. 500.
which is important in allowing both performers and the audience to feel a sense of control over the situation in the folktale. Often times, real life scenarios represent uncontrollable matters, such as social structure, repression, and hierarchy. These matters may also be prevented from being addressed in a normal context. Stylization, as a form of manufactured artificiality, provides a way to control these chaotic and tumultuous feelings of social anxiety through the ordering and structuring of these anxieties in a contrived, artificial form that is socially acceptable. For example, “song performances about the mother-in-law are predictable and formalized.” This formalization refers to the usage of stylization as a means to control social anxieties through manufactured formulism – consequently, “they express liberation, albeit temporarily, from behavioral norms and cognitive social rules.”

The aforementioned “predictable” nature of the folksongs provides a further explanation for how folklore functions so effectively in addressing problematic social issues. The simple observation that there is a recognizable pattern, in this case, the passive-aggressive structural unit, reveals the great utility in breeding familiarity among the audience. Familiarity leads to comfort and acceptance of the content of the tale, whatever it may be, due to the recognizable external structure that surrounds it. Thus, it can be seen how folks tales can be used to relieve conflicts in social structure, or in any situation of social anxiety, by taking the new problematic situation and fitting it into a familiar mold. Additionally, this phenomenon is not limited to the functional unit within the folktale but also to entire genres. The preordained understanding that the audience has of fairy tales, wedding songs, trickster tales, etc. allows for these tales to address issues while simultaneously providing awareness that the story is structurally designed for its function. Consider the social context of folksongs addressing the mother-in-law. “As long as these songs, which can both shock and amuse participants, appear within group performance, they offer certain immunity from social mores.” The fact that the songs are acceptable within the context of a group performance implies the familiarity people have with these songs. In this scenario specifically, the prevalent societal view of a passive daughter-in-law and aggressive mother-in-law allows the folksong to be easily used as a tool to address issues between the two parties.

While the psychoanalysis of what types of repressions are addressed and how it is resolved in folklore has sparked popular discussion among folklorists, it is also important to recognize how folklore initially allows the audience to connect with the story through its morphological structure. Through the use of morphological structure in providing dramatization, control, and familiarity, the passive-aggressive paradigmatic system seen in folklore is able to facilitate the function of folklore in addressing social anxieties.

Works Cited


14 Lockwood, p. 496.
15 Lockwood, p. 496.
16 Lockwood, p. 496.
One of my favorite films is Gladiator. Ridley Scott directed the film and David Franzoni, John Logan, and William Nicholson wrote the screenplay. The main role was Russell Crowe, Maximus. In the supporting roles were Joaquin Phoenix as Commodus, Connie Nielsen as Lusilla, Oliver Reed as Proximo, Richard Harris as Marcus Aurelius, and Derek Jacobi as Gracchus. It was filmed in Great Britain and Morocco. The film score was written by Lisa Gerard and Hans Zimmer.

The film begins in the Roman Empire in Germania. Maximus, who is one of the generals of Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor, is fighting against the Germans. He defeats them and Marcus Aurelius tells him that his son will not be a good emperor and that he wishes that Maximus be the next ruler. Maximus tells him he must think about it. Before he can give an answer, Commodus finds out what his father wishes and kills him. When Maximus refuses to serve him, Commodus kills his family believing that Maximus is also killed.

However, Proximo found a wounded Maximus and enslaved him. He forces him to fight as a gladiator. Finally, they return to Rome in order to fight in the games in the Colosseum. Maximus is very successful and becomes a popular gladiator. Commodus finds out that Maximus is not dead but cannot kill him because of this popularity. This scene, in which it is revealed that Maximus still lives, in my opinion, is the best in the film. Maximus's dialog is very strong:

"I am Maximus Desimus Meridius, commander of the north, general of the Felix Legion, loyal servant of the true emperor, Marcus Aurelius, father of a murdered son, husband of a murdered wife, and I will have my revenge in this life or the next."

