

SERBIAN LITERARY MODERNA ‘CAUGHT’ IN THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION ^a

Jelena Jovanović*

University of Niš, Faculty of Philosophy, Niš, Serbia

ORCID iD: Jelena Jovanović

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5396-4335>

Abstract

Beginning with today’s widely accepted thesis about literature as an act of communication, the paper presents a part of the results of a wider study of that process in a diachronic overview of recent Serbian literature. The base of the research is the question of the historicity of literature, including the problematization of the concept of development as the key determinant of a group of authors dealing with literary-historical processuality, and simultaneously rejecting the final consequence of the poststructuralist demand for the deconstruction of history. In so posited a frame, the study incorporates the communication between Serbian literary Moderna and a wider social and cultural context in which texts come into being, and which themselves constitute the mentioned context, and a dialogue with the present moment in which criteria of the value and meaning of literary texts shift. Through the examination of that period, it problematizes the question of the time frames of literary-historical stages, their internal dynamics, and their correlation with other literary periods/directions/movements. We rely on interdisciplinary studies that shed light on the literary process in contact with other arts for the argumentation of some literary attributes of Serbian Moderna, as well as for the explication of some of its under-researched characteristics. For that purpose, one segment of the paper is devoted to the relationship between the poetic texts of Moderna and visual arts (sculpture and painting) and music. The methodological foundation of the paper consists of the examination of literature from the perspective of phenomenological studies, which arrived at their reinterpretation with the development of cognitive studies, at the centre of which is literature as an act of communication.

Key words: process, communication, literary history, Serbian Moderna, interdisciplinarity.

^a The article was presented at the *Language, Literature, Process 2023 Conference* at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, Serbia.

* Corresponding author: Jelena V. Jovanović, University of Niš, Faculty of Philosophy, Ćirila i Metodija 2, 18000 Niš, Serbia, jelena.v.jovanovic@filfak.ni.ac.rs

СРПСКА КЊИЖЕВНА МОДЕРНА „УХВАЋЕНА” У ПРОЦЕСУ КОМУНИКАЦИЈЕ

Апстракт

Полазећи од данас општеприхваћене тезе о књижевности као комуникационом чину, рад ће представити део резултата обимнијег проучавања тог процеса у дијахронијском прегледу новије српске књижевности. Основу истраживања чиниће питање историчности књижевног текста, укључујући проблематизацију појма развоја као кључне одреднице групе аутора која се бави књижевноисторијском процесуалношћу, уз истовремено неприхватање крајње консеквенце постструктуралистичког захтева о деконструкцији историје. У тако постављен оквир уклопићемо комуникацију српске књижевне модерне са ширим друштвеним контекстом у коме дела настају, истовремено и сама чинећи поменути контекст, али и дијалог са савременим тренутком у коме долази до померања критеријума вредности и значења књижевног текста. Кроз истраживање тог периода проблематизоваће се питање временских оквира књижевноисторијских етапа, њихове унутрашње динамике и повезаности са осталим књижевним периодима/ правцима/ покретима. У аргументацији неких особености књижевности српске модерне, као и у експлицирању неких њених до сада недовољно истражених карактеристика послужиће нам интердисциплинарна истраживања која расветљавају књижевни процес у додиру са другим уметностима. У ту сврху, један сегмент посветићемо вези поетских текстова модерне са ликовним уметностима (вајарством и сликарством) и музиком. Методолошку основу рада представља посматрање књижевности из угла феноменолошких истраживања, која своју реинтерпретацију доживљавају развојем когнитивних студија, а у чијем се центру налази књижевност као комуникацијски чин.

Кључне речи: процес, комуникација, историја књижевности, српска модерна, интердисциплинарност.

