

# The Politics of Literature in the Works of Rijeka Authors

---

**Tadić-Šokac, Sanja**

**Authored book / Autorska knjiga**

*Publication status / Verzija rada:* **Published version / Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)**

*Publication year / Godina izdavanja:* **2024**

*Permanent link / Trajna poveznica:* <https://um.nsk.hr/um:nbn:hr:186:047542>

*Rights / Prava:* [Attribution 4.0 International](#)/[Imenovanje 4.0 međunarodna](#)

*Download date / Datum preuzimanja:* **2024-11-30**



*Repository / Repozitorij:*

[Repository of the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences - FHSSRI Repository](#)

Sanja Tadić-Šokac  
THE POLITICS OF LITERATURE IN THE WORKS  
OF RIJEKA AUTHORS

**Publisher**

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka  
Sveučilišna avenija 4, 51000 Rijeka  
www.ffri.uniri.hr

**For the Publisher**

Professor Aleksandar Mijatović

**Editor**

Associate professor Sanja Tadić-Šokac

**Reviewers**

Professor Aljoša Pužar  
Professor Milorad Stojević

**Proofreading**

Marijana Bender Vranković

**Conceptual solution of the cover**

Studiograf

**Graphic design of the cover**

Studiograf

**Graphic preparation**

Studiograf

**Press**

Studiograf, Rijeka

The CIP record is available in the computer catalog of the University of Rijeka Library  
under number 150724079

ISBN 978-953-361-126-6 (printed edition)

ISBN 978-953-361-127-3 (e edition)

Sanja Tadić-Šokac

THE POLITICS OF LITERATURE IN THE WORKS  
OF RIJEKA AUTHORS



Rijeka, 2024.



# Content

## Introduction

### 1. Review of the theoretical reflections of Jacques Rancière

*1.1. Regimes of art in the theoretical thought of Jacques Rancière*

*1.2. Disagreement*

*1.3. Mute Speech: An Essay on the Contradictions of Literature*

*[La Parole muette: Essai sur les contradictions de la littérature, 1998]*

*1. 4. Distribution of the Sensible*

*1.5. Politics of Literature*

*1.6. Criticism of Rancière's theory*

*1.7. The gap between forms of political practice and artistic practices*

### 2. The politics of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's novel *The Dried Out Mire*

*2.1. Police of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's The Dried Out Mire*

*2.2. Politics of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's novel The Dried Out Mire*

*2.2.1. A story within a story*

*2.2.2. Forms of texts and typographic solutions*

*2.2.3. Problematization of the genre*

*2.2.4. Problematization of technology and methodology of writing*

*2.2.5. Own critical frame of reference*

*2.2.6. Active role of the reader*

### 2.3. Conclusion

## 3. The politics of literature in novels *Berenice's hair* by Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić

3.1. *Police of literature in novels Berenice's hair by Nedjeljko Fabrio and Sonnenschein by Daša Drndić*

3.2. *Politics of literature in novels Berenice's Hair by Nedjeljko Fabrio and Sonnenschein by Daša Drndić*

3.2.1. *A story within a story*

3.2.2. *Forms of texts and typographic solutions*

3.2.3. *Problematization of genre*

3.2.4. *Active role of the reader*

3.3. *Conclusion*

## 4. The politics of literature in novels *Marija Częstochowska is still shedding tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.* by Daša Drdnić

4.1. *Police of literature in novels Maria Częstohowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto) and Canzone di guerra. New War Songs. by Daša Drdnić*

4.2. *Politics of literature in novels Maria Częstohowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto) and Canzone di guerra. New War Songs. by Daša Drdnić*

4.2.1. *A story within a story*

4.2.2. *Forms of texts and typographic solutions*

4.2.3. *Problematization of genre*

4.3. *Conclusion*

Conclusion

Literature

## Introduction

Jacques Rancière (1940) *grounded* aesthetics from the heights of pure art towards the common reality of forms and transformations of sensory experience, which is evident in his essay *Le partage du sensible. Esthétique et politique*. [*The Politics of Aesthetics. The Distribution of the Sensible.*], which he wrote in 2000. Rancière claims all social orders are reflected in the distribution of the sensible. This term denotes the distribution of space and time, perceptible, imaginable, and feasible, through which forms of the common world are created and contemplated, in a form of artistic production or political action. In his critical system, Jacques Rancière distinguishes between the police and the politics of literature. The term *police of literature* means various political debates, engaging manifestations, expressing personal views on certain (political) issues, and criticism of the society in which we live and work. He defines the politics of literature positively and advocates the emancipation of all the *excluded* so that they too become political subjects. It refers to the conflict over the common public space and the existence and status of the participants.

His theory has become a stimulating framework for devising inventive ways of connecting political theory and aesthetics. This study *The Politics of Literature in the Works of Rijeka Authors*<sup>1</sup> aims to explain Jacques Rancière's critical views and present narrative strategies referring to the police and the politics of literature in the Rancière sense in the novels of authors from Rijeka. The study analyses the avant-garde

---

1 Author's statement: The writing of the study was financially supported by the University of Rijeka within the framework of the research project "Politics of literature in the works of Rijeka authors from the 20th century to the present day" (33 uniri-iskusni-human-23-55).



work *The Dried Out Mire* [*Isušena kaljuža*] (written in the period from 1906 to 1909, and published in 1957) by Janko Polić Kamov (1886 – 1910), neo-historical novels *Berenice's Hair* [*Berikina kosa*] (1989) by Nedjeljko Fabrio (1937 – 2018) and *Sonnenschein* (2007) by Daša Drndić (1946 – 2018) and autobiographical prose *Maria Czestohowska Still Shedding Tears or Dying in Toronto* [*Marija Czestochowska još uvijek roni suze (Umiranje u Torontu)*] (1997) and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. [*Canzone di guerra. Nove Davorije*] (1998) by Daša Drndić.

1. Review of the theoretical reflections of Jacques Rancière



French philosopher Jacques Rancière (Algiers, June 10, 1940)<sup>2</sup> spent his early childhood in Algeria and Marseille. He grew up and studied in Paris, where he was a student of the philosopher Louis Althusser at the *École Normale Supérieure* and a member of the Union of Communist Students. In 1965, Rancière participated in the creation of *Lire le Capital* [*Reading Capital*] with Étienne Balibar, Roger Establet, and Pierre Macherey. He was greatly influenced by the May 68 movement, although he did not directly participate in it. Rancière moved away from Althusser's Marxism and criticized it in 1974 in *Althusser's Lesson* as a philosophy of university and social order. He is employed as a professor of philosophy at the European Graduate School in Saas-Fee (Switzerland) and as professor emeritus of philosophy at the University of Paris VIII: Vincennes Saint-Denis. Rancière is known as a post-Marxist philosopher and his works are compared to the works of his contemporaries on the French theoretical left wing (Alain Badiou, Étienne Balibar).

In 1965, he participated in the creation of the original French edition of Althusser's *Lire "Le Capital"* [*Reading Capital*], which explains the scientific theory of history in Karl Marx's later works. After the rebellion of students and workers in Paris in May 1968, Rancière parted ways with his former teacher and argued that Althusser's notion

---

2 He has published numerous scientific articles and books: *Althusser's lesson* [*La Leçon d'Althusser*, 1974], *Proletarian Nights: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France* [*La Nuit des prolétaires*, 1981], *The Philosopher and His Poor* [*Le Philosophe et ses pauvres*, 1983], *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* [*Le Maître ignorant*, 1987], *The Names of History* [*Les Noms de l'histoire*, 1992], *The Flesh of Words* [*La Chair des mots*, 1998], *Film Fables* [*La Fable cinématographique*, 2001], *The Aesthetic Unconscious* [*L'Inconscient esthétique*, 2001], *Aesthetics and Its Discontents* [*Malaise dans l'esthétique*, 2004], *Hatred of Democracy* [*La Haine de la démocratie*, 2005], *Politics of literature* [*Politique de la littérature*, 2007], *Béla Tarr, the Time After* [*Béla Tarr, le temps d'après*, 2011], *Figures of History* [*Figures de l'histoire*, 2012].

of the necessary role of the intellectual avant-garde in dissuading the masses from bourgeois ideology was at odds with the self-direction of popular rebellion. Rancière argues that workers are capable of understanding their oppression and emancipating themselves without the guidance of an elite class of theorists. A crucial aspect of his thinking is the philosophical position of the equal reasonableness of all people, regardless of status or formal level of education. It follows that equality in reason also enables political equality. The central thought of Rancière's educational and political philosophy is the thesis of radical equality, which opposes false assumptions about differences in the mental abilities of individuals. He insists on the radical egalitarian criticism of Althusser and other leading theoreticians of the French leftwing (philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu), and bases his claims on knowledge derived from work in the archives of the French labor movement of the nineteenth century. Since his first appearance in 1965, Rancière has dealt with philosophy, politics, history, historiography, pedagogy, literary studies, film studies, and aesthetics. In politics, he is best known for his presentation of radical equality and anti-foundationalist, anti-consensualist, and anti-institutional criticism of political theory, and in aesthetics, he is credited with the reformulation of modernism as an *aesthetic regime of art*.

Rancière has worked on aesthetics since 1995 and emphasized the aesthetic component of emancipation movements. His theory has become a stimulating framework for devising inventive ways of connecting political theory and aesthetics.

### 1.1. Regimes of art in the theoretical thought of Jacques Rancière

Rancière starts from the thesis that art in the West has gone through three major regimes from ancient Greece to the present day. These are the *ethical regime of images*, the *representative (or poetic) regime*, and the *aesthetic (or anti-representational) regime*. They coincide with Plato's, Aristotle's, and the modern understanding of art that began in Romanticism. The *ethical regime* existed for a relatively short time. It was created at the moment of the articulation of Plato's criticism of art and lasted until Aristotle's Apology, i.e. until the period in which his *Poetics* ceases to be a possible description and becomes a framework for creativity. Thus, it becomes the basis of a *representative regime*. It ends with the emergence of romanticism, which frees art from the hierarchy of representation and coincides with the forms of experience. Then the third, *aesthetic regime* was established, in which we still find ourselves today.

Rancière starts from the *ethical* regime and explains his philosophical starting point on the example of the construction of political subjects in the ancient world. In antiquity, slaves spoke the language of their masters but did not participate in government. Plato claims in the *State* that artisans have no time for anything else but their work, so their occupation, work schedule, and abilities do not allow them to participate in the affairs of the community. That is why they cannot engage in politics as an additional activity. When it comes to literature, the emphasis is precisely on the notion of *distribution of the sensible* and the way in which literature questions existing relationships. Rancière refers to the myth of the source of writing (*écriture*), as described by Plato in his *Phaedrus*. In Plato's devaluation of writing

and the idea of perverted and corrupted living speech, he recognizes a disruptive factor, a force that will call into question “the assumed relations between the mode of being and saying that is supported by living speech.”<sup>3</sup> (Kollias 2007: 82) Writing is therefore not an inferior mode of speech, but a kind of imbalance of “the legitimate order of discourse, the way it is arranged and how it distributes bodies in an ordered community.” (Rancière 2004a: 103) Rancière argues that in the ethical regime of painting: “art’ is not recognized as such, but is subsumed under the question of images. As a separate entity, images are the subject of a double question: the question of origin (and accordingly also of truth) and the question of purpose, i.e. the use and effects they have.” (Rancière 2004b, 20) It is essentially determined by Plato’s criticism of art as a simulacrum: “Plato does not impose the yoke of politics on art.” For him, “art does not exist, there are only skills (crafts), as forms of doing and making.” What we mean by art today is criticized by Plato in his vision of the state as one of the crafts that does not fit into the assumed distribution of labour. Rancière “draws a dividing line between crafts by declaring: there are true skills, i.e. forms of knowledge, based on the imitation of models with a clear goal,

---

3 In literature, this is reflected as an emphasis on distribution of the sensible and the way in which literature questions existing relationships. He interprets writing as a kind of imbalance of “the legitimate order of discourse, the way it is distributed and how it distributes bodies in an ordered community.” (Rancière 2004: 103) He refers to Plato and claims that writing disrupts the hierarchy of relationships that Plato considers harmonious and calls into question “the relationship between the way of acting, the way of being and the way of speaking.” (Rancière 2004: 103) For Rancière, literature and art function as privileged places for delineating the path of the political, which in contemporary society must be reactualized: “It is not about an irresistible social influence, it is about a new division of the senses, about a new relationship between the speech act, the world which he organizes and the abilities of those who inhabit that world.” (Rancière 2008: 17)

and craft simulacrums that imitate only phenomena.” (Rancière 2004b, 21) To this criticism based on origins, he adds a criticism according to purpose. He claims that they differ “according to the obstructing poetic performances provide children and adult citizens with a certain education, and fit into the distribution of city affairs.” (Rancière 2004b, 21) Thus, art is understood as an imitation of imitation and conflicts with Plato’s original police fiction, a *noble lie*, on which the hierarchical structure of the community should be based. Artists/artisans do not know the ideas themselves and therefore their *lies* cannot be noble. In doing so, they disrupt the construction of experience, i.e. the original assumption that people cannot be in more than one place in the time allotted to them. A deep mistrust towards the image itself, its place, and effects are visible, and it is explained by its problematic ontological status.<sup>4</sup>

4 Rancière’s analysis is simultaneously focused on the historical and contemporary because, in Plato’s distrust of the image, Baudrillard’s critique of the postmodern culture of simulacrum can be recognized. The concept of simulacrum has long been suppressed in the history of representation as something that threatens the very idea of representation. It was seen as undermining the dichotomy of model and copy, original and reproduction, image and likeness. A simulacrum is understood as an image without a model that lacks grounding, either through resemblance or imitation. That is why it was rejected as “a false pretender to being that calls into question the very ability to distinguish the real from the represented” (Kamil 1990: 59)

Gilles Deleuze rehabilitated the simulacrum on the basis of what was previously portrayed as its central flaw: “It is the fulcrum of a force that disputes the existence of the original and the copy.” (Delez 1990: 262) He believes that works of art as “a set of perceptions and affects” are not perceptions “that would refer to an object.” (Deleuze 1995: 209) That is why they produce reality, not imitate it. This is taken up by Baudrillard and taken to extremes. He sees the entire modern world as an endless procession of simulacrums, as hyperreality, which no longer has any basis in reality. (Bodrijar 1991: 3, 6, 10, 13) The reality in the postmodern age experiences an aesthetic transformation and is replaced by signs of consumer culture, in a kind of “semio-urgy of everything through advertising, media, and images.” (Baudrillard, 1993: 16)

Unlike him, Rancière tries to show that there is nothing originally manipulative in the image itself. For him, the picture “does not refer to something else” (Ransijer



*The ethical regime* lasted until Aristotle's *Apology*, i.e. until the period in which his *Poetics* ceases to be a possible description and becomes a framework of creativity. It served as the basis of the *representative regime*. For Aristotle, people are political beings because they possess speech. Through speech, they agree on what is right and wrong, so the entire political activity is a conflict over the delineation of sensory boundaries through which political ability is determined. The representative regime of art ends with the emergence of romanticism. Then art breaks free from the hierarchy of representation and coincides with the forms of experience. A third, *aesthetic regime* is taking shape that continues today.

The split in the Platonist understanding of "the specific essence of art in the pair 'poiesis mimesis'" (Rancière 2004b: 21) introduces the *representational or poetic regime*. Rancière claims that mimesis is not a principle that requires the imitation of reality, but a kind of framework that separates artistic production itself from craft. In this way, Aristotle redistributes the senses by introducing a new activity into the given space of action. The claim of crafts based on the usability of their creations cannot be applied to it. We call the specific creations of this activity *simulation*. (Rancière 2004b: 21) The *poetic/representational* regime relieves art of the ethically problematic status it had as a craft in Plato. He identifies art within the distribution of doing and making, "making it visible."<sup>5</sup> (Rancière 2004b: 22) There are four basic princi-

---

2013: 13) nor is it an object of mere observation. He describes artistic images as operations: "connections between the whole and parts, between visibility and the power of meaning and the effect that goes along with that visibility, between expectations and what fulfils them." (Ransijer 2013: 13) For him, images are an intervention in a certain division of the sensory.

5 Rancière subsequently defines the correct ways of artistic creation and ways of judging them. (Rancière 2004b: 22)

ples of creativity in this regime: “the primacy of fiction, the genre nature of the presentation defined and organized according to the subject being presented, the appropriateness of the means of presentation and speech in action as an ideal.” (Rancière 2011a: 49) The most significant is the genre nature of the presentation. What constitutes a genre is not a set of formal rules “but the very nature of what is represented, the subject of the story.” (Rancière 2011a: 44) Based on the subject of representation, a hierarchy of genres is formed. It conditions the creation of a hierarchy of the objects themselves, that is, a hierarchical organization of the experience of reality. There are two major genres: high and low, tragic and comic. In the first, the object of representation is elevated, and in the second, it is lowered. The first assumes people who act with their speech, who are of noble birth, and who are *better than us* (Aristophanes). The second implies the representation of the lower classes, people incapable of a lofty mode of addressing and acting, those who are worse than us. This distribution presupposes the way in which sensory reality is transmitted to represented subjects and subjects of representation. It establishes the original hierarchical vision of this participation and its presentation (masters belong to the high style, and servants to the low). What about the middle style and its relation to the expansion of the bourgeois class? It is a process that implies the development of an *aesthetic regime*. The way certain subjects will be represented in the space of the visible, understandable, and active is strictly mediated by genre procedures and performances that support and renew the police order of the absolute monarchy of classicism.<sup>6</sup>

6 In his analysis of the epistemological field of classicism, Foucault shows that in a given period meaning is not established as a whole of scattered signs that are connected to things by complex relations of similarity, as in the Renaissance. They “will arise from the complete image of signs (...) thus the image of signs will be the

The aesthetic regime, the name of which we explain by returning to Rancière's understanding of the term *aesthesis* as a sensuous regime, is opposed to the representational one. In it, "artistical phenomena are identified by means of their coincidence with specific regime of the sensible". (Rancière 2004b: 22) When switching to the aesthetic regime, all the basic principles of the representative system are reversed. So now, instead of a genre hierarchy of representation, there is equality everyone presented subjects. Instead of the principle of the appropriateness of style, its indifference comes to the scene, and instead of the ideal of oratory, the model of writing, i.e. mute speech, comes into play. (Rancière 2011a: 58) It coexists with a romantic mixing of genres, the use of free verse and poems in prose, various types of art are interwoven, collage, performance, ready-made, etc. appear. In this way, art becomes a field of tension because it is simultaneously in a heteronomous relationship to sensory experience. That is why it can articulate a demand for autonomy, i.e. for independence from any poetic and ideological conditioning. The aesthetic "connects autonomy and heteronomy." (Rancière 2011a: 134) Art coincides with the forms of life,

---

image of things." (Foucault 1971: 130) Speech in that system is only an image of an image, that is, a representation of a play, "a representation represented by verbal signs." (Foucault 1971: 145) Classicist literature never directly approaches the experience of sensory reality. This approach is mediated by the representation of the whole, anchored in the verb to be because only it "exceeds the system of signs" and is directed "toward the being of what is signified." (Foucault 1971: 157) Foucault concludes that the representative regime is a classicist interpretation of Aristotelian poetics, based on the exchange of words and things mediated by the relation of identity and difference, that is, speech and representation of reality. In the domain of poetics, it is formed in accordance with the genre hierarchy of styles. Rancière says that it is determined by the hierarchy of objects of representation in the master-servant relationship. Frederic Jameson observed that the language of classicist poetry was based on rhetorical forms and was therefore "in a certain way essentially non-perceptual." (Jameson 2007: 228)

so it can redefine the distribution of the sensible and thus becomes the bearer of emancipation.

A transformation in the field of literature is important for the emergence and development of the aesthetic regime, and it can be read already in the emergence of the modern novel. In the era of classicism, it was placed in the so-called middle style in which the lives of the middle class are described, unsuccessfully. That is why it is, like a form, unstable (since the very beginnings) and searches for its own rules, which has been evident since Cervantes' *Don Quijote*. Rancière calls it "a genre without a genre." (Rancière 2011a: 50) These transformations in relation to the novel, and the field of literature in general, become paradigmatic for the entire modern art. Literature opposes dramatic art and establishes an egalitarian redistribution of the visible parallel to the "principle of political redistribution of the common experience." (Rancière 2004b: 15) Literature coincides with sensible and uses the opportunity to warn about new forms of community. Rancière says: "The aesthetic brings the promise of a new world of art and a new life for individuals and the community." (Rancière 2011a: 133) The theorist points out that flashing of the aesthetic regime from its beginnings has been in connection with emancipatory projects and refers to Schiller's *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen. [On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters]* It shows the fundamentals important for the development concept of *aesthesis*. Rancière reminds us that it claims that "rule and slavery are, first of all, a part of the ontological distribution (activity of thinking versus passivity of the sensible matter)." (Rancière 2004b: 27) Those who advocate opinion were destined to rule over those led only by their instincts. Schiller believes that both of these verticals are a source of violence and lack of free-

dom, especially during the French Revolution. The theorist calls for the overcoming of this hierarchical structure by creating a new realm of existence. He advocates the creation of a new religion that would be “between matter and form, between suffering and activity.” (Schiller 2008: 224) He claims that this “middle mood, in which the soul is neither physically nor morally restrained, but is nevertheless active in both ways, deserves to be primarily called a free mood,” (Schiller 2008: 231) that is, an aesthetic condition. The pledge of the aesthetic regime thus becomes freedom itself. But freedom can only be reached through aesthetic education, because “there is no other way to make a sensuous man intelligent, except to first make him aesthetic.” (Schiller 2008: 237) Rancière points out that “it would be possible to devise an equality whose direct materialization proved impossible in the French Revolution.” (Rancière 2004b: 27) The aesthetic regime is not a political program. Within it, different, even opposing political practices and visions of community are possible, which is visible in the avant-garde. Mass culture is dependent on the logic of capital in the postmodern age, and it was conditioned by the aestheticization of everyday reality.

In a certain period, a certain regime dominates, and the others are on its periphery. This is visible in the history of the aesthetic regime, whose presence we also see in the Renaissance when the ancient heritage is revitalized in the works of Shakespeare, Cervantes, or Rabelais. Similarly, the issue of the ethical regime returned when the representative regime that provided answers to the dilemmas of the ethical regime came to an end. In the period that Hegel declared the end of art, the problematic of the ethical regime lives in two ways: “either as Plato’s doxa or as Fauber’s banality.” (Rancière 2004b: 11)

## 1.2. Disagreement

In the same year, Rancière also published the essay *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* [*La Mésentente: politique et philosophie*, 1995]. The critic claims politics is a conflictual encounter between two heterogeneous forms of community. These are the *police* – which puts each social group in its place with its own identity – and *politics*, which observes the work of specific subjects who make claims against police distribution. Rancière claims that political conflict is replaced by rational management of economic and social balance. Instead of an evacuated political conflict, this so-called pacification leads to the resurgence of an identity-based people united by hatred of others. Sartre defines literary *disagreement* as a feature of an era in which literature is presented as such through several paradigmatic figures: Baudelaire, Flaubert, Proust, Rimbaud... He defines it in an unusual way: minimal in content and radical in its form. It is radical in form because the author wants to be understood and refuses to serve the goals that the bourgeois audience attributes to literature, thus radicalizing the situation and refusing to serve all goals except those concerning art itself. The artist's refusal to be understood serves the goals of his class, which is also one of the ways in which the artist constructs his identity and in which the artistic elite rises above the vulgar. The basis of the *disagreement* is not any ambiguity or linguistic ambiguity. So, Proust in his cycle *Searching for Lost Time* could not leave out anything, even the infinitely lower details that hinder individuality. To say everything about criticism is to deny the whole that the work of art constitutes. The essence of the politics of literature is the relationship between saying everything and saying something superfluous about a certain po-

litical and social situation.

The exaggeration in the description and the realistic abundance of people and things has the opposite meaning from the one it would have in the era of Barthes and Sartre. Abundance represents the decay of that kind of whole that was in harmony with the stability of the social body. Political *disagreement* is emerging, so we need to think about the relationship between politics and literature, between political and literary *disagreement*. If the author has to say what he did, it means he didn't do it.