When Senator Gracchus and Lusilla, who was the daughter of the previous emperor and former lover of Maximus, saw how Maximus defied Commodus, she assured him that she would help him to overthrow Commodus. He finally agreed. Unfortunately, Commodus finds out that something is amiss and threatens Lusilla's son in

"Ja sam Maximus Desimus Meridius, commander of the north, general of the Felix Legion, loyal servant of the true emperor, Marcus Aurelius, father of a murdered son, husband of a murdered wife, and I will have my revenge in this life or the next."
Гладијатор је одлични филм који је номинован за много награда укључујући дванаест Оскара, од којих је освојио пет. Ти Оскари су били за најбољи филм, најбољег глумца Расела Кроуа, визуелне ефекте, најбоље костиме, и најбољи звук. Међу другим номинацијама је и номинација за најбољу оригиналну филмску музику. А то је била номинација зато што има два композитора и само један је могао бити номинован. Многи људи мисле да то је разлог што нису добили награду. Но они су добили друге награде укључујући Златни глобус. Филмска музика Гладијатора је мој најомиљени део филма. Музика је одлична, угодна и добро одражава причу филма. Мислим да је та музика врло интересантна мешавина западне класичне музике, која је слична музици Холста и Вагнера, и блискоисточне музике. Ти музички елементи помажу представити пут од спољних региона империје до центра Рима и пут од простог фармера и војника до гладијатора и политичког вође.
Она ће остати дуже него што би требало али ово је њен дом и она не зна ни за који други. Већина људи је већ отишла, али она је увек била тврдоглава и не воли бродове. Она ће лутати по рушевинама оног што је некада било, или како су јој рекли, парк који је био окружен лепим кућама веома богатих људи. Куће ће бити гомиле дрвета, цигле и стакла, а парк ће бити само прашнина. Она ће се питати како је свет изгледао када је још било боја и живота, пре четвртог и петог светског рата, док је облак прашине и пепела окружио свет. Њена бака јој је причала приче о том времену, о бојама и цвећу, о води и животињама и о музици, али они за њу су далеко и слични бајкама и магији и принцезама и херојима.

Али једног дана неће бити више воде и она ће жети да остане, али ће жети да живи дуже. Она ће спаковати своје ствари и она ће ући у брод и осећати се врло прљавом у овом чистом белом простору који је толико различит од сиве прашине у којој живи. Она ће бринути да је чекала предуго, и да се не сећа како да управља бродом. Али, када седне пред контролни панел, она ће се сетити инструкција своје баке као да бака стоји пред њом поново. А она ће гледати како свет нестаје кроз прозор и биће изненађена да види звезде по први пут у свом животу. Недељама, она ће седети у мраку и гледаће звезде док ће се питати шта ће све наћи у новом свету, да ли ће бити цвећа и река и животиња и води и боја. И једног дана, када јој брод каже да су близу њеног новог дома, док брод слеће, она ће видети беле облаке и плажу воду и зелено земљиште и то ће бити лепо. А када брод слети, она ће отворити врата и ући у сунчеву светлост.

She will stay longer than she should but this is home and she knows nothing else. Most people have already left but she was always stubborn and doesn’t like the ships. She will wander over the rubble of what was once, so they tell her, a park surrounded by the beautiful homes of very rich people. The homes will be piles of wood, and bricks and glass and the park will be nothing but dust. She will wonder what the world looked like when there was still color and life, before the fourth and fifth world wars and the cloud of dust and ash that surrounded the world. Her grandmother told her stories of that time about colors and flowers and water and animals and music but for her they are far away like fairy tales and magic and princesses, firebirds and mermaids.

But one day there will be no more water and she will want to stay but will want to live more. She will pack the few things she has and she will enter the ship and feel very dirty in this clean white space, which is so different from the grey dust she lives in. She will worry that she waited too long and she doesn’t remember how to fly the ship. But when she sits in front of the controls she will remember her grandmother’s instructions like the woman is standing in front of her again. And she will watch as the world disappears through the window and is surprised to see the stars for the first time in her life. For weeks, she will sit in the dark and watch the stars as she wonders what she will find in the new world, if there will be flowers and rivers and animals and water and colors. And one day when the ship tells her that they are close to her new home as the ship descends she will see white clouds and blue water and green land and it will be beautiful. And when the ship lands, she will open the door and step into the sun.
The world of that musical life, the composition business which extends peacefully from Irving Berlin and Walter Donaldson—"the world's best composer"—by way of Gershwin, Sibelius and Tchaikovsky to Schubert's B Minor Symphony, labeled The Unfinished*, is one of fetishes.