LITERARY HISTORY: REALITY OR ANACHRONISM

The question of literary history, which was resolved multiple times, was revived yet again at the turn of the twenty-first century. On one side, there are nominalists, who claim, following medieval scholastic teachings, that every work is valuable in itself, and, thus, they exclude an interdependent chaining into diachronic sequences, completely denying the idea of literary development. They avoid any general definitions and abstractions, and advocate an analytical, individual approach to literary texts. On the path of that reflection, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the following considerations can be identified: the observations of B. Croce, who, advocating the unique charms of individual works, eliminates any kind of classifications and generalizations¹; W. P. Ker who

¹ “Every true work of art has violated some established kind and upset the ideas of the critics, who have thus been obliged to broaden the kinds, until finally even the broadened kind has proved too narrow, owing to the appearance of new works of art,

claims “that we do not need literary history, as its objects are always present, are ‘eternal,’ and thus have no proper history at all” (as cited in Wellek and Warren, 1949, p. 265); T. Eliot’s claim that “the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order” (1919, p. 55); and above everyone else, the widely cited A. Schopenhauer, with the thought that “art is everywhere at its goal” (1909, p. 239). Negating the contextualization of literary works, literature as an act of communication, and thus its processuality/development, the aforementioned authors simultaneously negate the existence of literary history. It is sometimes seen as ‘the necessary evil’, and is reduced to a sequence of texts or authors that consecutively appear in time, but without any additional interdependence and causality – there is no category of qualitative change in such an understanding: individual works and their authors are just concretizations/realizations of the same essence. One of the most famous examples that disintegrates the idea of the processuality/development/historicity of literary texts is R. M. Meyer’s *Die Deutsche Litteratur des Neunzente Jahrhunderts* (1910), where the whole century is divided into decades filled with sequences of literary works. In such a constructed system, periodization is understood as something that is imposed on literature from the outside, in the form of a mould that is filled with specific subject matter to enable a particular historical orientation within an enormous literary material. Therefore, it is a “wilful act of the historian” (Meyer, 1910, as cited in Škreb, 1964, p. 98).

Soon afterwards, a harsh criticism of Meyer’s system emerged, and a whole range of scholars who proved the historicity of literary texts appeared, consequently seeing literary history as immanent in its nature. Accordingly, three influential names should be mentioned: W. Pinder, at the beginning of the twentieth century; R. Wellek, who presented his theory in the middle of the twentieth century; and Z. Lešić, who examined the question of historicity at the end of the previous century. The first of these thinkers begins with saving historicity:

History should be viewed not only as a simultaneity or succession (Neben und Nacheinander) of human acts and experiences, not only as something whose parts could be interpreted psychologically but is meaningless and chaotic on the whole (if we want to be consistent), but as an occurrence that surpasses human will and that is what precisely makes it representable (anschaulich).

(Pinder, as cited in Škreb, 1964, p. 98, 99)

naturally followed by new scandals, new upsettings and—new broadenings” (Croce, 1920, p. 37);

In Wellek, perspectivism is the key term for understanding the historicity of literature:

We must rather adopt a view for which the term ‘Perspectivism’ seems suitable. We must be able to refer a work of art to the values of its own time and of all the periods subsequent to its own. A work of art is both ‘eternal’ (i.e., preserves a certain identity) and ‘historical’ (i.e., passes through a process of traceable development).

(Wellek et al., 1949, p. 35)

Z. Lešić explains that a literary work is historical in two ways: first and foremost because it arises in a historical world, and so it carries traces of the entire world in its structure; subsequently, it is historical because we find it at a very specific place within a single timeline:

To be condemned to temporality means to have one’s place in a particular temporal sequence, which in the historical world is not only a succession in time but also an ‘**developmental sequence**,’ because everything that occurs in it does not just come **one after the other** but also **from one another**. That is why we can say that a literary work is not only a ‘product of history’ [...], but it is also a ‘producing part of history’.

(Lešić, 1986, pp. 51, 52)

Historiography experienced a substantial crisis in poststructuralist studies that peaked with the theory of deconstruction, establishing the thesis of the “endless postponement of establishing meaning”² and the impossibility of any kind of semantic stability – everything is turned into a narrative to which historiographic metafiction also belongs. The discourse of history transforms itself into a complex mechanism fundamentally incapable of reaching the truth, and is endlessly burdened with the idea of the ‘real’ that is always ideologically presented (R. Barthes particularly deals with that in “The Discourse of History” (1989)). Indirectly, such a situation opens up the possibility of the predominance of arbitrariness over theoretical considerations of literary history; it loses its national character within specific entities and loses the quality of *literariness* by pouring over into cultural studies under the currently dominant and topical European projects. N. Nikolić very prudently examines the possibility of misusing the final consequences of deconstructionism for the creation of a “desirable meaning of literary past”, where there is no place for the proclaimed methodology of representing multiple historical stories (Nikolić, 2015, p. 12). Standing between these rather simplistically depicted opposites, we state that literary history’s right to exist should not be abol-