There is a divergence of paths between political and literary *disagreement*. Literature goes in the opposite direction from the organization of the perceptual field around the content of a statement. It twists the content of the statement in a tangle of perception and effect of anonymous life. *Disagreement* contrasts the double scene of silent words: a scene with things that evoke the regular world better than political speeches, and a scene of silent things that are there without reason, without meaning, and drag the consciousness into aphasia and apathy. Thus, a scene of over-meaning and a scene of under-meaning are established. *Literary disagreement* tends to distance itself from serving political discord. He has his politics, his metapolitics. Literature simultaneously reads the signs written on the body and resolves the meanings imposed on it. (Rancière 2008: 49)

1.3. *Mute Speech: An Essay on the Contradictions of Literature*  
[*La Parole muette: Essai sur les contradictions de la littérature*,  
1998]

Following Kant's distribution into appearance and essence, Rancière claims that in the aesthetic regime, every object can understood "as an appearance of the essence, not just a consequence of certain causes, but a metaphor or metonymy of the force that has created it." (Rancière 2011a: 60) This distribution of appearance essentially corresponds to the new relationship between senses and thoughts, matter and form, so art can be seen as a self-alienation of spirit, "a product that is identical to something unproduced, knowledge turned into non-knowledge, 'logos' identical with *pathos*', the intention of the unintentional." (Rancière 2004b: 22) This distribution corresponds to the interpretation of art as conscious and unconscious, which will appear a century later. Kant spoke of nature as a poem written in a coded language, but he could not yet interpret this movement. Rancière claims that his metaphor could only be interpreted ontologically in Fichte's teaching.

In self-identity, the I of transcendental subjectivity already possesses the principle of the unity of subjective and objective, finite and infinite. That is why it can break the 'enchantment' that closes the song of nature, that is, to recognize it as a divine essence and what must become an inhuman reality: the imagination that has become sensual. (Rancière 2011a: 76)

Material and spiritual, ultimately and endlessly, are mediated by the movement of transcendental subjectivity. At the same time, the



entire material reality can be interpreted as the speech of the spirit, since it is already a spirit in its self-alienation. Fichte's teachings have strongly influenced literature and art in general and enabled a new understanding of its role in the distribution of the *sensible* and its visibility. Rancière warns that such an understanding is already present in the concept of mute speech: "In the Greek language, the fairy tale was also called '*mythos*', myth, from which *mutus* is derived in Latin." (Rancière 2011a: 58) Poetry is seen as '*mythos/mutus*' and with it, a man explains to himself the order of the world and his position in it. It is now interpreted as a method by which the truth is given to the collective consciousness in the form of songs and institutions but without awareness of its nature. This speech is on the same level as the speech of any natural phenomenon. Truth said in this manner is "like a self-prediction." (Rancière 2011a: 58) In classical German idealism, poetry becomes one of the forms of return of thought to itself: "the work of art stands in the middle between immediate sensibility and ideal thought," (Hegel 1986: 40) and poetics is its mute speech.

Fichte's conception is elaborated to the extreme by Novalis, who says: "Nobody knows precisely about the property of language that it only takes care of itself." This statement is one of the most important arguments of European art of the nineteenth century, and Rancière concludes that it is an empty formalism. Namely, if the language has no reason to worry about anything other than itself, "it is not because it is a self-sufficient game, but because it always already contains within itself the experience of the world and the text of knowledge, because the experience itself always speaks, before us". (Rancière 2011a: 62) That is why language is not a reflection, it is not a mimesis of a representation of reality. It expresses relationships in reality, and with its structure it

expresses the organization of sensory experience because in it there is a mirror of the community. (Rancière 2011a: 63) This theory will develop in two directions in the nineteenth century. Positivist doctrine is related to “certain sociability, the character of civilization and class dominance” (2011a: 64) in the works of Balzac and realists, and the German romantics and later Baudelaire and many symbolists will interpret it as an expression of the relationship of deep spiritual reality and the basis of universal analogy.

Schiller, Schelling, Helderlin, and Hegel in their joint early work *Das Älteste Systemprogramm Des Deutschen Idealismus [The Oldest Systematic Program of German Idealism]* describe the movement of the spirit with its possible consequences in the community. This led the romantics to the conclusion that poetry is the best mediator between spirit and sensuality, i.e. the perfect tool for establishing a community based on the laws of the mind in which “the ideas of reason would become a common song, would be made ‘aesthetic’, i.e. ‘mythological’ as would consecrate the harmony of thinkers and people in the form of a new religion.” (Rancière 2011a: 82) Hegel proves that this future-in-the-past fantasy is empty. In the case of the poem, the future of the community belongs to forms of sociability, a distribution of the sensible that is different from the usual. Hegel believes that in modern times, the mind has become aware of itself and has mastered language, so it sets up material reality in a different way than it did in primitive societies. Spirit no longer has to know itself through its external manifestations, “art, in terms of its highest purpose, is and remains for us something that belongs to the past.” (Hegel 1986: 12) That is why prose is “the historical world that prescribes the end of poetry as an essential form of thought.” (Rancière 2011a: 83) Rancière claims that

romanticism cannot be a principle of new poetics because it is based on the incompatibility of two organizational principles of the aesthetic regime: “the principle by which poetry becomes a special mode of language and the principle by which indifference to the object of representation is proclaimed”. (Rancière 2011a: 86) That is why all modern literature is an attempt to overcome this contradiction. Writing again becomes mute speech, “the speech of an orphan deprived of the power of living speech, i.e. the speech of the master: the possibility to ‘defend’ himself, to answer when asked . . . Also, this muteness makes the letter too talkative. Since it is not directed by the father, who can recognize the correct fruitful way, the written speech wanders without direction.” (Rancière 2011a: 93) This emphasizes the instability of modern writing: the text cannot be reliably attributed to its author, it cannot be determined to whom it is intended, nor how it should be used. The text is mute on these issues to this day. The truth of writing that abolished the monarchist scene of speech was not the embodiment of the word and the community it invoked, but, paradoxically, its abolition in the silence of the wandering letter. This is the principle of democracy, as a distribution of the sensible, because it is “a regime of letters, a regime in which the perversion of letters is the law of the community.” (Rancière 2011a: 95) Rancière says:

Instead of a voice directed towards ‘Moses’ we are directed by a ‘man of a dead God’. The latter can govern only if it becomes the guarantor of ‘small pleasures’ that capitalize on our enormous misery of orphans condemned to wander in the realm of emptiness, which means also the realm of democracy, the individual, or consumption. (Ransijer 2008, 42)

The regime of the letter thus introduces a constant tension in

the relationship between the order of discourse and the police order of the community.<sup>7</sup>

Rancière singles out two heroes of nineteenth-century post-Hegelian art: Flaubert and Mallarmé. He interprets Flaubert's literary work as the first artistic attempt to overcome Hegel's statement about the end of art. Rancière emphasizes his understanding of style because it "establishes the identity of writing and sight." (Rancière 2011a, 114) Flaubert says that "style is an absolute way of looking at things." It is not choosing a certain angle of observation to deform the thing, but "a way of looking at things as they are in their 'absoluteness.'" (Rancière 2011a: 116) It is necessary to abolish genre classification and break with the classicist understanding of the very nature of things. In doing so, the romantic assumptions are reversed, so instead of meaning as the secret of the sensible and speech as the secret of muteness, there is a "meaning that has become meaningless, the sensual that has become insensible." (Rancière 2011a, 120) That is why Rancière claims that Flaubert lays the foundations of modern literature and is freed from the dilemma between subjectivity (non-directedness of imagi-

7 In opposition to the living speech of the master and the directionlessness of the letter, one can recognize the dialogue with Jacques Derrida, who believes that the letter "was regarded as a simple complement to the word," (Derrida 1976: 15) "in all cases the voice is closer to the signified, whether we strictly define it as meaning (...) or more elastically as a thing." (Derrida 1976: 20) Both theorists believe that Plato sees writing as something that disrupts the way "in which knowledge and discourse regulate visibility and establish authority." (Rancière 2011a: 94) Rancière claims that Derrida misinterprets him. Namely, Plato does not interpret writing as a visual meditation of the signified that is opposed to the vocal occurrence of the presence of truth, but as "a special staging of the speech act." (Rancière 2011a: 94) He believes that the letter and its circulation act as an attack on the legitimate police order according to which "logos divides speech and body in the community." (Rancière 2011a: 94) Plato's idea of community rests on the harmony of the division of labor, space and time, the possibility of speech and action, while writing and speech according to Rancière act as a constant tension in the field of the senses.

nation) and objectivity (an epic that is nostalgia for the identity of the world and the poem), i.e., speaking and muteness of writing and matter. Mallarmé believes that literary language is exempt from the laws of information exchange and that literature is provided with a certain doctrine. He wants to implement a kind of speech of the forms themselves that would signify only the forms, i.e. poetry should be: “a spirit speaking to the spirit in the language of the spirit.” (Rancière 2011a, 134) The absolutization of poetry, which would free it from material and formal frameworks, brings it close to prose, from which it wants to distance itself. In this sense, Benjamin’s thesis that “the ideal of modern poetry is prose” is confirmed. For Mallarmé, this difference was realized in music, which became “the tomb of the image to the extent that it is the tomb of the speech it names.” (Rancière 2011a, 136) Thus, for the third time, poetry becomes mute speech, and music becomes an art of art, replacing the poetry enthroned by Hegel. He believed that it is “the art of the spirit that has become independent and free.” (Hegel, 88) His exaggeration of music is not accidental. Rancière claims that he “tried to make this fate impossible at the cost of freezing the fate of art as such.” (Rancière 2011a: 138) Art, which cannot become its philosophy by freeing itself from materiality, can become a pure form (spirit) of materiality. It becomes a form that represents a form, which is available to the senses and is essentially non-representational. So, that’s music. Rancière calls this point of view “romantic fundamentalism” in which “there are no more symbols; now there is only the spiritual world.” (Rancière 2011a: 138) Mallarmé is not an advocate of the self-abolition of poetry in music, although it became visible in his poetry. Rancière believes that there were three solutions: “naturalism as a compromise between old and new poetics, the identification of prose and poetry,

and the identification of music and poetry.” (Rancière 2011a: 138) He concludes: “Mallarmé’s ‘silence’ is not related to a metaphysical apprehension over the white page or to the poet’s endless effort to convey to the people an Orphean explanation of the earth.” It is not about character anguish or aristocratic rejection of poetic words. On the contrary, it is connected with the politics of poetry, with the understanding of the time and place of poetry in the republic.” (Rancière, 2008: 100) The song cannot be separated from the creation of the whole of shared life, but the whole in which it is written is always a kind of alienation and participation. In the aesthetic return to the poetic space, the place of the poem is the theatre stage, so that “the people must attend the performance, the scene of its magnificence.” (Rancière 2008: 100) The song becomes both the plot and the stage on which it takes place.

#### 1. 4. *Distribution of the Sensible*

Rancière ‘brought down’ aesthetics from the heights of pure art towards the common reality of the forms and transformations of sensory experience, which is evident in the essay *Le Partage du sensible. Esthétique et politique. [The Politics of Aesthetics. The Distribution of the Sensible]*, which he wrote in 2000. He argues that all social orders are reflected in the *distribution of the sensible* – complex of individuals and individual speech (*bodies and voices*) that are effectively visible, speakable, or audible (or invisible, unspeakable, or inaudible), along with implicit assumptions about the natural capacities of different individuals and groups. The *distribution of the sensible* is the distribution of space and time, perceptible, imaginable, and feasible, through which

the forms of the common world are created and thought through, in the form of artistic production or political activity. *Politics* properly understood is the destructive attempt of those victimized or excluded by unequal social orders to assert themselves as equals to those with privilege and power. The term *police* refers to the rules and conventions that enforce the unequal distribution of the vulnerable, along with broad ideological beliefs and values that justify unequal social orders as fair, democratic, inclusive, consensus-based, or in some sense natural or necessary. The critic asks us to move away from traditional discussions about the autonomy of art or its political subjugation and criticizes the theory of modern art as an autonomous art, focused exclusively on its materiality. He believes that the practices of critical art do not reveal the hidden order of things and thus arouse political consciousness and energy.

Rancière's work is original in emphasizing the aesthetic dimension of politics and the political dimension of aesthetics. Politics is aesthetics in a broader sense because it deals with the *distribution of the sensible* created by social hierarchies, and aesthetics is political because artistic regimes determine the *distribution of the sensible* in art and give insight into the distribution that is specific to the wider society. He concludes that art and politics are immanently connected and that their combination can lead to radical democracy. He sees the political difference between the *police* (police logic), as a logocentric order that requires the identification of each member (citizen) with the whole, and *politics* (political logic), as a demand for disidentification that leads to the political subjectivization of the citizen. He equates the political with democracy, and it is realized in the "*disagreement*" between the two aforementioned logics, police and political. This departs from the

mainstream understanding of politics, that is, democracy as consensus and agreement.

*Partage du sensible* that is, the *distribution of the sensible* is one of the key terms by which Rancière names the system of obvious facts of sensory perception, which “simultaneously reveals the existence of something common and the demarcations within it that determine individual parts and positions.” (Rancière 2000: 12) In his 2000 essay of the same name, subtitled *Aesthetics and Politics*, Rancière uses the ambiguous term *partage* to denote both the sharing of something common and the mutual separation of individual elements. The work intertwines the relationship between aesthetics and politics, through the expression of sharing the sensuous, and this expression finds its origin in a philosophical essay *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (*La Mésentente: politique et philosophie*, 1995). He explains his philosophical starting point on the example of the construction of political subjects in the ancient world.

Writing disrupts the hierarchy of relationships that Plato considers harmonious and thus calls into question “the relationship between the way of acting, the way of being and the way of speech.” (Rancier 2008: 103) Rancière calls this factor of disorder, irregularity, and licentiousness (*dérèglement*) in literature, which disrupts the existing (*police*) order of distribution of the sensible, *literariness* (*littérarité*) and thus introduces the notion of radical equality into literature itself:

The democracy of writing is a regime of free writing that everyone can spread according to their will, whether they want to appropriate the lives of the heroes and heroines of novels, whether they want to become writers themselves, or whether they want to participate in discussions about common affairs. It is not about an overwhelming social influence, it is about a



new distribution of the senses, about a new relationship between the act of speech, the world it creates, and the abilities of those who inhabit that world. (Rancier 2008: 17)

The prevailing conception of the political as well as the necessity of reactualizing its questioning in the contemporary social context leads to the fact that for Rancière, literature and art function as privileged places for delineating his trail. The opposition between politics and the police, the dispute between the police and the desirable order of relations, and the existing *distribution of the sensible* and the new (democratic) regime of visibility can be seen in this context as a manifestation of the political. Exactly what Rancière calls the politics of literature, what disrupts the hierarchy of police relations for the sake of equality, is a precondition for the emergence of the political. It is also the scene of delineating his trail because in his theoretical system serves as a residual category. The way literature operates makes the distinction between literature that would be political and literature that would not be unsustainable. The idea of the inherent politics of literature supports the idea of literature as a privileged zone of visibility of the *trace of the political*.

“This distribution and redistribution of space and time, place and identity, speech and noise, the visible and the invisible forms what I call the distribution of the sensible”,<sup>8</sup> (Rancière 2008: 8) says Rancière.

I call the distribution of the sensible system of sensory obviousness which enables us to see at the same time the existence of commonality and the existence of intersections that define places and

---

8 In the French original, this term reads *le partage du sensible*, in the English translation it reads *distribution of the sensible*.

shares in it. Therefore, the distribution of the sensible at the same time consolidates the distributed common and exclusive shares. This distribution of shares and places is based on the distribution of space, time, and form of activity which determines the very way in which the community is suitable for participation and in which both have a share in that distribution. (Rancière 2013: 139)

Jacques Rancière does not understand aesthetics as a theory of art in general or a theory of art that would refer to its effects on sensitivity but as a specific regime of identification and thinking of art (a way of articulating between the way things work, the forms of visibility of these ways of working and the way of thinking about their relationships, implying a certain idea of the efficiency of thought). Based on the *distribution of the sensible*, one can see who can have a share in the common with regard to what they do and the time and space in which this activity is performed. A particular occupation defines visibility, i.e. invisibility in a common space, then the possibility of common speech, etc. It is precisely the intersection of time and space, visible and invisible, speech and noise that determines the place and role of *politics* as a form of experience. *Politics* refers to what is seen and what can be said about it, to the one who is competent to see and able to say, to the properties of space and the possibilities of time.

Rancière interprets the notion of the *politics* of literature quite differently from other critics. He believes that “literature deals with politics while remaining literature” since there is a connection “between politics as a particular form of collective practice and literature as a determined practice of the art of writing.” (Rancière 2008: 7) He claims that *politics* exists only when the natural order of dominance

and when those who were excluded are included. (Rancière 2008: 31) He believes that politics appears very rarely, and refers to the conflict over the common public space and the existence and status of the participants. He concludes that *politics* is the establishment of a sphere of experience in which certain objects are seen as common, and certain subjects are accepted to name those objects based on arguments. That sphere is not a constant quantity based on anthropological immutability. Rancière believes that the magnitude on which *politics* is based is always contested.

Jacques Rancière states that the *politics* of literature cannot be identified with the politics of writers. (Rancière 2008: 8) The term *politics* of literature does not mean the personal participation of writers in political or social engagements in their era. In their works, writers problematize social structures, political movements, or different identities in numerous ways, but the critic does not define these actions as the politics of literature. Rancière contrasts the term *police* (*la police*) with *politics*, but not in the sense of a repressive state apparatus, but as a designation for a specific order that assigns a special place, purpose, and goal to bodies and thus defines their ways of acting, being and speaking. As the order of the *visible and the tellable*, (Rancière 1995: 52) the *police* determines whether an activity will be visible and whether a certain discourse will be recognized as speech or as ordinary noise. It is about processes and institutions that maintain order, manage the representation of the community, and legitimize the existing situation. For Rancière, political activity (or *politics*) itself is aimed at changes, at moving bodies from their assigned positions. (Rancière 1995: 53) Police order (*l'ordre policier*) is not based on disciplining bodies, but on the rule that governs their appearance. Bodies are placed in certain

positions within the social hierarchy under the assumption that they will behave in accordance with these positions.

### *1.5. Politics of Literature*

In his work *The Politics of Literature*, Rancière emphasizes that the politics of literature is not the politics of writers. “It does not refer to their participation in the political or social struggles of their time. It does not even refer to how writers present social structures, political movements, or different identities in their works.” (Rancière, 2008: 7) Expressing one’s opinion on current topics present in the media or the ruling apparatus is politics, but the politics of literature is considerably broader in Rancière’s sense. He warns of “the existence of an essential connection between politics as a particular form of collective practice and literature as an established practice of the art of writing.” (Rancière 2008: 7) Politics is often mixed with the exercise of power and the power struggle. Rancière believes that with the existence of government, the existence of politics is not necessary, i.e. if there are laws that regulate life in the community, there is not necessarily a politics. It is possible only when the community is organized in a special way:

Politics is the establishment of a special sphere of experience in which certain objects are seen as common, and certain subjects are accepted as capable of naming these objects and defending them with arguments. However, the sphere thus established is not a constant quantity based on anthropological immutability. The magnitude on which politics is based is always disputed.” (Rancière 2008: 7)

Aristotle established that humans are political beings because they have a speech to express what is right and what is wrong, while animals have a voice to express pleasure or pain. That is why the entire political activity is a conflict over the determination of what is speech and what is a cry, i.e. a conflict over drawing sensory boundaries by means of which political ability is determined. In Plato's *State*, it was stated that artisans have no time for anything else but their work, i.e. that their profession, their work schedule, and the necessary abilities do not allow them to engage in politics as an additional activity. Politics begins with the questioning of that impossible, when they use the time they don't have to prove that they too are beings who speak and participate in a common world. This distribution and redistribution of space and time, place and identity, speech and noise, visible and invisible forms the *distribution of the sensible*. It introduces new objects and subjects to the scene. It makes the invisible, visible and enables those who were considered noisy animals to be heard as speaking beings. The *distribution of the sensible* refers to the subjects of active participation in the community and the way of their participation, i.e. it refers to what is visible and what is invisible, refers to the one who has the right to speak and to the one whose speech is just noise, refers to the actors and to who has the right to define them as such, refers to different conceptions of time and space according to which subjects are defined. (Rancière 2008: 8) Politics makes it possible to see the basics of the organization of the system in which such debates are held, it determines what a political debate is, its norms and topics, and participants among whom some have the right to vote and some do not. The politics of literature implies a specific way of organizing the world and does not refer to current media and socio-political activity. Rancière concludes:

The expression politics of literature implies that literature as literature participates in the redistribution of space and time, visible and invisible, speech and noise. It affects the relationship between practices, between forms of visibility, and between ways of saying that share one or more common worlds. (Rancière 2008: 8)

Rancière raises the question of *what is literature as literature*. It is not a transhistorical term that refers to the totality of speech and writing. The word acquired the meaning that is common today. In Europe, the term literature ceased to denote the knowledge of learned people only in the 19th century and became a sign for the art of writing. Madam de Stael's work entitled *On Literature Observed in Its Relationship to Social Institutions*, which was published in 1800, is considered a manifesto of the new use of the word. (Rancière 2008: 8) Many critics tried to establish a relationship between historically defined events and political currents and the timeless concept of literature. After 1800, writers like Flaubert, Balzac, and Proust revolutionized the way of writing. They tried to establish a relationship between historically defined events and political currents, on the one hand, and the timeless concept of literature, on the other. Some critics emphasized the historicity of the concept of literature, but most did so within the framework of the modernist paradigm. "Within the modernist paradigm, modernity is defined as the break of all arts with slavery to representation, which reduced them to a means of expression in the service of an external referent, and as the focusing of art on its materiality." (Rancière 2008: 10) Rancière states that literary modernity is based on the introduction of the intransitive use of language as opposed to its communicative use, so some storytellers contrasted the autonomy of literary language with political use, which was considered

the instrumentalization of literature. Others considered that there is solidarity between literary impermanence, understood as a confirmation of the materialist primacy of the signifier, and the materialist rationality of revolutionary practice. JP Sartre, in his work *What is Literature?* proposes a kind of reconciliation, opposing poetic impermanence and literary transience. Poets use words as things: Rimbaud turns his verse into an opaque substance, similar to Tintoretto's yellow sky. On the other hand, Rancière emphasizes that writers deal with meanings. They use words as a means of communication, so they act in the work of building a common world. He sees in Flaubert's work the politics of literature, which is based on the very use of language, and the desire to establish the special position of literature in language. These efforts are related to the simplification of the modernist paradigm of art. In Flaubert's work, there is a petrification of language, in which Sartre sees the contribution of the leader of pure literature to the strategy of the bourgeoisie. Flaubert, Mallarmé, and their colleagues did not want to accept the bourgeois way of thinking and dreamed of an aristocracy that would live in a world of purified words. In order to create this, these writers had to purify words from their communicative use and thus rob them of those who could use them as a means of political debate and social struggle. The literary petrification of words and objects served the nihilistic strategy of the bourgeoisie. In Flaubert's works, the previously valid rules about the subject and the way of writing are no longer present, and in them, the democratization of literary practice is carried out. In his works, attention is paid to until recently unimportant subjects and heroes from the lower classes who did not have a voice in the canon of writing until then. Sartre declared Flaubert to be the leader of an aristocratic attack on the democratic nature of prosaic lan-

guage: he and his associates had to purge words of their communicative use and wrest them from those who used them as a means of political debate and social struggle. (Rancière 2008: 12) As an example of a new use of language, Rancière takes Rimbaud's use of language: it is anti-communicative and results from a new relationship between the pure and the impure, the prosaic and the poetic. He believes that it is necessary to determine the relationship between the way of writing that tends to erase meanings, then the way of reading that notices a symptom in the erasure of meaning, and the possibility of interpreting the political meaning of that symptom in different ways. He sees the solution in literature as a historical system of identification of the art of writing, i.e. in a specific node between a system of meaning of words and a system of visibility of things. (Rancière 2008: 15) Rancière recognizes modernism as a problematic label for the *aesthetic regime* of art. It superficially notes the shift between the representational and anti-representational model of art. Twentieth-century critics interpret the literature of the nineteenth century with political and social determinations, which, as the essence against the bourgeois novel, take over the analyses and arguments of nostalgia from the monarchist and representative order. The petrification of language, the loss of meaning in human work, and meaning is the breakdown of the poetic hierarchy aligned with a certain order of things in the world. An obvious example of this decomposition is the complete erasure of the hierarchy between themes and characters, i.e. the principle of agreement between style, theme, and character. Flaubert carried to the extreme the principle of that revolution which was revealed at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge. They claim that there are no more themes, and that indiffer-



ence is hidden in the very composition of actions and the expression of thoughts and feelings, which are the essence of poetic composition. The structure of the work is in its style, and style is an absolute way of looking at things. The absolutization of style meant the dissolution of all order, and the destruction of all hierarchies that governed the creation of themes, the composition of actions, and the decorum of expression. Radical egalitarianism, which destroys not only the rules of poetic art, but the entire system of relationships between ways of being, acting, and speaking, is visible in the publications of larpurartism. The absolutization of style was a literary recipe for the democratic principle of equality. In his works, attention is paid to until recently unimportant subjects and heroes from the lower classes who did not have a voice in the canon of writing until then. Sartre declared Flaubert to be the leader of an aristocratic attack on the democratic nature of prosaic language: he and his associates had to purge words of their communicative use and wrest them from those who used them as a means of political debate and social struggle. (Rancière 2008: 12) Rancière takes Rimbaud's use of language as an example of a new use of language: it is anti-communicative and results from a new relationship between the pure and the impure, the prosaic and the poetic. He believes that it is necessary to determine the relationship between the way of writing that tends to erase meanings, then the way of reading that notices a symptom in the erasure of meaning, and the possibility of interpreting the political meaning of that symptom in different ways. He sees the solution in literature as a historical system of identification of the art of writing, i.e. in a specific node between a system of meaning of words and a system of visibility of things. (Rancière 2008: 15) In modernism Rancière recognizes a problematic label for the *aesthetic regime* of art.