When I read this sentence for the first time, I was in my first year of college. Like all students at this University of Chicago, I was taking classes to fulfill the core requirements. In that quarter, I was in a course titled Self, Culture, Society. We read classical texts of social science, included the essay by Adorno, On the Fetish Character in Music. That is how I coincidentally came upon the above-mentioned sentence, which changed my relationship towards philosophy and academia in general.

I should explain, that Walter Donaldson was my great-uncle; he was the uncle of my grandmother. My grandmother grew up in Brooklyn in the time of the Great Depression. Her mother raised four children along because her father left to find work in the south and never returned. They were really poor and lived hard lives. However, my great-grandmother was very close to her brother. He was a musician in Manhattan and he worked a lot and earned enough to help my great-grandmother and her children. He was an excellent pianist and played in many of the best venues in the city. Sometimes, my great-grandmother accompanied him. Their parents were classically-trained musicians from Edinburgh, and she also played piano and sang. Gradually, Walter began to write his own music. He wrote one song, The Daughter of Rosie O'Grady, which was immediately a big hit. After that, he wrote many songs, such as Yes, Sir, That's My Baby, My Blue Heaven, Love Me or Leave Me, Carolina in the Morning, etc. His song, Mammy, was the first song in film with sound, in the film The Jazz Singer, starring Al Jolson. At the end of his career, Walter had written around 600 songs. Furthermore, he supported my grandmother and her siblings throughout their childhood. When my grandmother and her siblings were teenagers, he invited them to visit him in Hollywood. They would go to really elegant parties and meet famous people; in short, they would see a very different side of life than

The world of that musical life, the composition business which extends peacefully from Irving Berlin and Walter Donaldson—'najbolji kompozitor na svetu'—preko Gershwina, Sibeliusa i Čajkovskog do simfonije u B molu od Šuberta, takozvane 'Nedovršene', to je svet fetišizma.

Kad sam pročitala ovu rečenicu prvi put, bila sam na prvoj godini univerziteta. Kao svi studenti univerziteta Čikaga, uzimala sam akademse predmete da bih ispunila uslov osnovnog plana. U tom kvartalu, bila sam na kursu koji se zove Čovek, kultura i društvo. Mi smo čitali klasične tekstove iz društvenih nauka, uključujući čuveni esej Adorna, O karakteru fetiša u muzici. Tako sam slučajno naišla na gore pomenutu rečenicu, koja je promenila moj odnos prema filozofiji i bavljenjem u akademiji uopšte.


“Svettooglazbenog života, zanimanjekompozitora koje se mirno proteže od Irving Berlina i Walter Donaldsa—‘najbolji kompozitor na svetu’—preko Gershwina, Sibeliusa i Čajkovskog do simfonije u B molu od Šuberta, takozvane ‘Nedovršene’, to je svet fetišizma.”

Kad sam pročitala ovu rečenicu prvi put, bila sam na prvoj godini univerziteta. Kao svi studenti univerziteta Čikaga, uzimala sam akademse predmete da bih ispunila uslov osnovnog plana. U tom kvartalu, bila sam na kursu koji se zove Čovek, kultura i društvo. Mi smo čitali klasične tekstove iz društvenih nauka, uključujući čuveni esej Adorna, O karakteru fetiša u muzici. Tako sam slučajno naišla na gore pomenutu rečenicu, koja je promenila moj odnos prema filozofiji i bavljenjem u akademiji uopšte.


ANECDOTE

Katie Tucker

ANECDOTA

Katie Tucker

“Svettooglazbenog života, zanimanjekompozitora koje se mirno proteže od Irving Berlina i Walter Donaldsa—‘najbolji kompozitor na svetu’—preko Gershwina, Sibeliusa i Čajkovskog do simfonije u B molu od Šuberta, takozvane 'Nedovršene', to je svet fetišizma.”

Kad sam pročitala ovu rečenicu prvi put, bila sam na prvoj godini universiteta. Kao svi studenti univerziteta Čikaga, uzimala sam akademse predmete da bih ispunila uslov osnovnog plana. U tom kvartalu, bila sam na kursu koji se zove Čovek, kultura i društvo. Mi smo čitali klasične tekstove iz društvenih nauka, uključujući čuveni esej Adorna, O karakteru fetiša u muzici. Tako sam slučajno naišla na gore pomenutu rečenicu, koja je promenila moj odnos prema filozofiji i bavljenjem u akademiji uopšte.