² That could be recognized in Derrida’s famous sentence “Il n’y a pas de hors-texte” (1976, p. 207).

ished due to the impossibility of the absolute objectification of the past, but that it should be observed through its dialectical nature. Returning therefore to H. R. Jauss (1982)³ and W. Iser (1978, pp. 49, 50), we fully support their view of this issue which M. P. Markowski summarizes in the following way:

History is not a series of events that exist objectively, nor is literature a sum of texts that exist outside of history. It is about the historicity of texts, and, thus, it is not only that they exist in some specific historical period but they are also actualized by readers from other epochs with the help of different reader conventions and in different cultural contexts.

(Markowski, 2009, p. 110)

That subsequently leads to the question of the universality of aesthetic value that a literary work obtains by undergoing a specific evaluation of the so-called aesthetic objects in a spatio-temporal sequence, where an aesthetic object represents the immaterial equivalent of the material part in the recipient's consciousness, originating in the meeting of incentives which proceed from the work itself and an actual/alive aesthetic tradition that belongs to the collective (Mukarsovski, 1971, pp. 118, 119). This thesis explains very well the emergence of the *literary-historical story* through the openness for multiple interpretations unified by hierarchization: there will always be something that will come out of its frame together with an evaluation of the existing material from a certain standpoint, from which the historical narrative is shaped:

However, the awareness of that procedure enables those values, and the standpoint itself, to be externalised and offered for acceptance, refusal, and most frequently for different changes; shortly, the completeness necessary for the story to have meaning is not to be closure.

(Nikolić, 2015, p. 194)

Such reflections on the dialectical nature of the historical process are in complete accord with the cognitivist understanding of literature as an act of communication, where the realization of the literary work is produced exclusively in the interaction between the text and reader who activates their own cognitive frames in the moments of reception⁴. In this

³ "A literary work is not an object that stands by itself and that offers the same view to each reader in each period" (Jauss, 1982, p. 21);

⁴ Wolfgang Iser, Hans Robert Jauss, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, David Herman, Wrener Wolf, Ansgar Nünning, Marie-Laure Ryan and many others have written about it. „As the reader uses the various perspectives offered him by the text in order to relate the patterns and the 'schematised views' to one another, he sets the work in motion, and

way, recent studies have re-connected the interpretation of texts with the context in which they reveal their nature and existence: it can be an interaction with a particular time, space, social context, and other arts. The possibilities are limitless.

*SERBIAN MODERNA:
A STAGE IN THE LITERARY-HISTORICAL PROCESS*

Bearing all of the aforementioned in mind, we will refer to the question of the specificity of the Serbian Moderna literary period, and problematize the status of temporal borders, internal dynamics and inter-connections of different cultural environments (Serbian and Western European literary centres at the beginning of the twentieth century). Right here, the question is whether it is a period, or perhaps it is more precise to say *epoch*, *direction*, or *school*. Even though the mentioned dilemma at this moment seems like a superfluous examination of less important questions, what partly creates difficulties during the shaping of a literary historical overview is terminological non-uniformity. That is why this study relies on M. Solar who, in *Theory of Literature*, gives the necessary explanations of specific terms that are sometimes synonymously used (Solar, 2005, pp. 142-146). Flaker's concept of *stylistic formation* can be added to the given list which emphasizes that stylistic characteristics of literary works are crucial for defining broader temporal periods (Flaker, 2011, p. 108)⁵.