It superficially notes the shift between the representational and anti-representational model of art. Twentieth-century critics interpret the literature of the nineteenth century with political and social determinations, which, as the essence against the bourgeois novel, take over the analyses and arguments of nostalgia from the monarchist and representative order. The petrification of language, the loss of meaning in human work, and meaning is the breakdown of the poetic hierarchy aligned with a certain order of things in the world. An obvious example of this decomposition is the complete erasure of the hierarchy between themes and characters, i.e. the principle of agreement between style, theme, and character. Flaubert carried to the extreme the principle of that revolution which was revealed at the beginning of the nineteenth century in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge. They claim that there are no more themes, and that indifference is hidden in the very composition of actions and the expression of thoughts and feelings, which are the essence of poetic composition. The structure of the work is in its style, and style is an absolute way of looking at things. The absolute of style meant the dissolution of all order and the destruction of all hierarchies that governed the creation of themes, the composition of actions, and the decorum of expression. Radical egalitarianism, which destroys not only the rules of poetic art, but the entire system of relationships between ways of being, acting, and speaking, is visible in the publications of larpurartism. The absolutization of style was a literary recipe for the democratic principle of equality.

Flaubert's critics believe that democracy represents a system of government in which they emphasize self-destructive utopia and *social influence*, i.e. the way of existence of a society characterized by the

equalization of classes and ways of being and feeling. Political democracy was doomed, and the social process could not be prevented and its influence on the texts could not be avoided. They expressed themselves within the framework of a new paradigm that made literature an expression of society, and they failed to see the complex dialectic that such a view of literature brought.

Democracy does not determine any particular system of expression but destroys any established logic of the relationship between expression and its content. It symbolizes the destruction of an established order in the relationship between body and words, the way of speaking, the way of acting, and the way of being. In this sense, *literary democracy* can be opposed to the classical order of presenting things (e.g. Corneille). The power of creating art with words was linked to the power of the hierarchy of speech, i.e. to the power of address that connects speech acts and selected listeners in whom these speech acts are supposed to trigger thoughts, feelings, and energy.

Literature is a new system in the art of writing in which it did not matter who was the reader and who was the writer. It is the rule of writing, i.e. words that flow beyond any relation of address. It no longer addresses any specific audience and does not take sides in the social order.

This is the essence of the democracy of writing: its eloquent silence cancels the difference between people who act with words and people with a painful and noisy voice, between those who act and those who just live. The democracy of writing is a regime of free writing that everyone can spread at will, whether they want to appropriate the lives of the heroes and heroines of novels, or whether they want to become a writer themselves...” (Rancière 2008: 17)

So, it is about a new *distribution of the sensible*, about a new relationship between the act of speaking, the world it creates, and the abilities of those who inhabit that world.

The structuralist era tried to base literature on the specific use of writing – *literariness* which Rancière redefines. For him, *literariness* is not a special property of literary language, but a radical democracy of writing that is within everyone's reach. Democratic *literariness* is a condition for the special position of literature and at the same time, it is a threat to its disappearance because it means the absence of boundaries between the language of art and the language of everyday life. The politics of literature broke that integrity and divided literary writing from the state of *literariness* in which it is located. Literature often depicted the troubles of those who read books and tried to turn words and stories from books into the material of their own lives (e.g. Emma Bovary). A change in the community of meaning and sense, a change in the relationship between words and beings changes both the common world and the people.

Literature gives primacy to the living word, which in the representative order was in accordance with the primacy of action over life. It opposes writing understood as a device that allows life to speak. Writing is simultaneously more silent and more eloquent than the democratic word. Petrification of speech occurs: writers are aware that in the age of archaeology, paleontology, and philology, even stones speak. "The rocks bear witness to their story with their bodies." (Rancière 2008: 19)

Meaning becomes the relationship of the will to the sign, a relationship written on silent things and the very body of language. Literature is spreading and deciphering those signs that are written on

the things themselves. The writer is an archaeologist or geologist who enables the mute witnesses of a shared history to speak. This is the principle on which a realistic novel is built. The principle of building literature is not to imitate events in their reality but to develop a new regime of equality between the meaning of words and the visibility of things, in discovering the world of prose reality as a huge canvas of signs on which the history of an era, civilization or society is written. (Rancière 2008: 19) Even in the works of Balzac and Hugo, the truth about the entire society can be read through fossils. Thus, the new society reveals its truth in the way that all those scholars tried to discover the truth about the life of ancient peoples or to break the veil of mystery with which silent nature subdued the truth about the first times of its history. Such a model of true literature in its creation simultaneously opposes the hierarchical principles of the tradition of the representative order and the democracy of the wandering letter. In Balzac's works, we read the symptoms of a new age, we recognize the remains of collapsed worlds, and we meet the counterpart of deceased mythological deities. The modern world, presented in these works, is a huge canvas woven from signs, ruins, and fossils that bring the new poetics, the poetics of world prose, closer to the work of philologists, archaeologists, and geologists. This world is inhabited by fantastic creatures. Literature is the science of society and the creation of a new mythology. The identity of a new poetics and a new politics is being created. The new system of meaning establishes a distance towards the democratic political scene. It raises itself voluntarily by inverting words, sentences, and characters in founding texts and dominant rhetoric. He opposes a different politics to the democratic direction of literature. Her principle is to leave the clamour of speakers from the people of old rhetoric

to their vanity to decipher the testimonies that society itself leaves as an open book. Opposite the noisy scene of the speaker, a path opens to the underground, which holds the hidden truth about society's prisoners. (Rancière 2008: 25) Rancière states that in the *History of the French Revolution*, Michelet perceives the rhetoric of the countryside during the Republic as a borrowed voice and replaces it with the voice of the Republic itself. By doing so, he points out that in the age of literature, silent things speak better about the Republic than republican speakers. (Rancière 2008: 25)

There is no single policy of literature, it is twofold. The *petrification* of language is the interweaving of two logics. On the one hand, it is a sign of the collapse of the system of differences that allowed the social hierarchy to be represented. On the other hand, it opposes the democracy of writing by a new poetics that introduces different rules of equality between the signifying role of words and the visibility of things.

Twentieth-century critics believed they could demystify literary naivety and reveal its unconscious discourse by showing how this fiction unconsciously encoded the laws of social structure, the state of class struggle, the market for symbolic goods, or the structure of the literary field. However, it was these critics who used explicative models of literature itself, to tell the truth about the literary text. A model of the symptomatic reading characteristic of literary creativity emerges: all prosaic realities are analyzed as phantasmagorias that bear witness to the hidden truth of society and the surface truth is revealed by travelling to the depths and expressing the unconscious social text that is decoded there. Literature is nothing but a state of intelligibility in which its newness is confirmed and transmitted to those theoretical

sciences which believed that they would force it to admit its hidden truth. Such an alleged contribution to literature is devalued.

It reinforces the process by which literary hermeneutics turned against itself. Then she put the obsession with her decoding at the expense of the democratic abundance of words and thoughts and recognized the danger to life itself in that *language of life* and opposed it to the system of rational representation of actions and the will to tell. (Rancière 2008: 28)

One form of democracy can be summed up in Flaubert's joke. He declares that he is more interested in the fleas eating the unfortunate rag than the rag itself. It is the molecular equality of micro-events, that is, individuality that no longer makes individuals but differences in intensity whose pure rhythm cures all social fever. (Rancière 2008: 30)

Literary *petrification* cannot be reduced to any simple scheme of identity between one form of writing and one political content. It is made up of the tension between three regimes of expression that define three forms of equality. First of all, there is the equality of topics and the availability of all words and sentences for creating the fabric of life. Then the democracy of silent things that speak louder than any prince from a tragedy. The last is the molecular democracy of the state of things without reason, which at the same time rejects the noise of speakers and deciphering the signs written on things. These three democracies are three ways by which literature assimilates its mode of expression with the way of arranging a common meaning. Thus, literature influences the creation of the horizon of visibility, the ways of deciphering that horizon, and the diagnosis of the place of the individual and the community in it, and what they can do. These are three mu-

tually conflicting policies that are also in conflict with the logic on the basis of which political communities build the objects of their appearance and the forms of their subjective expression. (Rancière 2008: 31)

The politics of literature is the conflict of these politics. Its criticism consists of the game between these tensions and the writing of the limits of the power of these games, which she carries out. Literature tests these limits when it wants to radicalize the silence that separates it from democratic messing and when it wants to surpass the democracy of the letter by setting itself up as the new language of the collective body. Copyists want to live books instead of copying them (e.g. in the work of Flaubert). The writer must undo the split that his characters strive to deepen to weave a life for themselves in it.

The other side of the paradox will appear in the twentieth century. The desire to transform itself into a means of emphasis will force accusatory literature to find room for the standardized messages of the world. This is evidenced by the representative work of political literature of the twentieth century, Dos Passos' *Club USA*. The author introduces stereotyped sentences from *actualities* into the adventures of his characters and then borrows montage forms from the Dadaist and Surrealist schools. The goal of editing media stereotypes is to enable people to feel the forms of violent domination of one class. The indifferent equality of stereotypes penetrates the stylistic equality applied to stories about destinies that bear witness to the power of domination.

Literature encounters another form of self-erasure when it wants to overcome the democratic silence of writing to compose a new writing. This is the project that the poet was engaged in, this is the project of a language accessible to all senses that celebrates the harmonies of the new collective body. The song of the future must be composed



of the remnants of ordinary life and the fossils of collective history collected at random in an antique store. Literature has become a powerful device for self-interpretation and re-poetization of life, capable of turning all the scraps of ordinary life into poetic works.

The interpretation of life is the changes that transform the forms of visibility of the common world and the abilities that ordinary bodies can use in the new world of the common. The new regime of meaning calls into question the very meaning of the opposition between interpretation and transformation of the world. That is why thinking about the politics of literature can help us understand indeterminacy and its consequences in sciences that strive to interpret the world as it is encountered in the practices that try to change it. (Rancière 2008: 35)

### *1.6. Criticism of Rancière's theory*

As I have indicated, Rancière, in his *Politics of Literature*, claims that literature is not a transhistorical term that refers to the overall product of the art of speech and writing. (Rancière 2008: 8) He writes that only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century did the term literature (*la littérature*) change its meaning and from denoting the knowledge of learned people began to denote the art of writing itself, so the literature was formed as a new identification system of the art of writing (*écriture*). Only when literature as a system is established, can one think about politics in literature. Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe have warned that the German early romantics are responsible for shaping the new concept of literature. Analyzing romantic texts, they highlight their break with the representational model. Similarly, representatives of the Marxist

theoretical tradition (Pierre Macherey, Étienne Balibar, Raymond Williams) explain that the formation of the term was influenced by social, economic, and aesthetic changes in the 18th century, which were interconnected. (Davis 2010: 102)

Politics exists only when the natural order of domination is suspended when those who were excluded are included, Rancière claims. (Rancière 1995: 31) It exists “because no social order is based on nature, no divine law governs human societies.” (Rancière 1995: 36) Politics appears very rarely and always concerns the conflict over the common public space and the existence and status of those who participate in it or would like to. It is about the establishment of a special sphere of experience “in which certain objects are seen as common, and certain subjects are accepted as capable of naming these objects and defending them with arguments.” (Rancière 2008: 7) It is not about any stable and unchanging basis, but about a size that is always contested. *Partage du sensible*, i.e. the *distribution of the sensible*, is one of the key terms by which Rancière names the system of obvious facts of sensory perception, which “simultaneously reveals the existence of something common and the demarcations within it that determine individual parts and positions.” (Rancière 2000: 12) The ambiguous term *partage* means both the sharing of something common and the mutual separation of individual elements. As Davis explains, those *excluded*, those who do not participate in any way (those he calls *les sans-part*) are completely invisible as political agents (subjects) before the process of subjectification. (Davis 2010: 91) Through politics, the *excluded* become visible, and get a voice and the opportunity to express themselves. Rancière contrasts the term *police (la police)* with *politics*, but not in the sense of a repressive state apparatus, but as a designation

for a specific order that assigns a special place, purpose, and goal to bodies and thus defines their ways of acting, being and speaking. As “the order of the visible and the tellable,” (Rancière 1995: 52) the police determine whether an activity will be visible and whether a certain discourse will be recognized as speech or as ordinary noise. It is about processes and institutions that maintain order, manage the representation of the community, and legitimize the existing situation. Davis explains that such a concept of the police corresponds to the usual understanding of the concept of politics, (Davis 2010: 76) while political activity (or *politics*) itself, for Rancière, is aimed at changes, at moving bodies from their assigned positions. (Rancière 1995: 53) Police order (*l'ordre policier*) is not based on disciplining bodies, but on the rule that governs their appearance. Bodies are placed in certain positions within the social hierarchy under the assumption that they will behave in accordance with these positions. The opposition between politics and the police in Rancière, the renaming of politics to the police, Davis believes, and the twisting of their usual meaning “blurs their ‘true’ meanings and dramatizes the conflict between them.” (Davis 2010: 76) It is distortion and dramatization, according to Davis, that are “characteristics of politics in a specific Rancière sense”. So, we can consider the aforementioned opposition as “the entry into force of the political.” (Davis 2010: 76) Let’s recall that Rancière participated in the work of Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe’s Center, but he, like Alain Badiou, insisted on rethinking and retaining the concept of politics. While for the other participants, it was important to extract the concept of the political and define the political difference, Badiou and Rancière kept politics as an “empathic emancipatory term.” (Marchart 2011: 130) The political difference is thus reshaped: instead of the political, *politics* is

opposed by the *police*. Only the political, in this way, became a *residual category*, but also a label for “the terrain where politics and the police meet and collide.” (Marchart 2011: 131) This means, Marchart concludes, that we only encounter *politics* through the political. This, he adds, is not enough attention in the literature on Rancière. Despite the sharp criticism of his notions of democracy and radical equality, Marchart recognizes the manifestation of the political in the notion of the distribution of the sensible.

A key element for understanding the notion of *partage du sensible*, Panagia argues, is the tension between the specific act of perception and its reliance on previously established objects worthy of perception. (Panagia 2010: 95) It is a sensitive dividing line that establishes perceptual conditions for the political community, as well as for the dispute (dissensus) within the community itself. (Panagia 2010: 96) The distribution between what is within the reach of perception and what is excluded “is a place of political struggle that becomes manifest when groups, individuals and collectives whose ways of perception are considered illegitimate, with regard to the dominant order of sharing the sensible, demand to take them into account.” (Panagia 2010: 97) It is about the conditions of visibility, audibility, and availability of certain entities in public space. Rancière himself compares his approach to Foucault’s archaeology, which from the very beginning is about knowing how “the order of the world is pre-written in the very configuration of the visible and the tellable.” (Rancière 2000: 13) Panagia concludes that the perceptual, phenomenological, aesthetic and political dimensions of Rancière’s analysis of the *distribution of the sensible* show that *politics* is an event of appearance “with the power to overthrow conventional forms of seeing, hearing and perceiving.” (Panagia 2010: 103)

In literature, no transhistorical term could be used to name “the overall product of the art of speech and writing”, according to Rancière. (Rancière 2008: 8) Only in the 19th century, he reminds, did the term (*la littérature*) cease to refer to the knowledge of learned people and began to function as a label for the art of writing (*écriture*) itself.

In short, literature is a new system of identification of the art of writing. The identification system of art is a system of relationships between practices, forms of visibility of these practices, and ways of understanding. It is therefore a matter of influencing the distribution of the senses that defines the world in which we live, how that world is visible to us, and how that world allows it to be expressed, and the abilities and inabilities that are manifested on that occasion. Only when this is determined, it is possible to think about the politics of literature ‘as such’, about the way it influences the distribution of objects that shape the common world, the subjects that inhabit it, and the abilities they have to see it, to name it and to act on it him. (Rancière 2008: 11)

Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe, who warned against breaking with the representational model in their comments on selected romantic texts, showed that the German early romantics were responsible for shaping the new concept of literature. Prominent representatives of the Marxist theoretical tradition, such as Pierre Macherey, Étienne Balibar, and Raymond Williams, warn of the same and tried to explain how the formation of the term itself was influenced by interconnected social, economic and aesthetic changes during the 18th century. (Davis 2010: 102) But instead of seeing the mentioned change as a great upheaval or a turbulent rupture (following Foucault’s understanding of events and discontinuities in his archaeology), Rancière in the discussion *The Mute Speech: An Essay on the Contradictions of Literature [La Parole*

*muette: Essai sur les contradictions de la littérature, 1998*] directs attention towards the so-called discrete (mute) revolutions of the past, observing them as a kind of metastatic transformation. (Rockhill 2011: 2) Rancière thus, according to Rockhill, breaks with the dominant understanding to which even his predecessors in the 20th century adhered, according to which “the classical era of codified representation ends with an intransitive, anti-representational shift in the modern era.” (Rockhill 2011: 3) The modernist artistic paradigm was based on the assumption that the classical era governed artistic production with strict rules. In contrast, modern art and literature (whether we include literature and art of the 19th century, the avant-gardes of the early 20th century, or the various innovations that regularly appear throughout history) proclaimed the liberation of expression, form and language “containing the potential for political emancipation.” (Rockhill 2011: 3) Instead, Rancière recognizes in modernism a problematic label for the *aesthetic regime* of art (*le régime esthétique des arts*), a label that conceals “the specificity of this regime of art, but also the meaning of the specificity of the regime of art” in general. (Rancière 2000: 34) It, in fact, superficially marks the shift between the *representational* and *anti-representational* model of art. In his opinion, the establishment of the *aesthetic regime* was marked by questioning: “What makes art and what does art make.” (Rancière 2000: 35) The concept of modernity simplifies relationships that are complex, multidimensional, and heterogeneous in the *aesthetic regime*, so modern art was equated with the anti-mimetic revolution. Rancière talks about two understandings of the avant-garde. The first is based on a clear understanding of the historical movement, with a strong connection between political subjectivity and a certain form, and the second is grounded in an aesthetic

anticipation of the future. “If the concept of the avant-garde has any meaning in the *aesthetic regime* of art,” explains Rancière, it does not consist in the progress of artistic innovation, “but on the side of the invention of sensory forms and material structures for the life to come.” (Rancière 2000: 45) This is also the key contribution of the aesthetic avant-garde to the political. It is, in fact, about two different understandings of political subjectivity: “the archipolitical idea of the party” or “the idea of a single political intelligentsia that collects the basic conditions of change” and “the metapolitical idea of global political subjectivity, the idea of virtuality in innovative modes of sensory experience, which anticipate the coming community.” (Rancière 2000: 45) According to Rancière, the political avant-garde is split between two conceptions: strategic and aesthetic. When it comes to literature, the emphasis is precisely on the notion of the *distribution of the sensible* and how literature questions the established relationships.

### *1.7. The gap between forms of political practice and artistic practices*

Jacques Rancière emphasizes the complex game of distanced relations and gaps between forms of political practice and artistic practices. He gathers his reflections in works such as *Le Destin des images* (2003), *Malaise dans l'esthétique* (2004) and *Le Spectateur émancipé* (2008). He continuously writes about modern and popular art, about cinematography in numerous columns and articles, and his texts participate in the catalogs of collective (Face à l'histoire, Rouge) or solo exhibitions (Marcel Broodthaers, James Coleman, Alfredo Jaar, Ray-

mond Depardon, Esther Shalev -Gerz, Éric Rondepierre and others).

After 2010, he deals with another important topic for his research. It is a matter of fighting against the hierarchy of time. He concludes that the linearity of the evolutionary conception of history is related to the model of fictitious rationality defined by Aristotle. It is based on a traditional hierarchy that distinguishes between action time leisure time and reproduction time. In the works *Le fil perdu* (2014) and *Les bords de la fiction* (2017) he describes how the modern interruption of narrative continuity means the destruction of this hierarchy. In the works of G. Flaubert, V. Woolf, W. Faulkner, WG Sebald, etc., the present world is created in which everyone can experience various forms of sensitive experience. At the same time, in the work of Béla Tarr. *Le temps d'après* (2011) analyses the way this director stages a shift from a circular time of repetition to a time of the decision to illuminate both communism and its consequences. In *Modern Times* (2018) they show how film and dance led to a redistribution of temporality, canceling the opposition of free action and mechanical movement.





2. The politics of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's  
novel *The Dried Out Mire*

## 2.1. *Police of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's The Dried Out Mire*

Janko Polić Kamov, in the novel *The Dried Out Mire*, criticizes the *institution of art* as nurtured in the civil society of his era and seeks new functions of art in moral, ethical, social, and political reevaluation. It has already been emphasized in the critical literature that *The Dried Out Mire* is an avant-garde text (Čerina 1913, Popović 1970, Kisić 1985, Ivaštinović 2005, Milanja 1980, 1981, Šicel <sup>2</sup>1997, 2005, Frangeš 1987, Jelčić 1997, Nemeč 1998, 2001, Žmegač 1970, 1982, 2001, Sla-binac 1988, 2006, Gjurgjan, 1984, Machiedo 1986, 2007, Marot Kiš 2006, Matijašević 2008, Brlek 2004, Biti 2003, Mijatović, Marot-Kiš 2013, Brajović 2018). This chapter will examine the ways in which the author raises the question of the status and role of art in society.

Rancière argues that different political practices and visions of community are possible within the *aesthetic regime*. This is happening in the vanguard whose representatives are members of both the right and the left. The literature and art of the 19th century, the avant-gardes of the early 20th century, and the various innovations that regularly appear throughout history demand the liberation of expression, form, and language “containing the potential for political emancipation.” (Rockhill 2011: 3) The concept of modernity simplifies relationships that are complex, multidimensional and heterogeneous in the *aesthetic regime*. That is why modern art was equated with the anti-mimetic revolution.