I know that Walter had a strong influence on my grandmother, and she became a very interesting woman, thanks to this exposure to different worlds. She became the kind of woman, for example, who, at the age of 75, once day picked up her grandchildren at school, took them to the airport, bought airplane tickets, and went to Holland, with no plans whatsoever. It was spring and she wanted to see the Dutch flower fields.

So, when I read Adorno's sentence, I was personally offended. I knew that reaction was, in the academic sense, unprofessional, but I couldn't help myself. To me it was important. Until then, when I read one of those famous texts, I approached them with respect but from a distance. But I had to respond to this criticism, and I did. In this way, by offending my personally, Adorno gave me the right to enter into dialog with the text myself.
ANDREW BOSHARDY is a fourth year at the University of Chicago. He is majoring in Slavic studies and Linguistics concentrating on Russian and BCS. The paper published in this journal is the first chapter of his B.A. thesis on the current language situation in Zagreb, Croatia.

EMMA CHRISTENFELD is a first year student at the University of Chicago, studying History with a focus on Eastern Europe and the Balkans. She is originally from San Diego, California and wants to be a professor when she grows up. In her free time, she likes to read about revolution, write fiction, and spend time with her pets—2 dogs, a cat, 2 goats, 8 chickens, 3 turtles, and 15 fish.

NORA DOLLIVER is a first year in the College who hails from Astoria, Queens. She is currently studying Slavic Languages and Literatures. In her spare time, she likes walking, traveling around Chicago, and drinking coffee. She will be studying BCS at Pittsburgh this summer.

ERIN FRANKLIN is a third year graduate student in Linguistics in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago. In addition to her extraordinary skills in Russian, she has chosen to study BCS, and as a FLAS recipient she has spent the entire summer participating in a language immersion program at Azbukum Language Center in Belgrade and Novi Sad, Serbia.

CHIARA GRAF is a fourth-year Classics major in the College, with a focus on theater, humor, and gender in antiquity. Her other academic interests include psychoanalytic philosophy, anything and everything Balkan, poetry, and archaeology. She hopes to pursue a career in academia after graduation.

ALEKSANDAR HEMON was born in Sarajevo in 1964. He was temporarily in Chicago in 1992 when war broke out in Bosnia, preventing his return home. He wrote his first story in English in 1995. Hemon is the author of two novels, Nowhere Man (2002), and The Lazarus Project (2008); short story collections The Question of Bruno (2000), Love and Obstacles (2009). His most recent book, The Book of My Lives came out in 2013. He was a finalist for the National Book Award and twice a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2003 and a “genius grant” from the MacArthur Foundation in 2004. He lives in Chicago with his wife and two daughters.

SIMO HUANG is a graduating senior at the undergraduate College. He is majoring in the Biological Sciences, with an Endocrinology specialization, and hopes to attend medical school for the Class of 2014. He has always been a fan of great storytelling and the study of culture, which led to his initial interest in the Balkans.

LANA JAVANOVIC is a rising fourth year at the University of Chicago majoring in Comparative Literature. During the course of the 2012 academic year, as a student of BCS, she rediscovered the wealth of South Slavic literatures which she plans on incorporating into her BA thesis.

ZYTHA KOCK is a second-year studying History and Public Policy in the College. Her history major is focused on South-Eastern and Central Europe. Her interest in Balkan history stems from the two years she spent at the United World College located in Trieste, Italy. At this school she encountered many students from former Yugoslavia. After arriving in Chicago, she decided to continue pursuing these interests and study BCS. Besides this fascination, she enjoys going to concerts at the CSO, reading existentialist novels and learning new dances. After graduating, she would love to pursue a PhD in history focused on research.

ANALYSE MARKOVIĆ is a first year at the College. Before moving to Chicago, she lived in Indiana. She is a proud Questbridge scholar and student of psychology. After graduation, she hopes to become a correctional therapist or go to law school. Analyse is excited to be learning BCS for the first time as her heritage is very important to her. In her free time, she likes to write poetry and fiction, go to concerts, and go on roadtrips.
JUSTIN O’DELL is from Huntsville, Alabama and is a second-year undergraduate student. He is studying biology and geophysical sciences. In his free time, he enjoys collecting fossils, studying popular music, and keeping pets. He wishes to become a professor of paleontology after earning a PhD.