After reviewing complex terminological issues, the paper considers Moderna as **the period** in which twentieth-century literature begins. It was equated with modernism for a long time, which in turn led to a general confusion in the overview of poetic paradigms. Having been taken over from German linguistic practice (more specifically from Hermann Bahr and his *Die Moderne* manifesto from 1890) which used it to mark a reaction to the positivistic currents within Realism, the term took root in Serbia as an umbrella term for literary developments leading up to the First World War. Following what was occurring in Europe, domestic literature was, precisely through Serbian Moderna, the harbinger of internationalization and the inclusion of smaller cultural environments in dialogue with bigger environments, primarily French and English. The back-

this very process results ultimately in the awakening of responses within himself. Thus, reading causes the literary work to unfold its inherently dynamic character." (Iser 1972, p.280)

⁵ J. Delić (2019, p. 237) i J. Vježbicki (2003, pp. 100-109) argued about about the use of this term.

bone of the shift, which was already present in Europe throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, consisted of the absolutization of the aesthetic and the emphasis on the artist's social role.

In Serbian literature, as in the literature of Middle and Eastern Europe, Moderna arrived late and mostly in a syncretic form, merging different elements of late nineteenth-century literary tendencies. In some historical overviews, the period of Moderna is defined as modernism, symbolism, and neo-romanticism. The first term is not the best solution for labelling this period in Eastern European literature, especially in Serbian literature. First of all, it is not suitable because an objection could be raised that it does not contain a specific historical dimension, and then because it carries a very narrow meaning in Serbian literary theory which strictly separates this period from the literary directions at the beginning of the twentieth century. However, that is not the only problem; here, the names of cultural and social periods intersect with strictly literary concepts, which at the same time correlate but also differ from each other. In relation to this, M. Epstein's thoughts are important when he makes a distinction between socio-historical and cultural paradigms. His interpretation enables a more distant viewpoint from which certain phenomena that help establish a better orientation in a complex network of intercrossed concepts can be mapped. Thus, he singles out four great epochs in the history of humankind: ANTIQUITY – MEDIEVAL PERIOD – NEW, MODERN ERA, MODERNITY (from the Renaissance to modernism⁶) – POSTMODERNITY, or the POSTMODERN ERA (Epstein, 2010, pp. 20-22). As literature is not and cannot be viewed in isolation from social assumptions, it is important to notice that the literature of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and even Serbian literature so unpopularity, imprecisely and incorrectly defined, fit into the last two mentioned epochs. Therefore, the aim here is to make a difference between the Modern Age (Modernity) and Moderna, which is just another stage within the wider process of modernism. For some, the Modern Age begins with the Renaissance; for others, it begins with the discovery of the American continent; according to some, the starting point of the Modern Age can be found in the distortion of form brought about by Mannerism and the Baroque, and yet, for some scholars like M. Weber whom J. Habermas (1983, pp. 8-10) relies on, and M. Šuvaković (2005, p. 380), who will also be followed in this paper, the beginning of the Modern Age is the Age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. It arose at the moment when

⁶ Within modernism, Epstein mentions **certain** stages as examples of a "more detailed partition": symbolism, futurism, surrealism, existentialism (2010, p. 22). M. Šuvaković, in relation to that, notices that modernism is a "macro-form or a megaculture of the organization and development of culture and literature from the end of the eighteenth century to the end of the 1960s" (Šuvaković, 2005, p. 380).

the Christian totalizing worldview broke down. With the Modern Age (Modernity), a division of different areas of human endeavours appeared, and the personality that we recognize as the figure of the artist appeared for the first time, and acted in a specific, wholly autonomous discipline⁷.

To make things clearer, it is useful to go back to the epochs singled out by Epstein, with a special focus on the field of art in them: in antiquity, art represented a part of the human world and its relationship with the universe, nature and god; during the Middle Ages, it was a form of communication with the *other*, due to which humans exist in the first place. In the Modern Age (modernity), art was something in itself, and the artist became a separate subject capable of realizing it. He did that in different ways: by relying on inspiration/talent in Romanticism, and through social engagement in Realism. In the age of the modernist shift, the artist created by giving in to free play, which C. Baudelaire, in the middle of the nineteenth century, explains by following the phrase *l'art pour l'art*⁸. The germ from which the “adventure of the twentieth century” arises can be identified precisely in the autonomy of literature. The aesthetic theory which found its inspiration in Poe’s reflections against the “heresy of didacticism,” made in the name of beauty which is “the sole legitimate province of the poem” (Poe, 1907, p. 23), realized its full potential with French Parnassians and symbolists, especially T. Gautier and his followers (G. de Nerval, T. de Banville, C. Baudelaire).