Rancière concludes that there are two understandings of the avant-garde. First, it is based on a clear understanding of the historical movement and has a strong connection between political subjectivi-

ty and a particular form. The second is based on the aesthetic anticipation of the future. The critic believes that the meaning of the term avant-garde in the *aesthetic regime* is not reduced to the progress of artistic innovations, “but is on the side of the invention of sensory forms and material structures for the life to come.” (Rancière 2000: 45) This is the fundamental contribution of the aesthetic avant-garde to the political. The aesthetic and political avant-garde interpret political subjectivity in two different ways. They start from (1) “the archpolitical idea of the party” or “the idea of a single political intelligentsia that collects the basic conditions of change” and (2) “the metapolitical idea of global political subjectivity, the idea of virtuality in innovative modes of sensory experience, which anticipate the community to come.” (Rancière 2000: 45) That is why Rancière claims that the political vanguard is the distribution between strategic and aesthetic conception. In literature, this is shown through the concept of *distribution of the sensible* and the way in which literature problematizes the relationships encountered. This part of the book shows the ways in which Janko Polić Kamov problematizes *politics* and *police* in Rancière’s sense in the novel *The Dried Out Mire*. The critic states that the *politics* of literature cannot be identified with the *politics* of the writers. (Rancière 2008: 8) In their works, they question social structures, political movements, and different identities in different ways. Rancière defines these procedures as the *police* of literature. This includes political statements, engaged actions, publication of personal views on certain political issues, and criticism of the society in which we live and work. For Rancière, political activity (or *politics*) itself is aimed at changes, i.e. at moving bodies from their assigned positions. (Rancière 1995: 53) In the novel *The Dried Out Mire*, statements about one’s poetics and the society in

which the author works (*police*) and literary procedures that *distribution of the sensible* will be identified. They will refer to their meaning in the context of the discourse itself and literary creation in general.

*Police* is the arrangement of the situation in a defined common space after an agreement has been reached on who the actors of the discussion are, on what space and in what way these actors operate, and what that space is like. It is a label for a specific order that assigns bodies a special place, purpose, and goal and thus defines their ways of acting, being, and speaking. The police determine whether an activity will be visible and whether a certain discourse will be recognized as speech or as ordinary noise.

There are many examples of such statements in Janko Polić Kamov's novel *The Dried Out Mire*, and they are reshaped in an avant-garde way. Criticism of the processes and institutions that maintain order, manage the representation of the community, and legitimize the existing situation is presented. The narrator looks back on his narration and comments ironically: "My story was similar to that of the old man, who was sent to the store to get oil and flour, and he, so as not to forget, says and repeats flour and oil at the same time, and when he comes to the store and says 'good day', he forgets that he came." (Polić Kamov 2000: 156) The narrator will testify about his poetics and the cultural environment in which he writes within the novel in the inserted dash:

I want to tell you a story... It's a study, you understand... (...) What drives great works? Vanity. (...) This is how my hero is. In his youth, he decided to devote himself to the people's idea - to engage in public action. (...) And he works, gets ready, studies - he leaves the enjoyment of the lowly: wife, wine, and so on... (...) And they condemned him. (...) Now it seems to him that he has seen (...) a secret, barely perceptible, but a great mockery of

all workers for the people. (...) He loses his balance, judgment, and reasoning... (...) He sees his entire homeland as a successful stage for murderers and cheats, (...) He is vanity: he wants name, fame, and - fear... (...) And so he wanders, fools around, and invents horrors... (Polić Kamov 2000: 56-57)

These statements by Janko Polić Kamov are distinguished by the direct presentation of the narrator's political point of view. They express positions in which the narrator does not agree with the current state of society, as well as with the dominant poetics in literature and art. According to Rancière, they belong to *political dissent*. They do not belong to a *literary misunderstanding* because they do not achieve a redistribution of sensory experience.

## 2.2. *Politics of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's novel The Dried Out Mire*

In the *Politics of Literature [Politika književnosti]*, Rancière writes that “literature is a new system of identification of the art of writing. The identification system of art is a system of relationships between practices, forms of visibility of these practices, and ways of understanding.” (Rancière 2008: 11) *Politics* is only the practice of writing that has the possibility of breaking the fundamental agreement on the questions of who we are, where we are, when we are, and what we do. It is “one way of influencing *the distribution of the sensible* that defines the world in which we live, the way in which that world is visible to us, and how that world allows it to be expressed, and the abilities and inabilities that are manifested on that occasion.” (Rancière 2008: 11)

The factor of disorder, irregularity, and licentiousness (*dérèglement*) in literature disrupts the existing (police) order of sharing the sensible. Rancière calls it literariness (*littérarité*) and introduces the notion of radical equality into literature: “The democracy of writing is a regime of free writing that everyone can spread at will (...). It is about a new *distribution of the sensible*, about a new relationship between the act of speech, the world it creates, and the abilities of those who inhabit that world.” (Rancière 2008: 17) Literature and art, according to Rancière, act as privileged places for delineating the *path of the political*.

### 2.2.1. A story within a story

The procedure was used on several occasions in *The Dried Out Miremise-en-abîme*. It consists of a reflection that connects the diegetic whole and some parts of it, and in the theory of literature, there are several attempts to organize it.<sup>9</sup> Several interpolated stories within a story are present in this work. In the first part of the novel, written in the third person, called *At the Bottom*, the story about Mr. Marić and the widow who has a young daughter is inserted. It was brought in the

9 There are several typologies of possible subtypes of such reflection. L. Dällembach establishes his typology in the work *The specular story. Essay on mise-en-abyme [Le récit spéculaire. Essai sur la mise-en-abîme]* from 1977, which he cites: (1) simple duplication (the fragment stands in a relation of similarity to the whole to which it belongs); (2) multiplication *ad infinitum* (a reflective fragment contains a fragment of the same type); (3) *aphoristic mise-en-abîme* (the fragment somehow includes the work to which it belongs). Reflection occurs in different intensities, so L. Dällembach distinguishes three levels of reflection: (1) when the statement reflects the story (as a summary of the plot, in narrative form or other, e.g. visual forms); (2) when the statement reflects the process of expression, the process of creation of the work and (3) when the statement reflects the narrative or linguistic code (in open or actualized forms).

form of a dialogue, marked with italics and characterized by detailed didascalies. Dramatic excitement is achieved by describing the erotic desire of a middle-aged woman for a young man who is her lodger and who is attracted to her daughter. This *aphoristic mise-en-abîme* about Marić and the landlady is seen as the hermeneutic center of the text, in which numerous semantic fields that are problematized in the novel are hinted at. The inserted story within the story reflects the novel as a whole, challenging and describing it, resisting the story, but also completing it.

The second inserted story in the story in the first part of the novel about the adulterers Emanuel and Adela questions the hero's (secret) erotic longings and reflects the structure of the entire novel even more extensively. It emphasizes the hero's fantasies about an incestuous relationship with his sister. It would only be possible after the death of her professor husband. In the text of the novel, sexuality, coitus, and murder, crime are directly connected. The protagonist of the strip, Emanuel, systematically talks about his writing. He claims that he wants to write studies on human behaviour and that his hero surrendered to the idea of public action in his youth. He studies a lot and does not engage in low pleasures such as seducing women, getting drunk, and the like. The environment condemned him just like all other *workers for the people*. This affected him and he lost his analytical powers. He looks at his native country and sees only a multitude of murderers and cheats, among whom he, who wants fame, does not fit in at all. He is misunderstood and all that remains is for him to wander and invent numerous horrors. This literary *credo* is elaborated in the novel: the social conditions in the homeland and the protagonist's obsession with numerous ideas that he constantly questions are unmasked. In



the interpolated story in the story of Emanuel and Adela, the narrator lays bare the relationship of fiction to the reality of the story, i.e. the relationship of fiction in fiction to Arsen's reality.

The last inserted interpolation in *At the Bottom* is highlighted graphostylematically. The main character Arsen himself defined it in front of the reader by genre as *a poem, a trope, a figure*. In that line, he thematizes the occurrence of lung disease in his body, which affected his commitment to life. He devoted himself entirely to personal training and persistent writing.

In the part of the novel *At the Bottom*, the narrator refers to the artificial nature of the literary text by inserting sketches with motifs from the protagonist's childhood and highlighting their titles in italics: "And Arsen noted: *First point*. Early childhood: third year. (...) *Second point*. In the public school, he was among the privileged and therefore not subject to the teacher's bullying. (...) *Third*. Second public school: in the eighth year. (...) *Fourth*. Twelve years. Summer. (italics emphasized by J. P. Kamov)" (Polić Kamov 2000: 95) Four crucial moments for personality development from the earliest period of life will serve as a blueprint and will become the basis for building a new insert in the form of excerpts from the diary. Arsen introduces these fragments in the first person in the second part of the novel *To the Width*. Reworked, and supplemented by another point, the stories within the story have been expanded. Doubling subtitles within the same novel, where only the word order is changed, creates a specific reflection and regularly draws attention to itself. *The aphoristic mise-en-abîme* is elaborated in parallel with the introduction of statements that explicitly expose the awareness of the annulment of the fundamental laws of temporal organization of the text typical of a realistically organized work.

Semantic anchors from these stories are carried throughout the novel and that is how a strong metacommunicative component was created that allows the narrator to create a semantic surplus. Because of him, the reflective statement works both on the level of the story and on the level of reflection. At the level of the story, like all other utterances, it participates in the formation of meaning, while at the level of reflection, it appears as an element of meta-meaning that enables the story to take itself as its content and theme. The inserted stories in the story testify to the novel's flexibility, and the narrator regularly refers to their lesson. Within the text of the novel, they occupy a hierarchically lower narrative position than that of the primary diegetic world of the novel. They are regularly associated with some element from the primary diegetic world and contain an important aspect of the primary world. The embedded representation reproduces the primary representation as a whole. The narrator emphasized the differences between these narrative worlds, but also the similarities. That's how the critic commented on the events he presented. The stories in the story draw attention to themselves, and their sequence directs the reader to the message of the text.

### 2.2.2. *Forms of texts and typographic solutions*

Many different forms of texts (letters, dreams, reviews, overviews, etc.) are included in the novel *The Dried Out Mire* which is highlighted in italics. In excerpts from Liza's letter and Arsen's reply, the narrator describes the process of creating the letter. His writing is interrupted by a consideration of Liza's physiognomy and personality,

and comments are made about her appearance in private situations. The writing of the letter is interrupted by the arrival of the maid Marija, who awakens a series of associations, so the narrator also introduces them into the novel. In the novel, the evaluations of the very letter that the hero writes are expressed, and the nobility of the very act of writing the letter is emphasized. (Polić Kamov 2000: 82)

In the first part of the novel, already existing texts, i.e. self-citations are included. Numerous descriptions of Arsen's dreams are given in italics, in which the fictional status of the story is self-evident. The narrator states the same dream that he dreams twice and further explains it with statements placed in parentheses: "(...) I saw (in a dream!) as if through a dream (!! ) and a tired professor. But he is immediately overshadowed by his sister. (...) That's when I woke up, and the dream was so hot, that I believed in the reality of the dream (!!!)" (Polić Kamov 2000: 55) In the dream that follows, his plane disperses to the plane of the first dream and on the level of his dream continuation. At the same time, a fluid boundary is established between them: "And then, then - Arsen was later aware that he had *not woken up*, and anyway after his dream, he fell asleep and again later, began to dream the sequel: (...) (Kamov pointed out)" (Polić Kamov 2000: 91) Thus, within one frame (of the dream itself in relation to the reality of the novel), the *frame breaks*. This frame is inserted into a new relationship: the previous dream is the frame of a new dream from which the hero wants to wake up with the strength of his will. In the conversation with the painter Rubelli, an explanation of the dream is offered, thus testifying to the ontological uncertainty that occurs as a result of such *frame breaks*. On the thematic level, that dream is brought into connection with the rest of *The Dried Out Mireby* emphasizing and connecting

the crime and the dream. The imaginary crimes that Arsen wants to commit are regularly described in dreamlike states of consciousness.

The main character is interested in questions related to the nature of sexuality and analogous human aspirations, which he also includes the criminal urge. He gives an *overview* of his imagined experiences, which he titles and underlines in italics within the text of the novel: “*First sexual love: Adela, no. 4; then actress Zora J. Primorska varoš, then Natalija, no number, then Bezimena. Border. Park. and the Dalmatian cellar. Shareholder.*” (Polić Kamov 2000: 41-45) The narrator will repeatedly quote some sentences from these sketches and mark them with quotation marks. This is how he explains the insertion of auto quotes in the work.

In the part of the novel *To the Width*, the narrator uses the text organized into columns in a polemic about the stylistic differences between Zola’s and Vergina’s art. He compares these conclusions with the differences between the village and the city, which were also made in two columns. (Polić Kamov 2000: 164-165) He talks about the characters of Arsen and Mark and the characteristics of their manuscripts by entering a table in two columns. (Polić Kamov 2000: 166) The narrator explicitly talks about the distribution of literary forms in the example of Mark’s (synthetic) and Arsen’s (analytical) way of writing. He uses this distribution into two types of writing to once again create a reflection of the idea of a global story. Then, almost in shorthand, he will enumerate in columns the features of *instinct* (bottom: homeland) and *culture* (width: world) (Polić Kamov 2000: 183) and conclude: “I immediately threw down the pen. I saw that I could still add subscripts and that the sum would grow by - zeroes...” (Polić Kamov 2000: 183)

Attention was paid to the language in which the text was writ-

ten. He exposes himself to the reader in the enumeration process. Various procedures are present in the novel, such as lines made of dots that have a stylistic function. Large parts of the text are printed in italics, and there are also inserted parts that are not distinguished graphically, but only by (sub)headings, usually in italics. Tables have also been inserted into the text of *The Dried Out Mire*.

### 2.2.3. Problematization of the genre

The narrator wants to show the possibility of the functioning of different language texts within the novel, so he often intervenes in his narration by inserting, for example, letters, excerpts from personal diaries, essays, and notes, and marks them graphically. *The Dried Out Mire* questions the boundaries between fiction and fact, between art and life. The basis on which Kamov's novel is told uses and abuses the conventions of popular and elitist culture. The leading registers of the discourse of *The Dried Out Mire* are literary, socio-critical, autobiographical, feuilletonistic (popular-cultural), which follow the fields of activity of its writer. The novel is intended to be parodic in its intertextual relationship to tradition and genre conventions. The boundaries between literary genres in this novel are very fluid. The interweaving process is laid bare before the reader between *The Dried Out Mire* and the *Bildungsroman* (Bačić-Karković 1999, Frangeš 1987, Gjurđjan 1984, Nemeć 1998, Šicel 1978, Brajović 2018) and the *Künstlerroman*. (Biti 2003) We look at the relationship between *The Dried Out Mire* and the autobiographical novel, (Gašparović 1988, Gjurđjan 1984, Frangeš 1987, Ivaštinović 1955, Milanja 1981), the pi-

caresque (Gašparović 1988, Brkić 2007) and the erotic novel (incest). (Gašparović 1988) The work has been interpreted as gothic, (Slabinac 1988) thematic, (Milanja 1980) epistolary, (Gjurgjan 1984) fantastic, genetic-psychological (Milanja 1980), and analytical novel or novel of the course of consciousness. (Ivaštinović 1955, Kisić 1985, Milanja 1980) Critics interpret *The Dried Out Mire* as a diary (Gjurgjan 1984), as a novel essay (Gašparović 1988, Ivaštinović 1955, Popović 1970) as a travelogue, (Gašparović 1988) and as a feuilleton. (Gašparović 1988, Ivaštinović 1955, Popović 1970)

In *The Dried Out Mire*, the genres found are negatively (avant-garde) reevaluated. Unlike the official genres that are unique and gender and ontologically project a unique fictional world, in Kamov's novel literature interrupts the ontological horizon of the text with the help of numerous inserted genres: letters, essays, diary entries, theatrical dialogues, and stories within stories. The work is characterized by distinct stylistic heteroglossia. In this way, the novel thinks about itself and its function within itself. Astrid Earl views genre as a system of conventions that each individual learns throughout his life. That is why it belongs to cultural knowledge that is improved through socialization and inculturation. In childhood, an individual first gets to know a fairy tale, then during schooling, through reading, he acquires knowledge about genres and in later life consolidates them in cultural memory. Genres act as archetypes: the individual knows what to expect in an adventure or crime novel. Genre, therefore, is part of cultural memory and as such can represent a framework for self-reflection (Earl 2005: 148) that the narrator uses in his texts.

#### 2.2.4. Problematization of technology and methodology of writing

In *The Dried Out Mire*, the contestation of classic realistic representation is carried out. In the novel, the basic determinants of realist poetics are simultaneously included and challenged, the dialogical relationship of identification and distance is contrasted, and the resulting liberating effect is emphasized. Parody in *The Dried Out Mire* is both a conventional and a revolutionary genre at the same time, looking backward and forward at the same time. It brings the storyteller's awareness of the literary nature, form, and function of what he writes. Kamov's parody derives directly from literature, making its doubly artificial nature of it is obvious, which necessarily leads to implicit meta-textuality. In *The Dried Out Mire* there are frequent comments about the artificiality of the literary work itself. Thus, the narrator expresses many thoughts about his calling in life and is often ironic: "Study and work like before! How many ironies! The paper rustles like autumn leaves; books stick out like bare branches. The silence cries out more and more fearfully." (Polić Kamov 2000: 204)

Within the novel, the poetics of *The Dried Out Mire* are thematized, so such statements are scattered on different levels of the complete story. At the beginning of the novel, the position of literature in Arsen's home, i.e. in Croatian civil society during his school days, is shown: "I would rather bring guests like this (fleas, ST-Š. inserted) into the house, because when literature cannot shake your conscience, it will surely - fleas!" (Polić Kamov 2000: 22) Literature is powerless and purposeless, but the hero believes that it is his only weapon in the fight against the petrified canons of civil morality. That is why he sees the poem as a symbol of art and it is his message to the world that speaks

permanently *on paper like a testament*. In the work, the hero repeatedly explicitly expresses his opinion about the Croatian novel and literature in general: “All literature is boring without bums, lunatics, and criminals.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 93) Numerous dialogues with his friend, the painter Rubelli, thematize questions related to art: “Is the world must see sick, ugly in the painter’s picture... We are here to discover beauty... to at least create it - even if we dirty ourselves. Our coats are muddy and our hands are dirty, but the picture is clear. (...) You say: aesthetics. (...) And aesthetics, you said, is the enjoyment of the beautiful; therefore always – fornication.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 86) The narrator criticizes the literature of *the beautiful hero* and declares it bloodless, cold, and waxy. He presents theses about new literature in which hyperbolized and invented themes would be metaphorized and allegorized, and intensified and strongly emphasized. The poetics nurtured by the hero in *The Dried Out Mire* coincides in all its fundamental points with Kamov’s poetic principles explicitly stated in his letters to his brother Vladimir and friend Mija Radošević. In the dialogue with the painter Rubelli, these are presented about painting and art in general, where the narrator is a strong apologist for the modern approach to art. He challenges some well-established dogmas, for example, about the autonomy of art and its separation from life, about art as an expression of individual subjectivity, about its separate status compared to mass culture...

In the novel *The Dried Out Mire*, the narrator repeatedly comments on the abandonment of the traditional temporal organization of the text. In the frames of *the second chapter* in the part of the novel *In Wider*, a break in the presentation of details from school and family life is marked by a line made up of dots and the comment: “But I make



mistakes; this seems to me to be immaturity; that escaped me and I made a mistake in the chronology.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 136) *The third chapter* combines within itself, without any graphostylematic marker, a metatextual statement with which he begins questioning his relationship with politics and parents in his youth. In *Chapter Four*, which deals with the stay in the dormitory, the hero states: “I crashed and again committed a chronological error” (Polić Kamov 2000: 142) this time without graphostylistic markings. In *Chapter Five*, he repeats a similar process of explaining his experience of writing before describing his escape from his parent’s house in his young days, but he separates it graphostylematically with a few dots: “I would have to read everything I wrote, and the handwriting bothers me as much for reading as for writing. I would like to tear everything up and start anew so that I don’t feel so much compassion for my suffering and the letters, which are so poorly and wrongly nailed to paper as if on propellor.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 143) Conclusion: he is both *alcoholic and sexual*. The insert is finished, the *given chapter* is finished, and the next one begins: “This is a short description of my studies, as I managed to arrange it from the unwritten novella ‘One Soul without a Stove’. The next day I was waiting for Marko. Pardon! This is yet another chronological error. Marko came to me while I was in Rome.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 152)

In *The Dried Out Mire*, the narrator thematizes its linguistic code. In the discourse of the novel, he introduced numerous remarks about the fundamental character of the arbitrariness of the entire fiction, and at the same time, he emphasized various questions about the very technology and methodology of writing. At the end of the excerpt in the second book, *The Dried Out Mire*, the narrator explicitly shows the writing process itself on two occasions: “And when writing, there

were pauses after every tenth page, then the tenth line, then the tenth word, and... and every word... How slow one writes and think quickly!” (Polić Kamov 2000: 177) They explain the same topic in more detail in the excerpt that follows:

And now all those months of work, study, and haste seemed to me. And at night here and there, with insomnia, and insomnia with wide, big, scary eyes: pits of gaze into the pit of darkness. And yet, during all that time, I moved among people, listened to the ticking of machines, and watched the exchange of letters, pages, books, plots, ideas, theories... I read quickly; and thought even faster: it was necessary to record both reading and thoughts; and when I wanted to write, I had to organize my thoughts so as not to crush my weak hand... It was very important to pause... Then I remembered two things, two events. (Polić Kamov 2000: 177-178)

Witness the drudgery of his work: “Paper, table, and ink - all this scares and torments me like libraries, school, and discipline. It is my soul that is harnessed and weighs letters and thoughts under the whip.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 204) He claims that everything is Arsen’s, even his art came from water and bilge. Art arises from a strong struggle and strong turmoil of feelings in *the psyche of the cloaca*: “(...) and again this sentence, so rigid, swam and moved in him because in no time it seemed to him again that he was watery, moving, mixed.; He thought, called everything to mind, compared it, and then - as if he had taken that sentence by the throat as it bored him - he threw it away.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 94) *Rights* art is created by drying up the bilge, and other attempts at writing are characterized as unsuccessful: “I tried to write so many times and everything came out watery, without stench,

fat, and bulk.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 179) It is stated the cause of his writing: “Illness pulls him in because it separates him from the world. The disease threw him into reasoning because his organism had something in it, which the surface does not reveal.” (J. Polić Kamov 2000: 45) The author’s method of writing is problematized in the work: “At that moment I stopped thinking. I stopped to look.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 123) or “I didn’t notice all that on the first day of our meeting; today it is easier for me to describe all that, but then it was difficult for me to notice.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 156)

In the novel, there are frequent comments about the manuscript itself: “And this sentence begins to move in it full of passion, to capture the language.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 51) At the beginning of *writing about himself*, the narrator is confronted with the problem of translating life events into text: “It was necessary to find a way out, a formula, a word: it was necessary to find the logic of the absurd. Once he had said: ‘This word is not me,’ and now it was as if this reality was also him; there were two beings in it and two realities.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 93) or “And this word began to stretch its letters with particular pleasure. The letters were soft and large. Each letter was so crafted, and kept the same word for itself until suddenly a huge flood of something soft flooded his tender breasts.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 54) The handwriting is self-aware, self-sufficient, stubborn, and difficult, and at the very end part of the novel *To the Width* will make himself known once again: “I looked at my manuscript. And there were letters and words, the letters were not connected organically, firmly; they were jumbled, uneven, scattered, and the sentences were also incomplete: there were words here and there, transitions, stylistics.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 184) At the end of his literary journey, the narrator realized that such a cha-

otic, incomplete, illegible, and fragmentary manuscript offered numerous challenges. He still believes in the power of transforming the world through art: “And I thought about my songs and the fact that I’m not capable of writing in another language and that I don’t understand music and I didn’t cancel myself. Quite the opposite. This challenged me.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 118) And then he realizes that such a manuscript is not enough for him. The narrator in the discourse of *The Dried Out Mire* testifies to the reworking of the text of a novella and the inclusion of that reworking in the novel. In the novel, he comments on the combination of writing and play: “I’m lazy to write. And I’m just playing with this on paper, throwing words, ideas and impressions out of chance and boredom.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 204) It offers a solution to oppose the rigid order that rules the whole world and is its essence: “I will write with numbers.” I’m left with numbers. It’s such a dry, business style; without exuberance, phraseology, devices... Formulas... without punctuation... numbers.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 118)

The narrator anticipates modernist searches in language and uses narrative techniques such as free undirected speech, stream of consciousness, the principle of fragmentation, and luddism. In this prose, there is no solid plot, the chronological sequence of events is not respected, there is no authoritative omniscient narrator, and there is no rational connection between the character and actions of the hero. Tables are inserted into the novel’s discourse; structuring procedures are used that are either emphatically systematized or openly arbitrary in their arrangement. The work occasionally breaks down the temporal and spatial organization of the narration, there are combinatorics, unsolvable contradictions, paradoxes, reinterpretations of popular genres, and parodies of literary and non-literary texts.