MARTIN POSTHUMUS is a fourth-year student in the College who is currently studying Slavic Linguistics and Computer Science. He is originally from Maryland, not far from Washington, DC. He loves traveling, reading (especially about history and language), and exploring the city and its surroundings by bicycle. He is currently studying Serbian because he uses Russian at home and wants to know more about another part of the Slavic world.

KAITLYN TUCKER is a rising second year graduate student at the University of Chicago studying Slavic Languages and Literatures. She plans to study abroad in Belgrade, Serbia this summer. She first became interested in the Balkans after backpacking through the region in 2010, and has since been persuaded by Croatian beaches, Bijelo Dugme, and Nada’s cuisine.

*Special thanks to Dragoljub Zamurović. His photography can be found throughout this journal. His entire collection of works can be found online at [www.serbia-photo.com](http://www.serbia-photo.com).
You got Serbed!

Get Croative.

Finish your language requirement like a Boss-nian.

BCSN 10100 - Elementary Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian
Fall 2013, M/W/F 10:30-11:20
Nada Petković, petkovic@uchicago.edu
UPCOMING COURSES IN SOUTH SLAVIC AND BALKAN STUDIES OFFERED BY THE SLAVIC DEPARTMENT

BCSN 10100 Elementary Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian
The course is designed for both undergraduate and graduate students with a wide range of interests. The major course objective is to build a solid foundation in the basic grammatical patterns of written and spoken BCS, while simultaneously introducing both the Cyrillic and Latin alphabets. Students will become proficient in the basics of oral comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing, with an emphasis on mastering the grammar. Given the region's recent history and linguistic controversies that have surrounded the Wars of Succession, the course will include a sociolinguistic component, an essential part of understanding the similarities and differences between the languages. The course is complemented by cultural and historical media from the Balkans, guest speakers, cultural events, and dinner parties. No knowledge of Slavic languages or background in linguistics is required. N. Petkovic

BCSN 20100 Intermediate Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian
The course is designed for both undergraduate and graduate students with a wide range of interests. It combines a linguistic and literary approach to the study of the language(s) through a series of literary readings, in both Latin and Cyrillic alphabets, by modern Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian writers. The first quarter is devoted to an overview of grammar, with emphasis on nominal and adjectival morphology and syntax. The second quarter reviews and amplifies the verbal system through continued readings, grammar drills, compositions, and conversational practice. In the third quarter, students further develop active mastery of the language by concentrating on word formation, syntax, essay writing and style. The course is complemented with cultural and historical media from the Balkans, guest speakers, cultural events, and dinner parties. The course prerequisite is one year of formal study of the target language(s) or equivalent. N. Petkovic

BCSN 30100 Advanced Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian
The advanced course is designed to lead a diverse group of students – including heritage speakers – through a variety of topics and subjects to impart nuanced communication, comprehension, and writing proficiencies. While the first two years of BCS focus on language structure and grammar, supplemented with short readings, the third year seeks to improve students’ overall competency in the target language(s), as well as improving their cultural awareness. The texts we will use are complete short stories, research papers, and printed interviews from a wide variety of disciplines (contemporary literature; political science; economics; linguistics; history; art history; literary criticism; anthropology; music; cinema and media studies), geared toward the interests of the current cohort of students. The course is complemented by cultural and historical media from the Balkans, guest speakers, cultural events, and dinner parties. N. Petkovic

Returning the Gaze: the Balkans, the Rest, the West. Autumn 2013
SOSL 2/37200, CMLT 2/33201, NEHC 2/30885
Aware of being observed. And judged. Inferior... Abject... Angry... Proud...
This course provides insight into identity dynamics between the “West,” as the center of economic power and self-proclaimed normative humanity, and the “Rest,” as the poor, backward, volatile periphery. We investigate the relationship between South East European self-representations and the imagined Western gaze. Inherent in the act of looking at oneself through the eyes of another is the privileging of that other’s standard. We will contemplate the responses to this existential position of identifying symbolically with a normative site outside of oneself -- self-consciousness, defiance, arrogance, self-exoticization -- and consider how these responses have been incorporated in the texture of the national, gender, and social identities in the region. A. Ilieva
Poetics of Gender in the Balkans: Wounded Men, Sworn Virgins, Eternal Mothers Autumn 2013
SOSL 2/37610, CMLT 2/33902, GNSE 27607
Through some of the best literary and cinematic works from Southeastern Europe, we will consider the questions of socialization into gendered modes of being – the demands, comforts, pleasures and frustrations that individuals experience while trying to embody and negotiate social categories. We will examine how masculinity and femininity are constituted in the traditional family model, the socialist paradigm, and during post-socialist transitions. We will also contemplate how gender categories are experienced through other forms of identity—the national and socialist especially—as well as how gender is used to symbolize and animate these other identities. A. Ilieva