This information is also important for Serbian literature because Serbian writers at the beginning of the twentieth century were focused predominantly on French literature and Paris, where new literary ideas came from. Our authors, especially poets, followed the twentieth-century idea of art *whose function is to be without function*. Such a position of art was enabled by a bourgeois, capitalistic society that could provide individuals with economic security and leisure (i.e., P. Cézanne, C. Baudelaire, and C. Monet)⁹. Because of this, artists could create art that was not conditioned by the production process and the social division of labour. Artists were becoming craftsmen, and specialists in their craft (Šuvaković, 2009).

⁷ “The project of modernity formulated in the 18th century by the philosophers of the Enlightenment consisted in their efforts to develop objective science, universal morality and law, and autonomous art according to their inner logic” (Habermas, 1983, p. 9);

⁸ It was used for the first time by B. Constant in the *Journal* (11 February 1804): “L'art pour l'art, et sans but; tout but dénature l'art.” (https://www.larousse.fr/encyclopedie/divers/L_art_pour_lart/186076);

⁹ From there comes the stream of literary bohemia, which will be accepted in Serbia under completely different circumstances by the so-called “subcultural current” in literature (S. Pandurović and Dis belonged to it);

During the reign of Miloš Obrenović in the middle of the nineteenth century, Serbia discarded the feudal and accepted the capitalist social order, joining the Industrial Revolution that was just emerging in Europe. The May Coup of 1903, which overthrew the absolutism of the Obrenović dynasty and signalled the beginning of an era of parliamentary democracy, contributed to the modernization and progression of society. All this points to the fact that the socio-economic conditions in Serbia affected the modernization of literature. Similarly to the aforementioned French painters and authors, the main representatives of Serbian symbolism, J. Dučić and M. Rakić, could follow the idea of Kantian “disinterested interest” in art. Verses from one of Dučić’s *ars poetica* poems, *Poetry* or *My Poetry*, are perhaps a great example: “Be too beautiful to please everyone, / Too haughty to live for others” (2011, p. 661).

Europeanization and modernization were indicated in Serbian literature even before that, in the *Serbian Review* magazine established by Lj. Nedić in 1895, in which he sharply criticizes the utilitarian theory of S. Marković. In his study *From Recent Serbian Lyric Poetry* (1893), the same critic praises V. Ilić’s artistry in his poetry. Consequently, the year 1892 can be marked as the beginning of Moderna, where the aforementioned poet created poetry which was completely aligned with French Parnassianism and symbolism. He was the harbinger of Serbian symbolism, which, besides obvious connections to France, is not its copy. Serbian symbolism is essentially Parnasso-symbolism. Jovan Delić thinks that symbolism would be an adequate term for this period of Serbian literature if prose was excluded from the process¹⁰. The French influence is evident in many aspects of poetic production:

Hence the iambic hendecasyllable and symmetrical trochaic dodecasyllable, which is often mistermmed as ‘alexandrine.’ Probably, this is where Rakić’s and Dis’ envelope quintain comes from, as an echo of different kinds of rondo. Remarkable *terza rima* poems were composed then (by Šantić and Dis). Šantić’s poems are, perhaps, inspired by German poetry. This is when the sonnet form blossomed (Šantić, Dučić, Bojić).

(Delić, 2019, p. 238)

The mentioned characteristics that emphasize formal perfection can be perfectly argued by the connections between the literature of that period and the fine arts¹¹. All this came as an imperative from the French

¹⁰ M. Pavlović describes this period as “the golden age of our poetry” (1992, p. 210), and D. Vitošević supplements it with the statement that symbolism is the backbone of that golden poetic period (1975);

¹¹ The theoretical framework of this part of the study primarily consists of segments of cognitive narratology and interdisciplinary methodological models that enable an

literary and theoretical practice of the Parnassians, who frequently expressed their views of poetry through sculptural metaphors. Thus, C. Baudelaire, a great admirer of T. Gautier – the central figure of Parnassianism, in a collection of essays titled *Slikarski saloni*, notes various observations about sculpture where his considerations about literature can be found:

Our sculptors are more skilful, and that excessive preoccupation with craft completely consumes our sculptors of today as well as painters. / As lyric poetry ennobles everything, even passion, the real sculpture brings ceremoniousness into everything, even movement. It gives all that is human something eternal that proceeds even from the hardness of the material used.