### 2.2.5. Own critical frame of reference

Scattered throughout the novel are numerous statements in which the narrator offers his critical frame of reference. This requires a change in the form of reception and the traditional critical approach to the text. Towards the end of the novel, the literary discourse becomes more and more aware of itself. He drew attention to his artificiality in various ways. Then the narrator does not consider it necessary to mark the interpolations graphostylematically or to separate them from the discourse in any way. Arsen metatextually testifies to whether equating inserted parts of the text with discourse is a conscious act of the author or whether this procedure is a consequence of his great haste in writing:

As I write this, I feel the same rush. (...) I see that I have entered a huge, unfinished object, which I could both embrace and create. (...) I won't make it! I won't live long... It would be fine to sit for years at the table, in the room; keep silent, take notes, and do not write. And I can't. I smoke a cigarette after every tenth line. My pen goes too fast on the paper, I have to hold my hand - that's why I smoke. And my thoughts are speeding like lightning and I have to organize them again: that's why I would eat a lot and then - smoke... (...) So I can't be comprehensive; where I should and could be: I only write the results of my studies, not the study itself - - (...) I don't have time to record conversations... (Polić Kamov 2000: 137-138)

In the novel, the boundary between dream and reality is cancelled and the narrator explicitly claims that the hero controlled his dreams by the power of his will. These actions in the part of the novel *At the Bottom* confirm that the products are aware of the author's poetic intention. In this way, one's critical frame of reference within the

novel conditions a change in the form of its reception and the traditional critical approach to the text. It is prose that is focused primarily on the storytelling process, while the story itself remains in the background. Since the problems of writing and the processes of creation of the work became the theme of the novel, the system of novelistic conventions is deconstructed at the level of the present fictional elements and narrative levels.

In the novel, a change in *the writing process* is visible when the discourse moves from the third person to the first person, which emphasizes the focus on the description of the psyche of a single character. The composition of Kamov's *The Dried Out Mire* regularly attracted the attention of critics. It was pointed out that the first of the three books of the novel *The Dried Out Mire*, entitled *At the Bottom*, is written in *the third person*, and the next two books, *To the Width* and *To the Height*, are in *the first person*. Most critics claim that the transition from er-form to ich-form takes place in the novel without any motivation. (Šicel 1978: 352, Slabinac 1988: 99, Milanja 1981: 458, Gašparović 1988: 179, Popović 1970: 170-172, Gjurgjan 1984: 26) Tomislav Brlek and Vladimir Biti. Following the teaching of Franz Stanzel, Brlek concludes that "choosing one form or another, i.e. Ich- or Er-form, is not a 'question of stylistic decor but a question of the structure of the narrative text.'" (Brlek 2004: 160) Biti claims that between there is a non-negligible distance between the narrator in the first part and Arsen, so the role of the distant narrator is necessary. In the same article, the critic compares Arsen's transformation from a poet (in the first part) to a storyteller (in the second part) with Bakhtin's distinction between the monologic words of a poet and the dialogic words of a novelist. Of course, this also affects the structure of the plot. (Biti 2003: 53-64)

The transition from the first to the third person narration can be seen from the perspective of G. Genette who claims that focalization through the hero, i.e. Arsen, for the narrator represents the same artificial narrowing of his field of vision in both the third and the first person, even in cases where the narrator is the hero at the same time. In the first book *The Dried Out Mire*, narrated in the third person, it is not possible to put a sign of equality between the author, the character, and the narrator: neither the author is identical to the character, nor is the character identical to the narrator, nor is the narrator identical to the author. In contrast to heterodiegetic fiction, in the second and third books, the autobiographical narration was realized, i.e. the identity of the author, narrator, and character was realized. *The Dried Out Mire* is teeming with metatextual statements about these actions, as some previous critical works warn about. (Nemec 1994: 64, Gašparović 1988: 189-190, Biti 2003: 53-64, Slabinac 2006: 93-106) In the first book of the novel, the hero, Arsen, *that kind of scribe* explains his understanding of the function of literature with metatextual statements about numerous questions and by interpolating two *stories within a story* and a *trope*, as he calls it. The narrator thematizes autobiographical moments: “Because this intimacy was narrower, material for a novel, a study and a drama: we exploited each other (Arsen-Marko, inserted by ST-Š.), and each took a monopoly on the autostudy...” (Polić Kamov 2000: 167), and in the second part of the novel he testifies about the concluded *autobiographical contract* (Ph. Lejuene): “Before, I also dreamed that I was one face of my narrative, and I knew in my dream that I was both the author and that face at the same time...” (Polić Kamov 2000: 172) After presenting the literary program in the objective mode of narration, the continuation of the novel is moved to the sub-

jective mode, so Arsen in the first person meticulously analyses his life, to which he explicitly refers: “I do not bring others up; I write about myself. That’s why all this will come out incomplete and unfinished. I’m running out of ground, so to speak, because I decided to write only about myself. And there was an opportunity to illuminate oneself in another, to reflect one’s eyes in another’s eyes. Nothing for that.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 168) The first part of the novel shows the development of the narrator to the point where he takes over the writing of the novel that encompasses him, and then confidently becomes ready to look at himself: “I stopped imagining novels, plays, studies, journeys, new plots, cities, countries, technique and stylistics... I watched a poet dying of hunger and a poem dying of childbirth... and a new child who recovers grows stronger and grows from satiety, health, and of life.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 181)

#### 2.2.6. *Active role of the reader*

The narrator addresses the reader in *The Dried Out Mire*. He expresses his opinion about the reader’s encounter with the novel from his perspective: “These words will tire the reader and maybe make him angry. Life does not know how to finish the drama beautifully and neatly, as it started it.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 168) In *The Dried Out Mire*, he is understood as a construct that is mediated by previous texts and a social role. He is aware of the extent to which his novel departs from the canon of previous literary productions, so he interpolates explicit comments that should serve as guides for the reader in mastering the poetics and building the meaning of the work:



It would be very nice and clever to plan the narrative and then work out individual points, but beauty and intelligence are not in that case but convenience for the writer and reader. And I would like these words to leave the reader with that dissatisfaction, skepticism, and frustration that caused them to be written, namely to write as it was lived. (Polić Kamov 2000: 146)

In the novel, *frame breaks* are constructed, replaced, and provoke ontological uncertainty, as McHale said. (McHale 1987:14) At the end, the reader is enabled to recontextualize and orient themselves in the meaning potential of the literary work. At the end of the novel, in that semantically important place, the narrator addresses his words directly to the reader: “As you can see, I am silent. I don’t feel like talking. And that is clear and enough. I must not speak so as not to make you sad. That is even clearer.” (Polić Kamov 2000: 208) He reached this state by himself during the development of the text, as evidenced by several metatextual statements from the first part of the novel. The question repeated four times on the same page of the text: “What is left for me?” (Polić Kamov 2000: 208) echoes painfully in the search for a new Babylonian language, for a universal language.

### 2.3. Conclusion

In *The Dried Out Mire*, the author shows the storyteller’s development up to the point where he takes over the writing of the novel that encompasses him, so we can also define it as the *self-begetting native novel*. (Kellman 1980) The hero is aware of his illness and his approaching end, so he wants to ‘hand himself over’ to the reader. At

the same time, he confides in the reader and sends him messages about himself, and also delivers a message to himself. He has a premonition of his impending death, which hinders him from writing: "So, I cannot be extensive; where I should and - could be: and I only write the results of my studies there, not the study itself - - - (...) I don't have time to record conversations; I am scattered again; I live on many sides, and my ideas and concepts are created on all these sides, towards which my life runs and I cannot go in pursuit of everyone at the same time." (Polić Kamov 2000: 138) He collects and combines everything he has experienced and thus he overcomes his past. All the past events have left a mark on him that, just like the disease that eats away at him physically, offers itself as material for meticulous analysis. Arsen portrays himself as a non-violent anarchist and as an ironic critic of the absolutizing pretensions of generally accepted social, cultural, and literary norms. He is not a traditional hero because he does not defend the sanctity and inviolability of Values of any kind. The past and tradition are no longer solid models to be followed unquestioningly. They become material for his analysis, the results of which are summarized in the statement: "Because I am not me!" (Polić Kamov 2000: 209) With these statements, the narrator in the novel realizes the *police* of literature as Rancière defines it. Through numerous literary procedures, the narrator presented a different order among the already-known literary categories. Politics and the police are thus opposed in the work. There is a conflict between the existing *distribution of the sensible* and the new (democratic) regime of visibility. This is explained as an expression of the political. *The Dried Out Mire* has inherent politics, establishing it as a privileged zone of visibility of the *trace of the political*.



3. The Politics of literature in novels *Berenice's hair* by  
Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić

### 3.1. *Police of literature in novels Berenice's Hair by Nedjeljko Fabrio and Sonnenschein by Daša Drndić*

Examples of police statements are numerous in the novels *Berenice's Hair* by Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić. In the novel *Berenice's Hair*, the narrator makes moralistic and didactic comments (most often in parentheses) about numerous issues related to man's precarious position in the whirlwinds of the past. He wondered about the fate of the Croatian people: "And why are there Croats? (Dear Alfonsine, that's what every Croat wonders to this day!)" (Fabrio 1990: 43) and discusses the beginnings of national consciousness:

(However, who and why could have killed Camillo Evangelisti? The Croats? At that time, it was too early for them to consciously enter the fabric of our storytelling, they had not yet settled in Dalmatia: the silence that Bartul felt was something real for him (...) Because, if Camilla was killed by a Croat, a conscious Croat, and there are so many conscious Croats even today that they would stand on the tip of a knife, we could say that perhaps Croatian anti-Italianism was involved, which would have been completely hasty then his?) (Fabrio 1990: 97)

The narrator comments on issues of fate, coincidence, family, history, and politics: "(Ah, how one falls for History, especially when Politics is make-up.)" (Fabrio 1990: 120) and often links phenomena from the past with the current situation with an ironic comment: "((...) all these dishonest, but to us today, very intimate manipulations and easily understandable things, which will be supported by the official inspection of the municipal books, will come later (and of course bring down the mentioned gentleman, which is difficult for us to understand

today).” (Fabrio 1990: 162)

In the novel *Sonnenschein*, there is a strong criticism of the actions of the Nazi regime during the Second World War (e.g. condemnation of the horrors in the Treblinka, Auschwitz, and San Sabba camps, the consequences of the Lebensborn project), criticism of the inaction of institutions such as the Catholic Church and the Red Cross, and bystanders. There is a critique of history that repeats itself continuously with its horrors:

We should probably learn something from the repetition of the history of human society, *repetitio est mater studiorum*, but despite the fact that history stubbornly repeats itself, we learn poorly, so this insolent and persistent History does not give up, it just repeats itself and repeats itself, I will repeat myself until I faint, he says, to spite you, I will repeat myself until you come to your senses, he says, and we don't know how to come to our senses, we just let our hair down, hide, remain silent and lie, generally pretend to be silly. (Drndić 2007: 454-455)

These statements by Nedjeljko Fabrio and Daša Drndić are distinguished by the direct presentation of the narrator's political point of view. They express attitudes in which the narrator does not agree with the current state of society of which they are a part. According to Rancière, they do not redistribute *sensory experience*.

### 3.2. *Politics of literature in novels Berenice's Hair by Nedjeljko Fabrio and Sonnenschein by Daša Drndić*

#### 3.2.1. *A story within a story*

In the novels *Berenice's Hair* and *Sonnenschein*, the narrator inserts numerous stories within the story into the narration. The process of mise-en-abyme is characterized by a strong metacommunicative component, so it enables the narrator to create a semantic surplus. Because of him, the reflective statement works both on the level of the story and on the level of reflection. At the level of the story, it participates in the formation of meaning like all other utterances. At the level of reflection, there is an element of meta-meaning that allows the story to take itself as its content and theme. It is narcissistic prose with inserted stories that testify to the novel's flexibility, and the narrator conveys the message brought by the story within the text. A story within a story within the text of the novel occupies a hierarchically lower narrative position than that of the primary diegetic world of the novel. It is connected with certain elements from the primary diegetic world and contains an important aspect of the primary world. In this way, the inserted representation reproduces the primary representation as a whole. The narrator points out the differences between these narrative worlds and points out the similarities. Suzan Rubin Sulejman in *Authoritarian Fictions: The Ideological Novel as a Literary Genre* claims that the genre is organized as "a chain of implications: the story implies ('calls for') interpretation, and this in turn implies - but is also implied by it - a concluding instruction." (Sulejman 1983: 207) The sequence of stories in a story is carried out to refer the reader to the message of

the text.

When Lucija returns to her parent's home in Kantrida, her long-time neighbour Maria shares her father's writings, which the heroine has only just read. The reader learns the content of these writings at the very end of the novel when the narrator sheds light on the fate of Lucia's brothers in that *Familienfuge*. First, he talks about the death of Angelo, and then he introduces Nichi's diary entries, which are marked with quotation marks. They describe the last days of the war in Rijeka from Sunday, April 22, 1945, to Thursday, May 3. (Fabrio 1990: 332-340) In his diary entries, Nichi confesses that he is keeping Orfeo's disappearance a secret from his wife: "This is how our life is going these days between truth and lies." (Fabrio 1990: 340) The narration is interrupted and the fate of their younger son Orfeo is resolved who perished in the theatre he adored. So, in the father's diary, concern about the fate of Orpheus is announced, and that part of the diary is interrupted by entering the story of his death. An excerpt from a diary dated May 6 is inserted into this story, in which it is reported that Maria informs Nichi about the visit of the unknown Bold Duse, a comrade of his older son Angelo. (Fabrio 1990: 348) Here the diary concludes without the need for explanation. The merciless whirlwind of history swept the male heirs and that family off the stage of life. This example of introducing another discourse into the fabric of the story shows how Fabrio exploits these foreign bodies in the novel. The inserted diary provides authentic testimony about the liberation of Rijeka and becomes the key that enables the incorporation of a new story into the narrative fabric (the death of Orpheus). At the same time, he also connects the already-told story about the death of Angel into a unique picture of the inexorable disintegration of that family.



The inserted stories in the story mirror other stories that are characterized by a high degree of independence within that story of history. The whole hair of *Berenice's Hair* is built from numerous more or less independent micro-stories that intertwine. Family photographs showing the Italian and Croatian family in *Berenice's Hair* are of crucial importance for the fate of the novel's protagonists. The family portrait of Gorm was created during the wedding of Filip and Kata and opened up the possibility for the storyteller to introduce a different type of discourse into the fabric of the story. Thus, in the form of encyclopedic entries, *the biographies of alla Croats* follow, as Fabio says. The name of each of the people from the portrait about whom a biographical note is given (Šimun Matej Žarkulov, Mladi Žarkulov, Jako Žarkulov, Lilly Ševeljević, Grgo Budislav Angjelinović, Mihovil Žarkulov, Antonio Ruffo and Luce Ruffo, Leonard (Martin) Zagoda, Jura Stradiot, bride Kata Gorma) is written in capital letters with the years of birth and death. In those sketches about the people from the photograph, the narrator also writes Elvira Gallega (1906-?), who is "the unborn daughter of Luca Ruffo, born Matić and Antonija Ruffo" (Fabio 1990: 271) and presents her entire biography.

The narration in the novel *Sonnenschein* is interspersed with inserted stories within the story, which are printed in italics in the novel. A picture of historical events is built from the personal views of various characters. Stories within stories about Haya's ancestors are included in the novel, such as the story of her grandfather, Bruno Baar, who testifies about war events during the First World War. Numerous stories about events from family life have been inserted into the novel in fragments: stories about the fates of grandmother Marisa and mother Ada, for example, storytelling. Families cope with reality in different

ways: “The Tedeschi family continues to live in the illusion of ignorance. Those who know what is happening do not talk about it; those who do not know, do not ask questions; those who ask, do not get answers. Then, until today. So, because they don’t know, the Tedeschi family doesn’t ask, so they can’t even find out anything, so they don’t get very upset.” (Drndić 2007: 85)

With such a policy of organization of the world in the novel, which erases the difference between the past and the present, the narrator confirms Rancière’s claim about literature as an autonomous distribution of the sensory world. It does not use the usual historiographical conventions of presenting the past in media discourse and numerous literary texts. It bypasses the processes of depersonalization of history and realist narrative models in which the past is depicted through the description of devastating weapons and terrible battles that led to numerous nameless deaths. At the same time, *little people* are an impersonal homogeneous mass that moves in the direction determined by idealized heroes - leaders. *Breakthrough events* stand out from the mass of movements and upheavals that sink into oblivion. A sequence of events is created “suitable for memory ‘according to the rules of a teleological and cause-and-effect narrative structure that has its introduction, climax and end.’” (Kosmos 2020: 126) In this way, history “assigns to itself the status of objectivity, the immediate equating of the referent with the signified and language with extralinguistic reality.” (Kosmos 2020: 132) The narrator in the novel *Sonnenschein* uses an opposite strategy. In contrast to a structured story, it seeks to insert numerous and divergent data, portrays many people, brings various stories and forgotten texts, lists the names of the dead, etc. A large number of heroes tell their stories within the novel, and in the historiographical

discourse, there is simply no place for these heroes to speak. This is in line with A. Earl's claims that memory is selective. There are many events, people, and media from the past, so it is possible to remember only some of them. That's why Earl, following Cassirer's claims, concludes that every recollection is a process that is constructed, in which creativity is significant.

The narrator critically comments on the events she narrates. The life story of Haya in the first part of the novel is built using montage and collage techniques. She recalls past events from her life. He lists them and interrupts their sequence with inserted stories about his family members and events related to the First and Second World Wars. Thus, her life story is interspersed with numerous inserted stories about war crimes, the operation of Nazi camps in the Second World War, organizing special transport to the camps and creating a special train schedule, the operation of the Red Cross and the Catholic Church in the whirlwinds of war, etc. An inserted story about assisting the organization of the Red Cross in neutral Switzerland is extremely critically charged. The story within the story, highlighted in italics from the rest of the text, is told by the witness Elvira Weiner, who as a sixteen-year-old participated in distributing food and blankets to Jews in the wagons of a transport train traveling to one of the infamous Nazi camps. The neutrality of Switzerland in the war is shown ironically and there is a strange observation about how the Jews locked in the wagons made noise so the Swiss could not sleep peacefully. Representatives of the Red Cross in Switzerland wanted to quiet their conscience by providing assistance to numerous transports passing through their country. At the same time, they pretended not to know about their final destination and the fate of their passengers. People consciously closed

their eyes to the crimes, thinking that nothing could be changed. The narrator criticizes their inaction and sees them as accomplices in these crimes. After the war, Elvira's mother wants to forget it, and she investigates numerous transports and meets the partisan Dreher. She tells her about the diversions the partisans used to try to stop those trains before entering Switzerland and thus save people. She was intrigued by the fact that in the archives of the Swiss Railways and the Red Cross, there is no mention at all of these trains, nor of the help they provided.

Antonio, Haya's son, confesses his search for identity and tells various stories in the story at the end of the novel *Sonnenschein*. He studies the archives of the *Adriatisches Künstland* in search of his origins and learns about the *Lebensborn project* (which means *spring of life*) with which the Nazis wanted to ensure the abundance of Aryan youth. So many children were either stolen from their mothers or born in *Lebensborn* facilities throughout Nazi Germany. They are entrusted for adoption to verified Aryan families. He soon meets *Lebensborn's* children who, as adults, confess their biographies to him and confide in him the pains that torment them throughout their lives because of the knowledge that they are the children of war criminals. Helga's detailed life story is woven into the fabric of the novel. (Drndić 2007: 448-454) She tells about her mother's departure from her childhood home and her evil stepmother who placed her in a correctional home and a school for problem children. She talks about her marriage and the long-term search for her mother when she became a mother, and about the final meeting with her. Then he experiences a shock because his mother wants him to wear her Nazi uniform. The narrator emphasizes in italics and organizes in one column the numerous children who were born or lived in the Kinderheim "Godthaab", for example, the boy

Olaf, (Drndić 2007: 415-416) and the girl Ester born as Gisela, (Drndić 2007: 419-422) then the children from Kinderheim “Stalheim”: for example, the boy Karl Otto Zinken (Drndić 2007: 422) and children from the homes “Oslo”, “Trondheim”, “Heim Os.” (Drndić 2007: 422-426). His review of the fates and children concludes with the story of Ingrid von Oelhalfen, actually Anna Johnson. (Drndić 2007: 439-441) All these various stories within the story that are included in the text draw attention to themselves. Mensanabim multiplication is carried out with the aim of referring the reader to the message of the text. Thus, during the construction of its literary universe, the novel offers the reader keys for their interpretation, and the narrator expresses her political views.