Balkan Folklore Winter 2014
SOSL 26800, CMLT 233, NEHC 20568, Anth 25908
Vampires, fire-breathing dragons, vengeful mountain nymphs. 7/8 and other uneven dance beats, heart-rending laments and a living epic tradition. This course is an overview of Balkan folklore from historical, political and anthropological, perspectives. We seek to understand folk traditions as a dynamic process and consider the function of different folklore genres in the imagining and maintenance of community and the socialization of the individual. We also experience this living tradition first-hand through visits of a Chicago-based folk dance ensemble, “Balkan Dance.” A. Ilieva

Burden of History: The Nation and Its Lost Paradise Winter 2014
SOSL 2/37300, CMLT 2/33401, NEHC 2/30573
How and why do national identities provoke the deep emotional attachments that they do? In this course we try to understand these emotional attachments by examining the narrative of loss and redemption through which most nations in the Balkans retell their Ottoman past. We begin by considering the mythic temporality of the Romantic national narrative while focusing on specific national literary texts where the national past is retold through the formula of original wholeness, foreign invasion, Passion, and Salvation. We then proceed to unpack the structural role of the different elements of that narrative. With the help of Žižek’s theory of the subject as constituted by trauma, we think about the national fixation on the trauma of loss, and the role of trauma in the formation of national consciousness. Specific theme inquiries involve the figure of the Janissary as self and other, brotherhood and fratricide, and the writing of the national trauma on the individual physical body. Special attention is given to the general aesthetic of victimhood, the casting of the victimized national self as the object of the “other’s perverse desire.” With the help of Freud, Žižek and Kant we consider the transformation of national victimhood into the sublimity of the national self. The main primary texts include Petar Njegoš’ Mountain Wreath (Serbia and Montenegro), Ismail Kadare’s The Castle (Albania), Anton Donchev’s Time of Parting (Bulgaria). A. Ilieva

Imaginary Worlds: The Fantastic and Magic Realism in Russia and Southeastern Europe Spring 2014
SOSL 27700/37700; CMLT 27701/37701; RUSS 27300/37300
In this course, we will ask what constitutes the fantastic and magic realism as literary genres while reading some of the most interesting writings to have come out of Russia and Southeastern Europe. While considering the stylistic and narrative specificities of this narrative mode, we also think about its political functions— from subversive to escapist, to supportive of a nationalist imaginary—in different contexts and at different historic moments in the two regions. A. Ilieva

The Brighter Side of the Balkans: Humor and Satire in Literature and Film Spring 2014
SOSL 26610/368; NELC 20884/30568; CMLT 2/33301; ANTH 2/35908
Laughter is universal but its causes are culturally determined. A joke in one culture can be a shaggy dog story in another. The figure of the trickster occurs in many places and times and under many guises. Stereotypes can be revelatory about those who deploy them. At the same time, humor can be both an outlet and a danger. There is a special word in Russian for those sentenced to prison for telling political jokes. This course focuses on Balkan humor, which, like the Balkans itself, is located in a space where “Western Europe”, “Eastern Europe” “Central Europe” “The Mediterranean”, “The Levant”, and the “Near/
Middle East” intersect in various ways (linguistically and culturally), compete for dominance or resist domination, and ultimately create a unique--albeit fuzzily bounded--subject of study.

In this course, we examine the poetics of laughter in the Balkans. In order to do so, we introduce humor as both cultural and transnational. We unpack the multiple layers of cultural meaning in the logic of “Balkan humor.” We also examine the functions and mechanisms of laughter, both in terms of cultural specificity and general practice and theories of humor. Thus, the study of Balkan humor will help us elucidate the “Balkan” and the “World,” and will provide insight not only into cultural mores and social relations, but into the very notion of “funny.” Our own laughter in class will be the best measures of our success – both cultural and intellectual. A. Ilieva