(1979, p. 61) / (1979, p. 368)

T. Gautier, in his Parnassian *ars poetica* poem *Art*, insists on the formal beauty of a poem that must be difficult to achieve:

Just as a sculptor should contrast marble and bronze with soft clay, and a painter should contrast baked enamel with watercolour, so a poet should achieve harmonious beauty with clear and clean lines in the strict form of difficult lyric genres.

(Živković, 1992, p. 570)

Because of this attitude towards works of art and their creators, in which the illusion of genius is lost, he, viewing the poet above all as a craftsman, would make a request: “Scrape, sculpt, chisel!”¹² The Parnassians were turned towards the ideal of formal perfection that they saw in harmoniously made sculptures, and they frequently sang of their enthusiasm for works of art, which were completely devoid of passion¹³. That is why their poetry is distant and cold like the marble of the statues they

interpretation of the relationship between the written word and other types of mediation in conveying content. The inspiration came from literary studies that reactualized the dialogic nature of texts explained by the concepts of intertextuality, intermediality, transfictionality, and transmediality. Special attention is paid to specific phenomena that can be further illuminated by this approach and help to better understand some aspects of Serbian Moderna in the process of communication with other arts;

¹² „Sculpte, lime, cisèle!”

(https://www.bonjourpoesie.fr/lesgrandsclassiques/Poemes/th%C3%A9ophile_gautier/lart);

¹³ Following the path of the Parnassians’ connection with the visual arts, the information about the emergence of photography in the middle of the nineteenth century in France, as well as about the struggle for its artistic status, might be interesting: “The struggle for the recognition of its artistic status lasted from (and during) the beginning of the twentieth century, when photography was finally recognized as an artistic discipline” (Lazić, 2017, p. 1074). The same author notes that the French photographer Eugene Atget called his photographs of Paris taken at the turn of the century “documents for artists” (2017, p. 1075);

admire. That would be one of the key objections to Parnassians, and so Dučić, in his symbolist manifesto, characterizing V. Ilić as a “teacher of form” and a “pure Parnassian”, would conclude that new poetry “should incorporate the thought and sensibility of modern poetry into a perfect form, which will especially mark his individuality” (Dučić, 2018, p. 182). The thematization of sculpture is present in both French and Serbian poetry of this direction (e.g., *Thibault*, *Niobe*, *Corinthian Hetaira* of V. Ilić, *Yearning*, *Midnight* of J. Dučić). All the characteristics of Parnassianism are present in them: beauty of expression, precision, clarity of imagery, clarity of description, regularity of verse; turning towards antiquity, sculptures of Venus, Mars, Niobe, Laocoon, Oedipus etc.; and writing about impersonal beauty. It should be added that the legacy of the Parnassian cultivation of form is inherited even by those poets who do not thematize sculpture explicitly, hence the already mentioned isometric, but also strict poetic forms (such as the sonnet or *terza rima*) and firmly established stanzas (i.e., quatrain, tercet, envelope quintain).

In addition to the relation with sculpture, pictoriality in the works of Serbian Moderna can be traced to the tendency of some authors towards decoration, ornamentation, towards what is called “decorative symbolism”, which is linked to the poetics of secession. As Alexander Flaker rightly observes:

In the old motifs, elements primarily decorative in the visual sense are sought, suitable for building a harmonious enclosed structure (frequent sonnets!) which seem to want to oppose the restless modernity.

(Flaker, 2011, p. 152)

The visuality of literary secession proceeds directly from the source – secessionist painting, which was characterized by asymmetry, curved lines and stylized ornamentation, and which was initiated by the Munich, Vienna and Berlin art circles¹⁴.