### 3.2.2. *Forms of texts and typographic solutions*

In *novels about history*, as Fabrio called *The Exercise of Life*, *Berenice's Hair*, and *Triameron*, the narrator tries to explain certain elements of the story. He interrupts the narrative flow and inserts another type of discourse into the fabric of the novel and marks it graphically, i.e. uses horizontal lines. (Nemec 2003: 286) Most of these inserts serve to clarify the political situation, which is constantly changing and directly affects the destinies of the novel's protagonists. In an effort to historically authenticate socio-political uncertainty, the narrator uses various forms of factual material that he cites. In *Berenice's Hair*, upon Lucia's return from Italy, a part of Marshal Tito's speech, which was held in the National Assembly on April 1, 1952, about the problem of Sonnenschein's position after the Second World War, is interpolated. (Fabrio 1990: 11) In a similar way, he will insert and graphically

separate a part of Erasmo Barčić's speech at the parliamentary session on May 12, 1885, about the position of Croatia after the war with the Hungarians. (Fabrio 1990: 123) In one chapter, two inserted fragments were brought. The first is *From the invitation of the County of Varaždin sent to the Dalmatians. Narodne novine, Zagreb, May 11, 1848* (Fabrio 1990: 99) which appeals to Dalmatians to awaken national consciousness. Nicola writes an answer with the hope that it will cheer up his loved ones, so *From the answer of the Municipal Congregation of Split dated May 11, 1848, to the invitation of the Križevačka County*, he emphasizes: "Dalmatia is not Croatian". (Fabrio 1990: 100-101) The unrest in Dalmatia in the forty-eighth year of the nineteenth century is evidenced by the inserted excerpt from the newspaper *Il Nazionale* from 1863 signed by Natko Nodilo, a significant historical figure. (Fabrio 1990: 125)

The largest number of inserted parts in the novel *Berenice's Hair*, which problematizes various areas of human life, comes from various newspapers. A short description of the situation on the islands during the reign of the Monarchy was taken from the newspaper *Il Nazionale* from 1866 and interpolated into the novel. (Fabrio 1990: 201) Elvira gets a report about a prestigious social event, a soirée at the mayor's house, precisely from the news from the newspaper *L'Avvenire* from 1880. (Fabrio 1990: 233-234) The novel began by emphasizing the strained interstate relations between Yugoslavia and Italy, so once again documentary evidence is given of *the dispute* over Zone A and Zone B after the Second World War by inserting news from *Tanjug* on March 31, 1952. The following is an excerpt from Jevrem Brković's testimony from Slobodan Joković's interview book entitled *Brain War*, which was published in 1987. (Fabrio 1990: 353-354) The fantasies of

the hero in *Berenice's Hair* are represented through fragments from literature. When Petra's widow Andrić conjures up to the young and inexperienced Julije her obsession with Illyrian ideas and her fantasies about Ban, the narrator recites a longer excerpt about that historical figure from *Le bán Jelačić et les événements en Croatie depuis l'an 1848 par le lieutenant-feldmaréchal Joseph baron Neustadt*. (Fabrio 1990: 138)

The difficult economic situation in post-war Rijeka, as well as in the whole Balkans, is discussed in an article from the *Rijeka Novi list* dated 14.12. in 1950. It reports the arrival of a steamer from the USA bringing food. (Fabrio 1990: 303-304) The description of the journey of Alfonsina and Marcantonio to Bosnia, where they face the misery of the population, is touching. A culinary recipe taken from *Danica Zagreb* in 1834 testifies to her:

*Liquid soup without spices.* For a serving of soup, take three or two walnut kernels. If it is for several people, it is enough to take two nuts for one person, even more so if there are more than five, and something can be deducted from that. These kernels are tied in a clean cloth, when the hot water starts to boil, put them in the pot, and let them foam until they want to foam (so that the soup does not turn black), and then put some roots or greens inside, if you have salt, peppers, and red onions add it, and this kind of soup will cost a little, and it will be strong and liquid. (Fabrio 1990: 43)

In the novel *Berenice's Hair*, the testimony of Ivo Sučić (Fabrio 1990: 290-291) about the historically crucial agreement on the Inter-Allied Command over the Kvarner area is included in quotation marks. Such a degree of authenticity in the presentation and verification of events in history, which comes from the subjective view of an

individual, is also present in the *authentic testimony* about the break-in of the Jelačić residents into the premises of the Commander of the Hungarian Rijeka Police. (Fabrio 1990: 286-287) From a subjective point of view and in epistolary form, testimony about the situation in the coastal cities was brought in a *confidential* (highlighted by S. T.-Š.) *letter* of Franz von Suppé, who wrote about this topic back in 1860 to Mademoiselle Art.-Hans- Hof und Staatsarchiv. (Fabrio 1990: 167-168)

Parts belonging to other proceeds have been inserted into the novel and are highlighted with supposed signs. These are fragments created by the characters themselves from the novel. On the night of his wedding to Magda, Nichi writes an article for the newspaper, and the fate of Juli, who is still engrossed in school reading, is determined by a letter that Petra, widow of Andrić, sends him through his grandfather, Marcantonio. (Fabrio 1990:132-133) On the occasion of the death of his father Nicole, whose determination ended their relationship, Julije, who is unhappily in love, receives her written condolences in Croatian again, which strikes and humiliates him. (Fabrio 1990:198) This letter of the widow Andrić is graphically distinguished not only by quotation marks but also by placing it inside brackets. Filip Gorma, also a member of the Croatian family, would write a letter to his mother Klara, so the narrator presents most of the contents of that letter in a *paraphrased speech*. Those “(...) sentences of his would flow violently, from the soul: ‘Our people must now take advantage of the autonomist’s attack on the soldier, (...)’” Parts of an imaginary letter marked with quotation marks are inserted into the novel: “‘Mama, I would like you to go to our reading room so that one of our people can read this letter and the latest issue of ‘Narodne novine’ from which I



am transcribing this to you. All the newspapers in the world lie, only ours doesn't.' He would underline this sentence. So, he would continue: (pointed out by S. T.-Š.) 'Me and my friends know (...)' (Fabrio 1990: 212-213)

In the novel *Berenice's Hair*, various types of fact quotes are inserted: excerpts from articles from various newspapers, reports, slogans, some parts from the speeches of historical figures, parts of lexicographic entries, fragments from radio news, fragments from printed interviews and memoirs, parts from historical sources, parts confidential letters, a leaflet, and even a culinary recipe from the newspaper. (Nemec 2003: 286)

Their interpolation is graphically highlighted in the novel (Bačić-Karković 1998:121-145) and the narrator uses the opportunity to directly engage and present his commentary. Fabrio factionalizes fiction. (Milanja 1996: 100-120) Thus he draws attention to the conceptual nature of the past. A tension is created between the world of fiction and the world of faction, the inserted texts are recontextualized and the conceptuality and provisionality of the narrative are exposed. The very act of making fiction is thematized. The reader is consciously warned about how a *novel about history* is created.

In Daša Drndić's novel *Sonnenschein*, numerous real and fictional heroes are introduced from the margins to the center of the narrative, and each of them has the right to their own story, their testimony. (Levanat Peričić 2020: 73) The storyteller achieved this by including numerous stories in the story, many different forms of texts, various uses of already existing texts (auto quotes), and reaching for certain typographical solutions. (Ryznar 2017: 108)

In *Sonnenschein's* novel, the incorporated parts from the do-

main of official history stand out, as well as the stories of the heroes, which are testimony to the horrors and senselessness of war events that are graphically marked. From completely unknown data from the treasury of historical documentation (military, related to the organization of the camp, and those related to the civilian aspect in the organization of the mass destruction of Jews, for example, an interview with the watchman of the trains that transport people to the camp), through personal testimonies using montage and collage techniques, amazing worlds with a new painful truth revealed about the horrors of human existence in the whirlwinds of war. The novel contains in italics the interviews of numerous inmates about the horrors they experienced in the camps (Drndić 2007: 318-327, 362-371, 373-378) and the confessions of the perpetrators who look back on their actions, for example, the interview (Drndić 2007: 385-391) from the trial of Dr. Grassler:

I'm not a doctor. I just know that typhus is a dangerous disease. When an epidemic breaks out, people die like a plague. And, I know that the disease is spreading, that it cannot be suppressed, limited to a small space, say inside the ghetto. If an epidemic had broken out then, it would have affected both Poles and Germans. (...) But there was a danger ... because of hunger. People did not have enough food. That was terrible. We in the commission did everything we could to feed the ghetto... (Drndić 2007: 386)

Confessions of victims are most often separated from the rest of the text by using italics and organizing them into columns. The novel contains a list of the names of around 9.000 Jews deported from Italy or killed in Italy and the countries occupied by Italy between 1943 and 1945. This list is separated from the rest of the narrative text by printing in a different font and is organized into two columns in which the

names of the victims are listed in alphabetical order.<sup>10</sup> (Drndić 2007: 165-264) Numerous testimonies (Drndić 2007: 271-272, 273-275, 349-355) of the protagonists about life in the camp and the horrors experienced by the inmates were inserted, organized in one column, and printed in italics:

One Sunday, a bus full of people arrived, I think from Sonnenschein. They quickly shoved all those people into that basement with the bricked-up window, into the death cell; they were shot with a leaf the same night. I think they were hostages picked up by the Germans in a raid, there were raids in Sonnenschein, and there was an illegality. (...) Once, during the bombing, two prisoners escaped, because the Germans immediately swept them into bunkers. Afterward, they shot all the comrades of those who escaped. (...) One evening a truck loaded with soldiers arrived, we only saw their boots, their bodies were covered with blankets. When the truck pulled into the garage, they told us to bring all the wood we saw. At night, footsteps came from the courtyard, and people screamed, cried, and begged for mercy, they wailed terribly. In order not to hear how these people howl and wail, the Germans played loud music from their entertainment halls, then started the engines on the trucks and incited the dogs, the dogs growled and barked, and we knew that the Nazis were killing people, just we didn't know how. (...) I am Giovanni Hami Wachsberger from Rijeka. (Drndić 2007: 271-272)

The heroine, a professor of mathematics, discusses with Kierkegaard in deep despair. (Drndić 2007: 346-348) These sections were written in the form of inserted free non-administrative speech and printed in italics. Haya's statements were printed over the entire sheet of paper, and the thoughts of the revived famous philosopher were presented in one column.

<sup>10</sup> Kristine Rabberman warns that Robert Bolañ in the novel 2666 (published one year after the author's death, in 2004) enters the list of murdered women in Mexico. (Rabberman 2014)

In the novel *Berenice's Hair*, the hero's dreams are entered, which are graphically highlighted in italics. The first dream is the Traveler who travels with Nicola from Italy to Dalmatia. (Fabrio 1990: 29-30) The dreams of Ivan Matej Gorma, (Fabrio 1990: 57-65) Jurja's dream (Fabrio 1990: 116), and Philip's dream were marked in the same. (Fabrio 1990: 292) The Croats on the pages of *Berenice's Hair* dream an unfulfilled dream of national awareness and independence, and imperial dreams are placed in counterpoint, so the appearance of dreams is in accordance with the fundamental (contrapuntal) principle of construction of the work. (Bačić-Karković 1998: 135-144) Self-quotes are repeated and intertwined in all dreams. They are thematically related to the exile who had to leave the Roman Empire. (Bačić-Karković 1998: 135-144)

In *Sonnenschein*, morbid dreams and personal visions that haunt Haya as she waits for her son to be found are scattered in italics and lyrically coloured. She dreams about ghosts and voices that haunt her, about her guilt, about her pain. (Drndić 2007: 13-14, 55, 265)

In the novel *Berenice's Hair*, historical figures such as John Francis Edward Acton are mentioned, so an entry from the *Dizionario storico politico italiano* was entered into the discourse about him, separated by hyphens. Firenze 1971, (Fabrio 1990: 23) Nikola Tommaseo... In *Sonnenschein*, extensive notes are included that add information about certain historical figures significant in the periods that are problematized in the work, for example about Ugo Ojetti, (Drndić 2007: 26-27) Elsa Finzi, (Drndić 2007: 43) to Paquale Isidor Simonelli, (Drndić 2007: 67) to Odil Lotari Globočnik (Drndić 2007: 279) and the like.

Special attention was paid to the language in which the text is

written and it is laid bare in front of the reader in the enumeration process. In the novels, *Berenice's Hair* and *Sonnenschein*, enumerations that capture the reader's attention are frequent. (Drndić 2007: 269)

Self-quotes are scattered throughout *Berenice's Hair*. Equal or almost equal parts of the text are repeated as a kind of *leitmotif* in different textual positions. (Nemec 2003: 286) They are not graphically marked in the novel. Their role is visible in the example of the photo of Lucia's family, which is recounted in detail twice with almost the same words: first when Sister Maria urges Lucia to sell the picture because of the value of its frame (Fabrio 1990: 276-277) and when Ivan Matej Gorma sees it in the window store (Fabrio 1990: 355) and thus manages to reach Lucia's address. The photograph became a key moment in the construction of the novel because it brought together the youngest members of the generational tree of the Croatian and Italian families around which the action is concentrated. Auto quotes encourage the reader to move through the text in a loop-recursive manner, rather than in a straight line.

In the novel *Sonnenschein*, a self-quotation runs through the entire work, and at the same time a line from *The Waste Land* by Thomas Stearns Eliot: "Hurry up please it's time" graphically emphasized in capital letters. (Drndić 2007: 9, 392, 395, 398) Similarly, the statement of Haya's mother Ada is repeated: "Behind every name, there is a story". (Drndić 2007: 66, 72, 161, 461)

The narrator in *Berenice's Hair* uses certain light motives in the construction of the characters in which he testifies to some of their qualities. We meet Lucia (Bačić-Karković 1998: 133) at the very beginning of the novel. During the entire development of the plot, some elements that are already present in its first description in parentheses

at the beginning of the novel are repeated and varied. The symbol of the sandal will appear similarly (Bačić-Karković 1998: 132-145) which tightens Ivan Matej Gorma. The narrator will use the same procedures when evoking their ancestors: Julius's suit will also be described in detail (Fabrio 1990: 177) when he goes on a fateful visit to the wife of Petra. In his dealings with his father, a varied statement appears several times: "But he didn't recognize him even now. Or did he not want to recognize him even now?" (Fabrio 1990: 196) Markantonio in the depths of his soul is not satisfied with Fosca's choice of a life partner, so in the relationship between him and Nicole the phrase *he was burning, burning...* is regularly repeated.

Hair (Bačić-Karković 1998: 132-145) is present in the novel in the title and explicitly on two occasions. The first time when the narrator says: "I'm ruffling your hair, Alphonsine, I'm just now saying that your hair was curly, long, like the glow of the sunset in the wheat dust, I watch that hair flutter in the Adriatic breeze as the 'Fosca' sails under the city which in front of the bow emerges from the grey, lying at the bottom of the horizon". (Fabrio 1990: 180-181) Another time, near the end of the novel, the lock of hair that Elvira brought from Dalmatia becomes the only thing left of Lucia's great-grandmother Fosca. It is dusty and doesn't mean anything to Lucia, so she throws it in the trash. (Fabrio 1990: 283) Hair (Bačić-Karković 1998: 144) thus survived the wear and tear of the human body. In many places in the novel, the metaphysical presence of *Berenice's Hair* as a constellation in the northern sky will be invoked, (Fabrio 1990: 91, 161, 297) which will provide refuge to numerous heroes who desire peace.

### 3.2.3. Problematization of genre

In *Berenice's Hair* by Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić, the possibility of the functioning of different linguistic discourses within the novel is demonstrated. Storytelling is often intervened by inserting, for example, letters, excerpts from personal diaries, news from newspapers, TV news, poems, notes, etc., where they are marked graphically.

In *Berenice's Hair*, the narrator in the subtitle himself defined (Fabrio 1990:28, 154, 297) his text as *Famileinfuge*. (Matanović: 1997, 2002, Milanja: 1996, Nemec: 2003) With the subtitle, Fabrio combined two fundamental determinants. It is a family novel, as evidenced by the characteristic graphic representation of the genealogical tree at the beginning of the work. At the same time, it evokes intermediate connotations. The polyphonic musical form is the basis of the construction of this novel. In the novel, there is a contrapuntal transition from one era to another, from one cultural circle to another, and the point of view of the characters changes without any restrictions. With this procedure, the narrator warns of the fabrication of the text: "With the bare information that you died alone, I guess already in the first years after the war, because I heard nothing more about you, I incorporate you for the last time into this 'familienfuge', into which we are harnessed, all of us, in the same ok Because even the little soul that a person has is given to make it even harder for him". (Fabrio 1990: 297)

In the novel, the genre is problematized on two occasions: "When things in everyday life take an unusual or unusual path, or when they end happily, which we did not expect - we say that everything

happened 'like in a novel', and that is an insult to life. Because there is nothing above life, nothing that is not just living". (Fabrio 1990: 222) The narrator believes that it is a life that can upset the novel: "What will happen in our novel when Julije, that afternoon, comes from hospital to Marcantoni's home, therefore it will not be 'just like in the novel', but the novel itself will be taken aback by what he encountered in life." (Fabrio 1990: 222) Perspectives are twisted. Namely, the sweet and heartbreaking experience of the narrative is now silent before the onslaught of bitter reality that finds its place in the novel.

*Sonnenschein's* novel contains numerous biographies of Nazi officers who participated in crimes against the innocent population in two columns, with the officer's name in bold. They provide information about their service and those of a private nature, so they come to life in front of the reader as flesh and blood people. (Drndić 2007: 283-317) There are short biographies of, for example, Gottfried Schwarz, and Gottlieb Hering, who "makes a living performing various eccentricities, for example shooting inmates while riding at a trot" (Drndić 2007: 283), etc. (Drndić 2007: 283-317) Transcripts of testimony from the trial, e.g. from Stengel's trial, were printed. (Drndić 2007: 285-288) These parts of the text are printed in italics in the form of questions and answers. (Drndić 301-304) Along with the biography of Heinrich Mathess, an excerpt from the record of his trial in italics and an excerpt from Eliah Rosenberg's testimony about Mathess' role in the Treblinka camp, in the form of questions and answers, were brought. (Drndić 2007: 313) In the final part of the novel, in which Hans Traube, i.e. Antonio Tedeschi, searches for his roots, many confessions of *Lebensborn* children are inserted, who learn the truth about their origins only in their late years of life (Drndić 2007: 419-426, 439-441) and from



the rest of the narrative text are highlighted in italics and are organized in one column. In *Sonnenschein*, numerous historical data, documents, (Beronja 2020: 11) lists of Holocaust victims, interviews, and testimonies (Božić Blanuša 2020: 59) of individuals from war criminal trials about the suffering of Jews during the Second World War in the concentration camps of Treblinka, San Sabba, Dachau, Auschwitz and others. Biographies of important personalities from the period before the First World War up to the present day, the genealogy of the Haya Tedeschi family, geographical maps, sheet music of songs, letters, and various photographs were included (Mijatović 2010: 25–44, Giergiel 2020: 39–52) with the aim of illuminating the concept of the Holocaust from a new perspective. (Beronja 2020: 38) The reader is directly confronted with the names of members of entire families who disappeared in the gas chambers. (Drndić 2007: 165-264) The narrator describes Haya's visit at a mature age to the remains of the camp in San Sabba and includes a series of testimonies of numerous people about the operation of the camp and the horrors experienced by the camp inmates. (Drndić 2007: 271-272, 273-275, 349-355) Also inserted is a photocopy of a document, an incomplete list of former members of Action T4 in 1943 who were transferred to Sonnenschein and surroundings (OZAK). (Drndić 2007: 279)

There is a difference between fiction and reality, literature and historiography. The former find their referent in the fictional world, and the latter in reality. By establishing the difference between *reality* and *fiction*, the dominant *distribution of the sensible* is realized, i.e. the model that determines the foundations of our knowledge of the world. At the same time, fiction always belongs to the field of literature while, documentary belongs to the field of historiography, i.e. to professional

and scientific literature. We interpret fictional statements in relation to the fictional world, and documentary and/or historiographical statements in relation to the non-linguistic world. The reality of literature is self-sufficient, while the frame of fiction is precisely fiction. The goal of historiography is to achieve as faithful a reflection of the socio-historical situation as possible while viewing the idea of history as a complete and unique one that needs to be followed. It portrays reality as a closed and completed fable, shows the past as an ordered course of events, some of which are the introduction, some the climax, and some the denouement of a particular event, and attributes to it the features of continuity, with each narrative element having its meaning. Literature often questioned the ways of constructing the past. The critic believes that Tolstoy's *War and Peace* departs from such a way of writing history in which monumental figures are favoured, the ordered sequence of events, and the unity of the action. The hero of the work becomes a nameless mass of individuals, the results of battles are left to chance, and *large* events such as battles are represented with the same intensity as small intimate ones. (Rancière 2008: 80) Rancière believes that historiography offers a picture of society, while literature has a different obligation. The deconstruction of history changes in postmodernism, which is evident in the novels *Berenice's Hair* by Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić. This prose returns to history but emphasizes that history is mediated as a textual construction. This enables the questioning of the documentary-objectivist model of historiography, the questioning of the selection of historical events, and the production of facts. Such prose belongs to historiographical metafiction. The term historiographical metafiction was introduced into literary science by Linda Hutcheon. (Hutcheon 1983) In *A Poetics of Postmodernism*.

*History, Theory, Fiction* she builds the theoretical context of historiographical metafiction using examples from the works of J. Fowles, S. Rushdie, D. M. Thomas, U. Eco, and others. It tries to raise metahistorical awareness of the textuality of the historiographical discourse and warns against the convergence of historiography and literature. He expresses doubts about the attempt to reconstruct past events and reduces them to facts in the text, which are regularly marked by the narrator's ideology and subjectivity. In the novels, this is reflected in the collage narration, the mixing of fiction and fiction, the use of numerous metatextual procedures, etc. (Hutcheon 1983) In this interpretation of the novels *Berenice's Hair* by Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić, the metatextual elements in these works are brought into connection with the distribution of the sensible. The past is seen as a construction that people develop according to the needs and possibilities of their current reality. (Assmann 2011: 45) Numerous historical events are reinterpreted in literary works through the prism of official history, but also from the intimate perspective of individual heroes.

Within the novel *Sonnenschein* itself, the narrator defines the genre of her writing, and the reader is exposed to the process of interweaving documentary, historical/new history, family, war, and (auto)biographical novels, as well as novels about the Holocaust. In this way, the novel thinks about itself and its function within itself. Namely, Astrid Earl observes the genre as a system of conventions that each individual learns during his life. It belongs to cultural knowledge that is improved through socialization and inculturation. In childhood, an individual first gets to know a fairy tale, then during schooling, through reading, he acquires knowledge about genres and in later life consolidates them in cultural memory. Genres act as archetypes so the reader

knows what to expect in an adventure or crime novel. Genre is, therefore, part of cultural memory and as such can represent a framework for self-examination, (Earl 2005: 148) which the narrator of *Berenice's Hair* and the narrator of *Sonnenschein* exploit in their texts.

#### 3.2.4. Active role of the reader

In the novel *Berenice's Hair*, the narrator, as a self-conscious postmodernist creator of a work of art, addresses the reader directly within the framework of the novel: (Markić 1996: 154-165; Matanović 1997; Matanović 2002: 5-22; Milanja 1996: 100-120; Nemec 2003: 54) “However, things have changed fundamentally (is it necessary to emphasize to the reader from the end of the twentieth century that things fundamentally change only for the better?” (Fabrio 1990: 55) In *Berenice's Hair* the narrator starts from the assumption that the author and the reader live in a spiritual community in which there are some self-explanatory basic values within that universe. It directs its movement within the framework of the work: the transition from one fragment to another, from one level to another, from the story of one family to the story of another. He alludes to the reader's experience, expects cooperation and complete trust from him, and tries to direct the reception of his work. He admonishes the reader, warns, and makes him think. The narrator's comments are statements that form part of a fictional text and serve to explain and evaluate it. That is why we consider these comments part of exegesis.

### 3.3. Conclusion

The neo-historical novel is characterized by an anti-illusionist narrative strategy that seeks to erase, or at least blur, the boundaries between history and fiction since history and fiction are verbal constructions. In these novels, the way of constructing a fictional world is laid bare in front of the reader, and the narrator very often expresses his views on the topics he problematizes, on the ways of shaping fiction, on his dilemmas in the process of creation, etc. This is the layer of the police of literature, as Rancière would say. Nedjeljko Fabrio and Daša Drndić work with an enormous and conscious effort to find traces of history and mark them in the discourse. Such a way of exploitation and functioning of the historiographical layer in the novel narrative leads to the creation of a self-conscious postmodernist fiction in which there is a new distribution of the sensuous.

It starts from the prevailing conception of the political, which leads to the necessity of reactualizing its questioning in the contemporary social context. In the novels of Nedjeljko Fabrio and Daša Drndić, numerous textual and visual elements are present (stories within a story, an entered family tree, various lists, confessions, testimonies, interviews, documents, an extract from the book of the heroine's income and expenses, sheet music, photographs, use of typography: italics, bold print, different fonts, capital letters, exceeding genre conventions, etc.) with which the text draws attention to its composition. In this way, he resists the traditional understanding of literature and expresses *the distribution of the sensible*. From line to line, their works differ from the usual ways of organizing the text, so with their *otherness*, they capture

the attention of the reader whose horizon of expectations is constantly shifting. Genre rules were regularly exceeded, so an ordered and predictable sensory world based on literary norms was not realized. The narrator regularly expects the reader to be familiar with the narrative conventions in question and introduces indirect reception instructions into the text. The reader is offered to observe the narrative rules and laws of the fictional world of the novel, so the very act of reading becomes primarily an act of actualizing textual structures. In the novels of Nedjeljko Fabrio and Daša Drndić, the reader is assigned an active role, and depending on his engagement and literary experience, each reader creates his world.



4. The politics of literature in novels *Marija Czestochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*  
by Daša Drdnić



4.1. *Police of literature in novels Maria Czeṣtohowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto) and Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.* by Daša Drndić

In Daša Drndić's autobiographical prose, there are many statements that we classify as literary police. The narrator testifies about the culture of living in Canada in the novel *Maria Czeṣtohowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)*, which begins with a description of the scene in the subway. On the trains, everyone reads something: various newspapers, horror novels, romance novels, official documents, classics, and advertisements. The narrator emphasizes that seventy-five percent of people in Canada are literate. The narrator talks about the importance of reading once again, somewhat ironically when she states that Croatian newspapers are sold in the *Slovenia Meat Delicatessen* and concludes "Ergo: newspapers are food." (Drndić 1997: 15) She ironically comments on the changing of surnames by newcomers that end in -ić due to language confusion: "Canadians don't like to bother themselves unnecessarily. It's another thing when they mow the grass. That's healthy." (Drndić 1997: 54) He points out that it is very important to the Canadian government that immigrants speak English so that they can "a) retrain, b) integrate and) recycle." (Drndić 1997: 54) It is an interesting paradox that enacted in a framed TV news about a six-year-old child from the United States who can attend school only in French (Drndić 1997: 117) "because his stepfather, who is in Canada on a one-year work contract, is not his biological father. According to the law on the French language of the province of Quebec, children are allowed to attend classes in English schools if their parents reside in Quebec officially and temporarily." (Drndić 1997: 117)

The narrator presents her views on Canadian society and emigration, and on the work of writers in modern times. In the novel *Canzone di guerra. In New War Songs.*, the storyteller Tea Radan expresses her point of view about the multicultural society in Canada:

This modern world, its technology, its working class, declassified, its people equally clean, equally well-fed, equally cheaply dressed, equally healthy (non-smokers and athletes), equally chronically tired and empty, with the same 'high quality of life' (?!), equally (for long countries and people) (dis)interested because, they are a big family, a global village (my suitcase is full of global villages, global people, global in general), with equal (false) rights, all this has nothing to do with democracy. (Drndić 1998: 78)

He points out that Canada advocates a policy of multiculturalism that arose from the situation of multi-ethnic societies and the need of the ruling state will to preserve and ensure the respect and value of different cultures that coexist within a territorially determined community, whether it is a nation, a city, a religion or a local community. Thus, the policy of multiculturalism gained importance and became part of the influential identity discourse. This policy, in addition to its democratic successes, also has contradictions that cause *disagreements*. In the rest of the chapter, the narrator gives her opinion on the situation in Croatia: "(In Croatia, there is still no chance for that - in Croatia, the double and the fiddle are played, the "Jure and Boban" are revived - at the state and parliamentary level - raised in a fascist salute and political and other corpses of the type of Rojnica, Šakić and company here, what there)." (Drndić 1998: 87) He also makes the claim about ethnic groups:

It is a group with a historical memory, either real or imaginary. A person belongs to an ethnic group partly involuntarily, partly by choice. (...) Ethnic memory (...) (is) the sum of instincts, feelings, closeness, expectations, patterns of feelings and behaviour; a sense of reality; a series of stories for the individual and for the people that need to be experienced... / People who are part of the network (...) hardly see themselves as atoms. (...) Their definition of themselves includes their families, their relatives, their friends, their streets, their shops, familiar smells, landscapes, and sounds. (...) For people from the network, these things are identity, life, and part of their being. (...) Take all that away from them and part of them dies... (Drndić 1997: 72)

She believes that people flocked to Canada and carried the history of their ancestors with them. That's why Canada seems like plagiarism to her, and an example of that is the Yorkville enclave, which is just a touching imitation of the spirit of Europe. She feels isolated in that society because of her emigrant position and talks about emigration:

Emigration is sediment. (...) Emigration is humble (Mašina kovanica). Emigration does not visit exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances, and film screenings. (...) I cannot listen to cultural events, because these cultural events no longer fill my soul. Because Maša's loneliness and his sadness eroded me so much, that there is no culture that would fill that abyss in me. That's why I don't like cultural events when I'm abroad. (Drndić 1997: 124)

After all, cultural events that attract the attention of the Western world are approximately the same and occur in London, Rome, Vienna, Paris, Berlin, New York, and Toronto, says the narrator.

In the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*, a comment was made about writers: "By the way, writers (and writers) are the biggest

possible gossipers. “They are constantly looking for something to make a pie out of. They find out, for example, that Denmark has no rivers, they connect it with Hamlet and serve it to the readership. They notice that Canada, for example, doesn’t have a single kiosk, but that’s why the scientific literature on kiosks is abundant and serious, so they insert it into some kind of story. So do I.” (Drndić 1998: 113) In the central chapter of the book *Canzone di guerra*. The narrator of the new stories entitled ‘Staklenci I brabonjci’ states verbatim how she collects her stories and the stories of her ancestors and relatives, “I collect their and my shit (and specula now and then),” (Drndić 1998: 113) like a hamster she puts them into hiding places whose are the remains stored in (imaginary) attics: “let it be found under the old days.” (Drndić 1998: 113) Novels are built using the technique of montage and collage, and there are numerous inserted stories within the story.

The narrator also talks about the language in her homeland. While in exile in Toronto, she found on the shelves of the Robarts University Library the book *Linguistic Purism in the NDH* by editor Marek Samardžija, published in Croatia by the university publishing house in Zagreb in 1993, and her attention was drawn to *The Regulation on the Alignment of Companies, i.e. the Names of Companies, Societies, Institutes and Institutions with Regulations on the Croatian language, on its purity and spelling* (No. 1454-DV-1944), published on July 27, 1944. (Drndić 1997: 47-48) In the text in italics, he enters the entire provision: “It is forbidden to give non-Croatian names and shop names, companies, institutes, societies and any institutions, and it is also forbidden to report and post publicly any inscriptions that contradict the institutions of this legal provision” needs to be resolved from the language, describes the debate about the use of the words Aryans or

Aryans, and the expressions reporter or catcher, etc. (Drndić 1997: 48)

The narrator is aware of the Serbians who are slipping away from her and that is why she sleeps with the “Dictionary of the Croatian Language” published in Zagreb’s Liber in 1994 under her pillow and ironically claims that this is how she becomes a better Croat every day. This could lead to her becoming a worse writer because no language is spoken and written without caution. For her, caution is selection, and selection is purity. (Drndić 1997: 113-114)

In the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*, the author describes an episode when the librarian in the narrator’s homeland did not give Sara an edition of *The Catcher in the Rye* because it was in Cyrillic. (Drndić 1998: 8) He ironically describes how prejudices reign in Croatia, in Rijeka, which are also reflected in undesirable names: “In Croatia then, it was not convenient to be called Fatima. It was best to be called Grozda, for example. If that was impossible, then at least Vesna, Ivana, Maja or Ada. So could Ankica.” (Drndić 1998: 9) She experienced accidents because of the vocabulary she used every day:

(...) my long-term absence from the then the Socialist Republic of Croatia, my godlessness, then some beautiful words of Turkish and generally oriental origin, with a special smell, such as “cobblestones”, “bakalin”, “bakalisati”, “provodadžija”, “provodadžisati”, “tufahije”, “darmar” that would appear in my speech and writing, knew how to confuse those in positions and those who had the power to help me. (Drndić 1998: 46)

What left her completely indifferent:

the main street in Rovinj was called “Beogradska” for a long time and the only small cinema in Rovinj was called “Kino Beograd” for a long time because many things in Yugoslavia outside Belgrade were called “Bel-

grade" (...) Only later (it was before the war, Tito was still alive), when the main street in Rovinj was given its old name "Carera" back, and when some weekenders protested loudly about it, only when I heard the clerk at the counter in the post office say "grazie" instead of "thank you" to a stranger, and the party joined forces: don't give me grazia, this is not Italy, this is Yugoslavia! Only then did I start thinking. Notice all kinds of seemingly small things. (Drndić 1998: 51-52)

In the note that follows, he comments that he remembers that gentleman and wonders if he is now in Pale. Was he anywhere near Vukovar in 1991 and is he secretly coming to Rovinj? Now he's probably whispering instead of shouting.

The narrator emphasizes that her emigration to Toronto was, as far as the language was concerned, easier and more painless than coming from Belgrade to Rijeka: "Sara learned that garbage is called garbage and not rubbish, that *meat* is called meat and not *mijeso*. I already knew a long time ago that *one's own* is to be said, but not own, to be said to be a *week* or a week, not *sedmica*, to be said to be print or to be printed, not *štampati*, that's why it's *football*, not football, but soccer. (Drndić 1998: 53) In a cafe in Toronto, he listens to a conversation between an old emigrant and Konrad Koše, and notices how the gentleman speaks "bastard Croatian language, a kind of caricature mixture of Kajkavian, Štokavian, and English, rather outdated." (Drndić 1998: 62) In a note, he adds a diminutive a study of bizarre Germanisms and Hungarianisms that were used in the royal Hungarian-Croatian Artillery Training Manual: "Then it was written about the 'French prince' (Dauphin), that he was greeted with 'davoria' (canzone di guerra); 'secret' (code) or 'shorthand'..." (Drndić 1998: 62) and cites the source (Miroslav Krleža: *Childhood and Other Records, Collected Works of*

Miroslav Krleža, volume 27, pp. 83-86, Zora, Zagreb, 1972).

4.2. *Politics of literature in novels* Maria Częstohowska *Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.* by *Daša Drdnić*

4.2.1. *A story within a story*

In the novels *Marija Częstochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*, the storyteller, very often reaches for stories in the story through which she talks about the current situation in Canada and her homeland, as well as about her past and present. In this narcissistic prose, there are numerous interspersed stories that illustrate the novel's flexibility, and the narrator herself regularly presents the lessons that these stories convey within the text. The sequence of stories within the story is orchestrated with the aim of guiding the reader towards the message of the text.

In the novel, *Marija Częstochowska still sheds tears (Dying in Toronto)* a story about a family of hamsters that the narrator has in her home is inserted. He connects it with the story of the hamster by Salvador Dali and Gale, who prepared their pet for lunch: "The beloved animal, reaching her insides and from there almost caressing her, merged not only with her body but also with her whole being. That devouring of a beloved creature was the best confirmation of great, selfless love." (Drdnić 1997: 39) He concludes the story within the story with Krleža's words about the rat: "A rat is not a man, but a rat: it has its attic, its cobs,

its instincts, its intestines, its joy, but not a man.” (Drndić 1997: 39) In this way, he completes the thought and brings it into connection with his arbitrary exile. In this artificial story within the story, the situation is further complicated by the insertion of Salvador Dali’s story about the hamster and the introduction of Krleža’s quote as notes. These parts of the text are marked as stories that occupy a hierarchically lower narrative position than the inserted story itself (which itself already has a hierarchically lower narrative position). Among the stories, there is also a story about the history of the Busančić family from the island of Lošinj at the end of the nineteenth century, whose two brothers emigrated to Canada, and the third to South America, then to Canada and Europe. The narrator describes the situation on the island, which at that time flourished as a spa and tourist centre, while Toronto was just beginning to be built. A detailed story is included in the story about the creation of the city of Toronto (which in the language of the Huron Indians means a *meeting place*) along with which the narrator presents the civilizational achievements in Europe, especially in Rovinj.

In the novel, he includes two stories from his homeland: the story of Marija Częstochowska, protector of the Slavic race, and the story of the rebel brother Baldo Lupetina. The Statue of Mary Częstochowska was historically able to perform various miracles, even preventing a Nazi bomber from dropping a bomb due to heavy fog. Today Marija Częstochowska looks at the Balkans affected by the horrors of war and cries: “Her impotence is enormous, her miracle-working ineffective.” (Drndić 1997: 171) The story of Fr. concludes: “Fr. Baldo Lupetina was a tragic victim of excited times at the turning point of two fateful centuries, when religious issues occupied the world to the same extent as political and social issues do today” adds the information that today



there are Helsinki Watch and Amnesty International as guardians of conscience, that there are United Nations and little Lupetinas and that the Lupetinas and *Częstochowska* make exciting movies. (Drndić 1997: 174) In the chapter entitled *Ten Little Seals*, he introduces in italics the legend about the origin of the ancestors of Canadians. It is enchanted by the Inuit, who miraculously survive in merciless conditions in the very north of the globe:

They moved, a little east, a little west to Alaska, but mostly they stayed up there, in the far north of the globe, where there is so much ice, so much sky, so much seemingly nothing that their legends, their clothes, their songs, their tools, their houses and above all their statues, (...) either huge or miniature, but always round, playful, solid, so that their existence at all looks like a miracle. The refined, subtle line that emerges from everything they do and live seems miraculous. (Drndić 1997: 180)

By inserting the story about the *Caladrius* bird, the narrator talks about her and Masha's healing during their stay in Rovinj, which the narrator was paid by Canadian National Radio to record materials for a future documentary show:

*Caladrius*, that wandering bird, has been among us since time immemorial. But only now, when I became that, a wanderer, she flew to my doorstep. (...) She screams and whistles and warns. She flies in every night, watches Maša sleep, watches me wait, and never turns her head away from us. She says that one day everything will be alright again. That is why the summer of 1996 was a summer of healing. (Drndić 1997: 188)

He also includes the story of Marcel Ophüls and calls him the Orwell of documentary film. The central character in his documentary

opus is Germany, namely fascist and Nazi Germany. He points out that Ophüls is adept at creating aesthetic tensions and combining documents with fiction, so he warns about the method he will use in autobiographical prose Marija Cześćochowska Still Shedding Tears (*Dying in Toronto*) and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. The narrator hints at a theme that will completely occupy her in her later works. This is the theme of war crimes, the Holocaust, which is brought up for the first time in the novel by Marija Cześćochowska still sheds tears (*Dying in Toronto*) (Zlatar 2004: 139) in a prominent part of the text of the novel, in a framed TV news: “Two films by Stanley Kramer were shown on the same evening one after the other: *The Nuremberg Trials* and *Ship of Madmen*. The Nuremberg trial ends with the statement that the war criminals were sentenced to freedom after not even five years of imprisonment.” (Drndić 1997: 75)

In the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. (Zlatar 2004: 139) inserts the stories of numerous exiles (Molvarec 2017: 147) from the territory of the former Yugoslavia to Canada and ironically talks about their new fate. (Jambrešić Kirin 2001: 187) In the chapter entitled *Little Unfinished Story* in the *Introduction*, the narrator states that the literature on piglets is very numerous. He then describes the position of pigs in the Balkans as cult animals, their slaughter and slaughtering, and the roasting of whole pigs for the holidays in the new socialist order in Yugoslavia:

With muffled longing, the new citizens of the new cities, replacing their fields and their forests, their outer and their inner expanses with asphalt, lived an imitation of tribal life; in an environment of extreme individualism, they practised their pathetically dislocated collectivity. (...) And on the street, all that, longing, song, roar, grunt, blood, sausages, entrails,

entrails, merged with the noise of emerging cities. A new socialist man was being born. (Drndić 1998: 17-18)

He continues the story with a story within a story about Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs who were pets in America and Canada, but they could not adapt, so shelters for these animals began to be opened:

“We look at each animal individually, as a special individual, because no two piglets are the same,” Brown and Ronson told the press. “Some fit into the new environment faster and easier, others need more time. We are not rushing them anywhere. We want our piglet to understand that she is wanted, to stay in a safe place, where she will not lack human or animal warmth.” (Drndić 1998: 38)

The cultural gap is insurmountable.

The novel includes the story of the Koša family because they fell in love with Konrad:

(...) after talking with Mr. Businessman, our eyes met, like in Hertz novels, we smiled at each other and our love relationship - burdened with ideological-political psychological-philosophical, intellectually and physically sadomasochistic disputes and confrontations, confrontations arbitrarily imposed and sometimes senseless, burdened with obstacles in a multitude of variations - she could begin. (Drndić 1998: 72-73)

Namely, Zlata Koše, his mother, lived in NDH Croatia during the Second World War. She tells about her and her children in wartime Zagreb and is gnawed by a doubt: is she involved in the denunciation of her mother, Timea-Katica Skojevka, who suffered Ustasha interrogation and abuse? The narrator regularly interrupts the story of Koša's

family by inserting excerpts from her mother's diary in italics, in which she testifies about her communist activities and the situation in Zagreb during the war when activists were denounced and ended up in prisons. The narrator begins to be haunted by the history of Konrad Koše, with whom she lives, and his family, which caused his departure. But he, as the main character, will appear again in the metatextual novel *Totenwande. Walls of Death* (2000). (Tadić-Šokac 2022: 65-87)

In the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*, the narrator, under the name Tee Radan, established that “of all Western democracies, Canada has the most shameful history when it comes to providing refuge to those who fled from the madness of Nazism.” (Drndić 1998: 84) Inserts the story into the story of Theresienstadt was a transit camp during the Holocaust. For its inhabitants, it was a place halfway to the final destination – the gas chamber. In that city - camp, there were three-story barracks with attics, and prisoners were crowded into them. “Between 1941 and 1945, about 140,000 deported Jews passed through Terezin, over 90,000 of whom were killed in other camps.” (Drndić 1998: 87) Living conditions were unbearably bad. Some inmates stayed there for only a few weeks, some for several months, and some even for several years. In it, plays were performed in the attic of the building in the dark in front of two to three hundred people present, many of whom were standing. “Theresienstadt survived about 16,000 rooms, of which only 132 of the 15,000 children.” (Drndić 1998: 87) It was also restored, and on June 23, 1944, Hitler brought officials of the International Red Cross to Theresienstadt. The famous war criminal Adolf Eichman took them through the city and the representatives of the Red Cross were delighted. In their report, they state that, despite the wartime circumstances, the city's Jewish residents live well and are

treated humanely. Satisfied, they canceled their already scheduled visit to Buchenwald. (Drndić 1998: 88) The story of the Croatian concentration camp Jasenovac, the beauty of which delighted Herman Pröbst, continues, as stated in the article *Jasenovac is not a sanatorium or a torture centre* published at the beginning of 1942 in the Ustasha magazine “Spremnosti”. He was particularly impressed by the work and order in the camp, as well as the various products that the employees make, such as high boots, harness belts, various leather and metal items, bricks, and tiles. The narrator makes a sharp criticism: “After fifty-odd years, while part of the world (the one that failed at that time) wipes away the stain, asks for forgiveness, admits its mistakes (and that world also includes the Catholic Church and the International Red Cross), the Croatian Mihanovići one and the same dead chorus and they make history their maid.” (Drndić 1998: 89)

In *Marija Czestohowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)*, the comparison of narratives concerning Rovinj and the establishment of Toronto resonates with *Canzone di guerra: New War Songs*, where the narrator contrasts her interactions with counselors at social welfare offices. In Toronto, her advisor is designated as number 91, whereas in Rijeka, she is known as Marjeta. The settings of their offices starkly contrast: consultations in Toronto occur at a counter, while in Rijeka, they unfold in a room furnished with armchairs. The narrator reflects on the strictly procedural nature of her interactions with the Toronto counselor, involving the completion of numerous forms. In contrast, her engagement with Marjeta in Rijeka was more personal, culminating in shared moments over cakes with Marjeta and her daughter Sara at the renowned Simoni pastry shop.

#### 4.2.2. *Forms of texts and typographic solutions*

In these early prose works by Daša Drndić, numerous real and fictional heroes are brought from the margins to the centre of the narrative. Each of them has the right to his story, his testimony. That is why many stories within a story and different forms of texts are inserted into the texts of the novel, (Jambrešić Kirin, 2001: 184, Božić Blanuša, 2020: 53-72) then already existing texts (auto quotes) are used again and different typographical solutions are sought. (Ryznar 2017: 108)

The narrator in the novel *Marija Czestochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* most often at the end, less often at the beginning of the chapter, inserts numerous news about the state of Canadian society, which he brings framed. (Drndić 1997: 17, 29, 31, 50, 51, 57, 63, 75, 101, 104, 117, 121, 124, 129, 139, 167, 168, 175) Thus, in the TV news, she reports on the attack on a subway worker in Toronto (Drndić 1997: 11) or writes about the declaration of Canada as the country with the best quality of life in the world, (Drndić 1997: 27) etc. In the novel, various parts of the text are graphically highlighted by the use of italics, e.g. dialogues from telephone conversations (Drndić 1997: 15-16) and free non-administrative speech of Eisenstaedt. (Drndić 1997: 26) Italics are common and parts of the text that talk about various topics are marked with it. (Drndić 1997: 48, 49, 58, 62, 72, 84-85, 86, 89-90, 103, 125-126, 133, 136-138, 156, 162, 163, 164, 165, 169, 171-174, 177-178) In italics, he highlights the *Regulation on harmonization of companies, that is, the names of companies, societies, institutes, and institutions* with regulations on the Croatian language, (Drndić 1997: 48) then parts of the books he cites: Linguistic Purism from NDH, (collected and pre-

pared for printing Marko Samardžija, HSN, Zagreb, 1993) (Drndić 1997: 48) parts of the conversation in English, (Drndić 1997: 49) etc. The Epilogue of the novel itself is printed in italics. It contains an excerpt from Miroslav Krleža's *Dialectic Antibarbarus*. (Drndić 1997: 183) In the text of the novel, in italics, but also capitals, an excerpt from Danil Kiš's *Warehouse* is included, in which the narrator explains why she does not write in English: "(...) THEY DON'T KNOW THAT THE LANGUAGE IS THE DESTINY OF THE WRITER AND THAT EVERY ATTEMPT OF EXTERNAL INTERVENTION IS VIOLENCE AGAINST THAT FATE IS LIKE SOME DIFFICULT OPERATION OR MUTATION OF A GENE FROM WHICH THE WHOLE ONE DOESN'T COME OUT, IT DOESN'T COME OUT THE SAME." (Drndić 1997: 114-115)

The process of printing parts of the text in italics is present in the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. Thus, numerous dialogues, confessions of emigrants from Croatia and Bosnia in Canada, (Drndić 1998: 18-29) excerpts from letters, (Drndić 1998: 41-45, 52, 55) and the diary of the narrator's mother, (Drndić 1998: 58-59, 66-71) etc. (Drndić 1998: 87, 92-94, 102, 120-121, 150)

In the novel *Marija Częstochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* numerous notes were entered (Drndić 1997: 36, 39, 41,42, 44, 50, 59, 67, 68, 84, 114, 116, 124, 127, 130,135-137, 138-139,156, 162, 166, 166, 171, 178) e.g. about advertisements in the subway, (Drndić 1997: 10-11, about Canada as a country of computers, (Drndić 1997: 14) interpretation of the word popišmaniti, (Drndić 1997: 23) đuture, budžak, (Drndić 1997: 32) about the appearance of the first apothecary on Lošinj, (Drndić 1997: 70) etc. At the end of the novel, he includes a poem by J. Brodski about fish in the narrator's translation. (Drndić

1997: 181)

In the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. Numerous dialogues, parts of the life stories of emigrants from Croatia and Bosnia in Canada, (Drndić 1998: 18-29) excerpts from letters, (Drndić 1998: 41-45, 52, 55) and the diary of her mother, a Skojevka, are printed in new davoria in italics, (Drndić 1998: 58-59, 66-71) the story of Terezina by surviving witness John Freund, (Drndić 1998: 87) the explanation of why the narrator started researching the NDH, (Drndić 1998: 92-94) Sara's poem *Žito*, (Drndić 1998: 102) Dina Vierny's ballad about Stalin, (Drndić 1998: 120-121) advertisement for the sale of air-conditioners, (Drndić 1998: 150) etc.

The novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. has very numerous notes, (Drndić 1998: 19-20, 39, 39-40, 42, 57, 58, 63, 64-65, 66, 67, 71, 92, 93, 94, 98-99, 116, 119, 122, 123, 146,150) e.g. about preparing a pig, (Drndić 1998: 14) then instructions on slaughtering poultry in a footnote, (Drndić 1998: 15-16) suggestions for evening snacks made from ready meals from humanitarian aid, (Drndić 1998: 23) etc. In the narrative text, in the form of a note, the content of the form that the narrator must fill out when adopting a cat from the Toronto Humane Society is entered, in which the questions are organized into three units under the names: *History of your pet*, *You and your household*, *You and your new pet – hopes and expectations*. (Drndić 1998: 141-142)

Special attention was paid to the language in which the text is written and it is laid bare in front of the reader in the enumeration process, which is visible in the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. (Drndić 1998: 74-78) There are also two self-citations in which the text speaks about itself. The first of them is Sara's poem (Drndić 1998: 18 and 29) and the second time the narrator repeats a fragment about the



guard in the camp. (Drndić 1998: 85 and 90) Poems were also included in the narrative fabric: in Marija Częstochowska *Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* in the note, the poem *The Fish* by Joseph Brodski is entered, sung by the narrator in italics, (Drndić 1997: 181) and the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.* includes a poem composed by the narrator's daughter, Sara, also in italics. (Drndić 1998: 102)

#### 4.2.3. *Problematization of genre*

The narrator wants to show the possibility of the functioning of different language discourses within these autobiographical novels, so she often intervenes in her narration by inserting, for example, letters, excerpts from personal diaries, TV news, poems, and notes, marking them graphically. So, in the novels *Marija Częstochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)*, *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*, numerous letters, and excerpts from diaries entered. Chapter *Linjaci, Tepsije and the homeland* of the novel *Marija Częstohowska still shedding tears (Dying in Toronto)* begins with a quote from a letter from a friend and former colleague ZL. Parts of the letter, interspersed with the narrator's comments, are inserted in italics. (Drndić 1997: 111) Her friend describes in detail the candidates' answers to the questions from the television quiz, exposing the ignorance that is omnipresent around us and that is devastating. He writes to her about a mutual friend B., about whom she inquired. (Drndić 1997: 113) Because of her many years of living in Belgrade and her move to Rijeka, and because of the *dubious* jobs she did, because of her emigration to Canada, and because of the Serbian idioms that slip from time to time in her speech and writing,

B. perceives her as a Yugonostalgic and is not a suitable person for him. The narrator is not surprised by such an acquaintance's point of view and writes to a friend - after she felt betrayed and realized that she had given her trust to a person who did not deserve it - to look for comfort in something about lings "in the animal encyclopaedia (because they have everything about people, maybe a little more beautiful)." (Drndić 1997: 113) Then, in italics, he brings a note from the encyclopaedia about that fish that easily adapts to a new environment.