Examples of such poetry can be found among the verses of the *Poems of Dubrovnik* cycle (within the collection *Imperial Sonnets*) by Jovan Dučić, a cycle turned towards the Renaissance and Baroque Dubrovnik, where the poet proves to be an excellent painter of the atmosphere and characters of old Dubrovnik. These poems, as Kašanin observes:

¹⁴ There are also those literary scholars, such as Miloš Đorđević, who express skepticism about transferring the characteristics of secessionist painting into literature. “If [that] seems to be the case, it is mostly related to the lyric poetry of that period (1895-1910), to some poems by a certain author [...]. That lyricism is characterized by the idealization of beauty, traditional life within the spheres of life, with a slightly ironic and symbolic note” (Živković, 1992, p. 751);

in respect to their matter, they are no less to look at than to listen to – in our lyric poetry, there are no more vivid pictures or more attractive portraits than in them. By atmosphere, scenes, faces, anecdotes, the *Poems of Dubrovnik* are what the gallant festivities of the French and Italian painters of the eighteenth century were, which Dučić undoubtedly saw and was inspired by: Dubrovnik Wine, that is Lancret, Dubrovnik Carnival, Longi, the Senator of Dubrovnik, Vato. The virtue of those Dučić's poems, solitary in our modern literature, is not only in the witty narration and lively visuality but also in the discreet sensibility.

(Kašanin, 2001, p. 1231)¹⁵

Similarly, interpreting the *Poems of Dubrovnik*, Branko Letić often uses expressions from the field of painting: image, canvas, drawing, and detail. Dučić's verses reflecting this were criticized by Matoš and parodied by Vinaver, and recently Jovan Zivlak wrote about their low aesthetic potential:

The most frequently interpreted and accepted *Poems of Dubrovnik*, apart from few humorous verses and evocation of Dubrovnik's ambience, its destinies and occasions, with contessas, ladies, carnivals and epitaphs, apart from lightness and one-dimensional loveliness, fail to reach the power of exciting poetry.

(Zivlak, 1998, p. 317)

Not entirely sharing the quoted critical judgment, our attention, from all the aforementioned reviews of this cycle, is drawn to the mention of noble titles, a focus on the past and decorative loveliness¹⁶. After this kind of transmedial insight, the following conclusion emerges: considering our poets at the beginning of the twentieth century, it seems that the question is not only the influence of French Parnassianism and symbolism but also the achievements of literary secession – this slightly modifies the idea of Serbian Moderna poetry.

The transition from Parnassian to symbolist poetics has often been interpreted in domestic criticism as a shift in emphasis from the visual to the acoustic. Although we cannot completely agree with such a strict division, the fact is that Serbian modernist poets in the symbolist stages of

¹⁵ Following the quoted observations about the connection between the *Poems of Dubrovnik* and representations of Italian painters, and in order to illustrate the intermediality of Dučić's Parnassian poetry, we refer to Caravaggio's painting *The Cardsharps* and to the work of the Dutch artist Gerrit van Honthorst (see his painting *The Concert*), who lived in Italy for a while and relied on Caravaggio's poetics;

¹⁶ The transvisualizaton that leads to the poetics of secession is also clearly visible in Ilić's oeuvre, e. g. in the song *Babakaj* based on the painting of the same name by Đorđe Krstić, a Serbian representative of secessionist art;

their production directed special attention toward some musical components, both thematically and formally, which signalled the dynamics of literary changes that were taking place then. However, as shown by Mina Đurić¹⁷ in her study, in the case of Serbian verse, those changes began to take place already with Vojislav Ilić at the end of the nineteenth century. In several places, the author points to a movement from syllabic-tonal to tonal versification, which is a distant anticipation of the transition to free verse (Đurić, 2021, p. 111).

Apart from the formal level, the reliance of modernist writers on the auditory is noticeable on the level of theme, motif and the style of poetic texts. In this instance, we only list a few titles that imply a musical, but also a wider, auditory component: *Akordi (Chords)*, *Tišina (Silence)*, *Šušanje (Listening)*, *Dubrovački Requiem (Dubrovnik Requiem)*, *Šum (Noise)*, *Refren (Refrain)*, *Sonata (Sonata)*, *Rapsodija (Rhapsody)* (J. Dučić), *Serenada (Serenade)* (Alegro, Adagio, Menuet Iugubre), *Kineski madrigal (Chinese Madrigal)* (M. Rakić), *Violina (Violin)*, *Predgrađe tišine (Suburbs of Silence)*, and *Zvona na jutrenje (Dawn Bell)* (Vladislav Petković Dis).