At the beginning of the chapter *The glass jars and the glass jars* in the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.*, the narrator inserts parts of her grandfather's letters, also from the rest of the narrative text, separated by italics. He wrote to Tito with the aim of correcting the political injustices that were numerous, so they did not bypass either his son, the narrator's father, or himself. (Drndić 1998: 41-43, 52) He doubts that today anyone smart writes to the President, but adds in a note:

A month after writing this text, I read in ArkazIn: 'Do you know that they are writing to the president? Do you know that the president, in addition to all his obligations as a statesman, commander-in-chief, husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, historian and historical figure, tennis player, and player of preference... also gets to read letters from the regiment?' So, even today they write to the President; so, some things are repeated. (Drndić 1998: 42)

She directly warns about the repeatability of history, which was also merciless towards members of her family. Her grandmother from Split wrote letters to Tito. Nona Ana attended Italian schools, so her writing (and speech) never had the sound of *h*. He emphasizes that

the situation has not improved even today. Because citizens do not have deep faith in civil rights but still write letters to their presidents. In that chapter on family history, numerous excerpts from the diary in italics that her mother Timea-Katica kept while she was active as a young communist in Zagreb, during her medical studies during the war, were inserted. (Drndić 1998: 44-45, 58, 58-59, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71) She describes the events from Split in April 1941: the break-in of her cell and her first hearing, (Drndić 1998: 44- 45) then the ban on listening to enemy radio stations, (Drndić 1998: 58) the arrival of Germans in Zagreb, which Boris described to her, (Drndić 1998: 58-59) etc. In other excerpts from the diary from Zagreb, she writes about the arrival of Slovenes who are being evicted by the Germans, (Drndić 1998: 66) about revenge for the murdered police agent Tiljko, whose history the storyteller explains in a note, (Drndić 1998: 67) about a toothache, (Drndić 1998: 68) about going to a drugstore with Zdenka and Rajka Baković, (Drndić 1998: 69) about the Rosenberger sisters who were fired from their jobs and could not join the partisans because they had no one to leave their mother to, (Drndić 1998: 69) about the death of Zdenka and Rajka Baković who were tortured but did not betray anyone, (Drndić 1998: 70) about the arrest the Rosenberger sisters, (Drndić 1998: 70) about the arrest warrant issued for Ivo, (Drndić 1998: 71) about Voja's absence from the relationship, (Drndić 1998: 71) etc. By importing documents, the narrator builds a faithful picture of wartime Zagreb from the perspective of an active communist.

At the end of the novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. "It is not the end" is written in the new davoria. In that semantically important place in the work, the narrator betrays the accepted genre characteristic of the work. (Kosmos 2020: 132)

### 4.3. Conclusion

In this interpretation of Daša Drndić's novel, *Marija Czestochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs* tries to connect storytelling with the *distribution of the sensible*. In these works, the facts are regularly marked by the ideology and subjectivity of the narrator. In the novels, this is reflected in the collage narration and montage, the mixing of fiction and fiction. She presents personal views on various issues in society family and art (film, photography, and literature). In this autobiographical prose, the narrator records snippets from her life and the life of her family and depicts the atmosphere of the metropolis of Toronto in which she found herself. It describes the search for the identity of a highly refined cultural storyteller, a European by habitus in war and post-war times, who is disinclined to analyse and criticize social phenomena. She builds this literary universe by intertwining it with associations and descriptions of real events, reminiscences of past and present events, and existential and cultural events. It creates a ball of the story about her life that unfolds and flows on, inviting the reader to actively participate in the construction of her story. At the same time, the author is allowed to express everything she wants. At the same time, it remained safe from any type of religious and political censorship, as Derrida claims. (Derrida 1992: 37) He uses it as a powerful political tool and expresses his critical reflection on the things that surround it. The narrator offers a way out in each novel at the end of the story. In the novel *Maria Czestohowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* at the end of the novel, together with her daughter, she experiences healing in Rovinj, after returning from Canada. The novel *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*.

shows how a private event leads her life story in a new direction, which is emphasized by the ending of the novel: it is not the end. According to the belief of the ancient Inuit people: “A person cannot die until he completes his life.” (Drndić 1997: 179)

In the novels *Marija Częstochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di Guerra. New War Songs*. unusual ways of organizing the literary text are present to a lesser extent in the discourse. Various textual and visual elements were introduced into the works (stories within a story, confessions, documents, use of typography: italics, bold print, different fonts, capital letters, exceeding genre conventions, etc.). This prose resists the traditional understanding of literature and expresses the distribution of the sensible. Extremely numerous statements about various social, linguistic, cultural, and personal issues belong to the layer of the police of literature. *Marija Częstochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs*. guide the reader to the structure of the text and thereby convey the message of the literary work, so through these narrative strategies the narrator presents the politics of literature in the Rancière sense.

## Conclusion

In this study, after reviewing the critical views of Jacques Rancière, I presented the politics of literature in Janko Polić Kamov's avant-garde novel *The Dried Out Mire*, in the new historical novels *Berenice's Hair* by Nedjeljko Fabrio and *Sonnenschein* by Daša Drndić, and in the autobiographical prose *Marija Częstochowska Still Shedding Tears (Dying in Toronto)* and *Canzone di guerra. New War Songs.* by Daša Drndić. I believe that these works express the politics of literature by using various narrative techniques that were more or less common before their appearance. I have thus interpreted the narrative techniques in the mentioned novels, which achieve a specific division of the sensuous, as Rancière would say. The authors make use of introducing stories within the story into the narrative text, use different forms of texts to reach for numerous typographical solutions, and problematize the technology and methodology of writing. In these works, the laws of the genre to which they belong are questioned, their critical frame of reference is offered, and in some of them, the need for an active role of the reader in creating the meaning of the work is thematized.

Derrida once described literature in one of his interviews as a modern institution connected with the power to say everything (Derrida 1992: 37) and, therefore, inseparable from the modern institution of democracy. It is literature, not poetry or what was meant by the term *belles lettres*, that allows the author to say whatever he wants and can remain safe, protected from any type of religious and political censorship, adds Derrida. (Derrida 1992: 37) The freedom made possible by

the modern institution of literature “is a powerful political weapon, which can nevertheless be neutralized at a moment’s notice as fiction.”  
(Derrida 1992: 38)

## Literature

1. Assmann, Aleida. 2011. *Druga sjenka prošlosti: kultura sjećanja i politika povijesti*. Beograd: Knjižara Krug.
2. Bačić-Karković, Danijela. 1998. „Epifanija u Berenikinoj kosi N. Fabrija“. In: *Fluminensia*, 10, 1, 121- 145.
3. Bačić-Karković, Danijela. 1999. *Kriza obitelji u novijem hrvatskom romanu* (doctoral thesis). Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet.
4. Bačić-Karković, Danijela. 2000. „Tragom jedne paralele: Isušena kaljuža i Maldororova pjevanja“. IN: *Književna Rijeka*, 5, 10-12, 14-24.
5. Baudrillard, Jean. 1993. “ Transaesthetics”. In: *The Transparency of Evil: Essays on Extreme Phenomena*, New York: Verso. 14-19.
6. Biti, Vladimir. 2003. „Uzgoj eksplozije: ‘logika apsurdna u Isušenoj kaljuži Janka Polića Kamova“. IN: *Književna republika*, 1, 1/2, 53-66.
7. Beronja, Vlad. 2020. „Shards of Broken Glass: Daša Drndić’s Arhival Poetics“. In: *Fluminensia*, 32, 1, 11-38.
8. Biti, Marina; Marot Kiš, Danijela. 2021. *Egzil i trauma. Primjeri iz postjugoslavenske proze*. Rijeka: Filozofski fakultet u Rijeci, Fakultas Rijeka.
9. Bodrijar, Žan. 1991. *Simulakrumi i simulacija*. Novi Sad: Svetovi.
10. Božić-Blanuša, Zrinka. 2014. „Ispisivanje traga: književnost, politika i političko“. In: *Umjetnost riječi*, 58, 2, 119–137.
11. Božić-Blanuša, Zrinka. 2020. „Svjedočanstvo i bliskost *Sonnenscheina* Daše Drndić“. In: *Fluminensia*, 32, 1, 53-71.



12. Brajović, Tihomir. 2018. *Paradoksalni pustolov Arsen Toplak (Isušena kaljuža J. P. Kamova i žanr Bildungsromana)*. In: *Umjetnost riječi*, LXII , 2, 149-178.

13. Brlek, Tomislav. 2004. „‘Ako je literatura’ – (pot)pisano isušivanje kaljuže identiteta“. In: *Dani hvarskog kazališta, Hrvatska književnost i kazalište i avangarda dvadesetih godina 20. stoljeća*. Zagreb-Split, 151-166.

14. Čerina, Vladimir. 1913. *Janko Polić Kamov*. Rijeka.

15. Davis, Oliver. 2010. *Jacques Ranciere*. Cambridge: Malden.

16. Dällembach, Lucien. 1977. *Le récit spéculaire. Essai sur la mise-en-abîme*. Pariz.

17. Deleuze, Gilles. 1995. *The Logic of Sense*. London: The Athlone Press.

18. Delez, Žil. 1990. *Šta je filozofija?* Novi Sad: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića.

19. Derida, Žak. 1976. *O gramatologiji*. Sarajevo: IP „Veselin Masleša“.

20. Derrida, Jacques. 1992. *This Strange Institution Called Literature: an Interview with Jacques Derrida*. pp. 37. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9780203873540-3/dangerous-supplement-jacques-derrida-derek-attridge?context=ubx>, visited 8. 7. 2020.

21. Donat, Branimir. 1985. „Janko Polić Kamov: Prevladavanje koncepta zavičajne književnosti ili zasnivanje poetike anarhizma“. In: *Dometi*, 43, 9.

22. Drndić, Daša. 1997. *Marija Częstochowska još uvijek roni suze (Umiranje u Torontu)*, Rijeka: Adamić, Arkzin.

23. Drndić, Daša. 1998. *Canzone di guerra. Nove davorije*. Za-

greb: Meandar.

24. Drndić, Daša. 2007. *Sonnenschein. Dokumentarni roman*. Zagreb: Fraktura.

25. Erll, Astrid. 2005. *Memory in Culture*. Hampshire England: Palgrave Macmillan.

26. Erll, Astrid. 2010. „Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction“. In: Erll, Astrid, *A companion to cultural memory studies*. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 5-32.

27. Fabrio, Nedjeljko. 1990. *Berenikina kosa*. Zagreb: Znanje.

28. Frangeš, Ivo. 1987. *Povijest hrvatske književnosti*, Zagreb-Ljubljana.

29. Frangeš, Ivo. 2003. „Splet bogate romaneskne tradicije i izvornog modernizma. Nedjeljko Fabrio: Triameron.“ In: *Forum*, 27, 74[75!], 1/3, 378-390.

30. Fuko, Mišel. 1971. *Rječi i stvari: arheologija humanističkih nauka*. Beograd: Nolit.

31. Gantar, Marina. 2002. „Karnevalesknost u Fabrijevu romanu“. *Riječ*, 8, 1, 164-168.

32. Gašparović, Darko. 1988. *Kamov, apsurd, anarhija, groteska*. Zagreb: Cekade.

33. Gašparović, Darko. 2002. „Roman Triameron Nedjeljka Fabrija“. In: *Književna Rijeka*, 7, 4, 100-108.

34. Gašparović, Darko. 2003. „Lik bana Josipa Jelačića u Jadranskoj trilogiji Nedjeljka Fabrija“. In: *Republika*, VIX, 9, 14-23.

35. Gašparović, Darko. 2005. *Kamov*. Rijeka.

36. Giergiel, Sabina. 2020. „Additional Testimony. Photographs in the Prose of Daša Drndić“, In: *Fluminensia*, 32, 1, 39-52.

37. Gjurgjan, Ljiljana. 1984. *Kamov i rani Joyce*. Zagreb.

38. Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. 1986. *Estetika I*, Beograd: BIGZ.
39. Hutcheon, Linda. 1983. *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradoks*. London, New York: Methuen.
40. Hutcheon, Linda. 1988. *A Poetics of Postmodernism. History, Theory, Fyction.*, London, New York: Routledge.
41. Ivaštinović, Jakov. 1954. „Osvrt na jezik u djelima Janka Polića Kamova“. In: „Jezik“, 3, 2, 46-51.
42. Ivaštinović, Jakov. 1955. „Janko Polić-Kamov kao romanopisac“. In: *Republika*, 11, 9, 718-723.
43. Jambrešić Kirin, Renata. 2001. „Egzil i hrvatska ženska autobiografska književnost 90-ih“. In: *Reč*, 61, 7, 175-197.
44. Jameson, Fredric. 2007. „Baudelaire as modernist and postmodernist“. In: *The modernist papers*, New York: Verso. 223-237.
45. Jelčić, Dubravko. 1997. *Povijest hrvatske književnosti (Tisućljeće od Bašćanske ploče do postmoderne)*, Zagreb.
46. Kamil, Majkl. „Simulakrum“. *Kritički termini istorije umetnosti*, Novi Sad: Svetovi. 59-76.
47. Kellman, Steven G. 1980. *Self Begetting novel*. Columbia University pres.
48. Kisić, Uglješa. 1985. *Gorčine i katarze. Život i djelo Janka Polića Kamova*. Sarajevo.
49. *Književna Rijeka*, 2000, 5, 10-12.
50. Kollias, Hector. 2007. „Taking Sides: Jacques Ranciere and Agonistic Literature“. In: *Paragraph* 30, 2: 82-97.
51. Kosmos, Iva. 2020, „Politika književnosti i narativna konstrukcija prošlosti u romanu *Totenwande* Daše Drndić“. In: *Fluminensia*, 32, 1, 115-137.

52. Lasić, Stanko. 1977. *Problemi narativne strukture*. Zagreb: Zavod za znanost o književnosti.
53. Lasić, Stanko. 2000. *Autobiografski zapisi*. Zagreb: Globus.
54. Lejeune, Philippe. 1999. „Autobiografski sporazum“. In: *Autor, pripovjedač, lik*, ur. Cvjetko Milanja, Osijek, 201-237.
55. Levanat Peričić, Miranda. 2020. „Kanonske biografije i autobiografski kanon Daše Drndić“. In: *Fluminensia*, 32, 1, 79-93.
56. Lukić, Jasmina. 2006. „Imaginarne geografije egzila: Berlin i Rijeka kao fiktionalni toponimi u prozi Dubravke Ugrešić i Daše Drndić“. In: „Čovjek, prostor, vrijeme. Književnoantropološke studije iz hrvatske književnosti“. Zagreb: Disput, 461-475.
57. Machiedo, Machiedo. 1986. „Eksplוזija poticaja (inozemni Kamov)“. In: *Croatica*, 17, 24/25, 7-45.
58. Machiedo, Machiedo. 2007. „Povratak Janku Poliću Kamovu“. *Republika*, VXIII, 1, 35-45.
59. Marchart, Oliver. 2011. „The Second Return of the Political: Democracy and the Syllogism of Equality“. In: *Reading Ranciere*. Ur. Paul Bowman i Richard Stamp. London/New York: Continuum.
60. Matanović, Julijana. 1997. *Prvo lice jednine*. Osijek: Matica Hrvatska.
61. Matanović, Julijana. 2002. „Je li to za nas dobro ili može biti nije?“. In: *Kolo*, 12, 4, 5-22.
62. McHale, Brian. 1987. *Postmodernist fiction*. London-New York: Routledge.
63. Marot, Danijela. 2006. *Identitet granice, čitanje hrvatske pogranične književnosti iz perspektive postkolonijalne teorije* (doktorska disertacija). Rijeka: Filozofski fakultet.
64. Matijašević, Željka. 2008. „Toplakova „dobro“ strukturira-

na neuroza i pokušaj izlaska iz hipertrofije neurotske analize: 'Isušena kaljuža' Janka Polića Kamova". In: „Komparativna povijest hrvatske književnosti. Zbornik X. Smjerovi i metodologije komparativnog proučavanja hrvatske književnosti. Split, 236-246.

65. Mijatović, Aleksandar. 2010 „Vrijeme nestajanja. Sjećanje, kino i fotografija u romanu *Leica format* Daše Drndić". In: *Fluminensia*, 22, 1, 25–44.

66. Mijatović, Aleksandar; Marot-Kiš, Danijela. 2013. *Personifik(a)cije. Književni subjekt i politika impersonalnosti*. Rijeka: Facultas.

67. Milanja, Cvjetko. 1980 „Uvod u 'Isušenu kaljužu' Janka Polića Kamova". In: *Republika*, XXXVI, 7-8, 658-670.

68. Milanja, Cvjetko. 1981. „Roman kao autobiografija". In: *Republika*, XXXVII, 5-6, 454-475.

69. Milanja, Cvjetko. 1996. *Hrvatski roman 1945. – 1990*. Zagreb: Zavod za znanost o književnosti Filozofskog fakulteta.

70. Molvarec, Lana. 2017. *Kartografije identiteta : predodžbe izmještanja u hrvatskoj književnosti od 1960-ih do danas*. Zagreb: Meandarmedia.

71. Nemeč, Krešimir. 1996. „Historiografska fikcija Nedjeljka Fabrija (promišljanje povijesti u "Jadranskoj duologiji")". In: *Republika*, 7, 1/2, 49-53.

72. Nemeč, Krešimir. 2001. „Inovativni postupci u Isušenoj kaljuži J. P. Kamova". In: *Dani hvarskog kazališta (Književnost i kazalište hrvatske moderne – bilanca stoljeća)*, Zagreb-Split.

73. Nemeč, Krešimir. 1998. *Povijest hrvatskog romana II*. Zagreb: Znanje.

74. Nemeč, Krešimir. 2003. *Povijest hrvatskog romana III*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

75. Pajak, Patrycjusz. 2006. „Raspad identiteta u prozi Janka Polića Kamova“. In: *Umjetnost riječi*, XLIX, 3-4, 243-259.
76. Panagia, Davide. 2010. “‘Partage du sensible’: the distribution of the sensible”. In: *Jacques Ranciere: Key Concepts*. Ur. Jean-Philippe Deranty. Durham: Acumen.
77. Platon. 1983. *Država*. Beograd: Beogradski izdavačko-grafički zavod.
78. Polić Kamov, Janko. 2000. *Isušena kaljuža*. Rijeka: Izdavački centar Rijeka.
79. Popović, Bruno. 1970. *Ikar iz Hada*. Zagreb.
80. Rabberman, Kristine. 2014. *Sonnenschein by Daša Drndić*. <http://quarterlyconversation.com/Sonnenschein-by-dasa-drndic>, visited 6. 9. 2021.
81. Ranciere, Jacques. 1995. *La Mesentente: Politique et philosophie*. Paris: Galilee.
82. Ranciere, Jacques. 2000. *Le partage du sensible: Esthetique et politique*. Paris: La fabrique editions.
83. Rancière, Jacques. 2002. „The Aesthetic Revolution and its Outcomes“. In: *New Left Review*, 14, 1 133-151.
84. Rancière, Jacques. 2004. *The Flesh of Words: The Politics of Writing*. Translated Charlotte Mandell. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
85. Rancière, Jacques. 2004a. „Is There a Deleuzian Aesthetics?“. In: *Qui Parle*, 14, 2, 1-14.
86. Rancière, Jacques. 2004b. *The politics of aesthetics: the distribution of the sensible*. London: Continuum.
87. Rancière, Jacques. 2009. “Alain Badiou’s Inaesthetics: the Torsion of Modernism”. In: *Aesthetics and its Discontents*. Cambridge:

Polity Press. 63-87.

88. Rancière, Jacques. 2011a. *Mute speech*. New York: Columbia University Press.

89. Rancière, Jacques. 2015. *Nesuglasnost: politika i filozofija*. Zagreb: Fakultet političkih znanosti.

90. Ransijer, Žak. 2008. „Politika književnosti“. In: *Politika književnosti*. Novi Sad: Adresa. 7-35.

91. Ransijer, Žak. 2013. *Sudbina slika/Podela čulnog*. Beograd: Centar za medije i komunikacije. Fakultet za medije i komunikacije, Univerzitet Singidunum.

92. Rockhill, Gabriel. 2011. “Through the Looking Glass: The Subversion of the Modernist Doxa”. IN: Rancière, Jacques. *Mute Speech*. Translated James Swenson. New York: Columbia University Press.

93. Ryznar, Anera. 2017. *Suvremeni roman u raljama života: studija o interdiskurzivnosti*. Zagreb: Disput.

94. Slabinac, Gordana. 1988. *Hrvatska književna avangarda (Poetika i žanrovski sistem)*. Zagreb.

95. Slabinac, Gordana. 2006. „Toplakov nezavršeni rukopis (Natuknica uz Kamovljevi roman ‘Isušena kaljuža’)“. In: Slabinac, Gordana.: *Sugovor s literarnim đavlom. Eseji o čitateljskoj nesanicu*. Zagreb, 93- 106.

96. Sulejman, Suzan Rubin. 1993. *Authoritarian Fictions: The Ideological Novel as a Literary Genre*. New York: Princeton University Press.

97. Šicel, Miroslav. 1978. „Književnost moderne“. In: *Povijest hrvatske književnosti*. knj. 5. Zagreb.

98. Šicel, Miroslav. 21997. *Hrvatska književnost 19. i 20. stoljeća*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

99. Šicel, Miroslav. 2005. *Povijest hrvatske književnosti (Moderna)*, knj. 3. Zagreb.

100. Šiler, Fridrih. 2008. „O estetskom obrazovanju čoveka u nizu pisama“. In: *Pozniji filozofsko-estetički spisi*, Novi Sad: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, 180-259.

101. Tadić-Šokac, Sanja. 2022. „Metatekstualni postupci u romanu Totenwande. Zidovi smrti Daše Drndić“. In: *Croatica et Slavica Iadertina*, 18, 1, 65-87.

102. Tanke. Joseph. J. 2011. Jacques Rancière: An Introduction. Conitnuum.

103. Zlatar, Andrea. 2004. *Tekst, tijelo, trauma. Ogledi o suvremenoj ženskoj književnosti*. Zagreb: Ljevak.

104. Žmegač, Viktor. 1970. „O poetici ekspresionističke faze u hrvatskoj književnosti“. In: *Hrvatska književnost prema evropskim književnostima – od narodnog preporoda k našim danima*, Zagreb, 415-430.

105. Žmegač, Viktor. 1982. „O povijesti književne sablazni“. In: Žmegač, Viktor. *Književnost i zbilja*, Zagreb, 112-190.

106. Žmegač, Viktor. 2001. „Anarhijska ironija u književnoj kulturi moderne“. In: *Umjetnost riječi*, XLV, 2, 109-115.

107. Žužul, Ivana. 2020. „Format bez formata. Čitateljsko iskustvo oslabljenih pripovjednih nadležnosti u romanu *Leica format*“. In: *Fluminensia*, 32, 1, 95-114.

108. Waugh, Patricia. 1984. *Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self – Conxciuous fiction*. London-New York: Methuen.



## About the author

Sanja Tadić-Šokac was born in Rijeka. She completed her Croatian language and literature studies in 1996, and her doctorate in 2005 at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka. Since 1997, she has been working at the Department of Croatian Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka.

She has given numerous presentations at international scientific meetings. She publishes scientific works in domestic and foreign journals and anthologies (Fluminensia, Riječ, Umjetnost riječi, Croatica et Slavica Iadertina, Zbornik radova Filozofskog fakulteta u Splitu, New Trends in Slavic Studies). She published two books: *Pobunjeni individualist. Književno djelovanje Mije (Miška) Radoševića* (ICR, Rijeka, 2010) and *Roman o samome sebi* (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Rijeka, 2018). She researches Rijeka literature from the 19th century to the present day and contemporary prose production in Croatian literature.