Of all the listed poets of Serbian symbolism, Dučić was the only one who poetically and thoughtfully used words from the auditory/musical register in order to get closer to European literary trends, whether they came from France, Austria or Germany. This is evidenced by the most frequent use of synesthesia: no poet in Serbian symbolism resorted to synesthesia more than him; his poetry is dominated by the 'colour hearing'¹⁸.

Indeed, the predominant poetics of Moderna is symbolism, but the strand which nurtured "traditional Serbian patriotism, social and moral utilitarianism, and political and social activism" should be added to the poetic practice at the beginning of the twentieth century, and so J. Deretić rightfully states that the literature of that period moved between Europeanism and folk spirit, individualism and nationalism, and pessimism

¹⁷ The transition from transvisualization to transmusicalization, which brings about the dynamics of literary streams, but also the announcement of certain poetic changes, is perfectly traced by this author by dealing with the relation between the poetic and the musical in V. Ilić, the concept of Šantić's musicality, Dučić's musical epistemology and transmusicalization of cadence in his works, Rakić as the Beethoven of Serbian modernist literature, and the musicality of Dis' and Bojić's poetry (Đurić, 2022).

¹⁸ In some works of criticism, this is further specified by the term chromaesthesia (sound colouring; sound in color). It is probably not without significance that among the Serbian Symbolists, the poetry of Jovan Dučić attracted the most attention from composers. "As accepted in literary criticism, his verses are unvaried in terms of meter, mostly hendecasyllables and dodecasyllables, but with a very musical effect. Those two characteristics – the uniformity of meter and musicality – are certainly the most significant moments that influenced the composers" (Blagojević-Milin, 1985, p. 665).

and activist optimism (Deretić, 1996, p. 357). Serbian poetry was also authoritatively corrected by J. Skerlić, who erased everything that could possibly undermine the poetics of virtue and health from the literary scene and transplant “the disease of tired races” into “our young and fresh race, into our aerial South, where there is so much sunlight and cheerfulness” (1977, p. 444).

For the prose of this period, written by Borisav Stanković, Petar Kočić, Svetozar Ćorović, Veljko Milićević, Milutin Uskoković, Isidora Sekulić, Veljko Petović, Jelena Dimitrijević, internal focalization is the key element, bringing with it many other characteristics: focusing attention on the internal world of characters, lessening the communicativeness of characters and their complex nature; changing the role of the narrator who does not represent the central consciousness of the narrative, subjectivization of time and space, expansion of all types of virtual narrative; weakening of plot, subjectivization and poetization of expression; and a pessimistic view of the world in connection with the identity crises of protagonists:

Prose is becoming urbanized – the ‘Belgrade novel’ appears [...]. Hybridisation of the short story and the essay form ensues (*Traveling Companions* by I. Sekulić); an expressionistic experience of nature dominates (I. Ćipiko, P. Kocić).

(Delić, 2019, p. 238)

The most dominant stream of Moderna’s prose goes in the direction of impressionism expressed in the best way by Skerlić’s phrase ‘lyrical realists’. However, a naturalistic tendency must be added to it, which was predominantly present through the incorporation of city themes, motifs of the social evil (vice) and liberation of the erotic component in literature¹⁹. Both of these branches appear in European literature as a sign of the disintegration of realism. In that regard, the comparison between B. Stanković’s *Impure Blood* and both E. Zola and Strindberg’s *Miss Julie* is significant. The disintegration of realist structures “leads to the formation of characters of the outcast, outclassed people, vagabonds, actors, prostitutes, ‘former’ and ‘God’s’ people” (Flaker, 2011, p. 62).

In this overview of Moderna, the only question that remains to be resolved is that of the periodization framework, bearing in mind that the boundaries between certain literary periods are always fluid by nature. Most often, the beginning of the century²⁰ was taken as the starting year of this period, especially because it coincided with the formation of the

¹⁹ Here, it should be added that the relationship between naturalism and artistry could be mentioned, where different understandings of that bipolarity exist (from J. Renard, over J. Skerlić to D. Živković);

²⁰ J. Skerlić, B. Popović, V. Gligorić, and D. Vitošević make the same claim.

most influential literary journal of the time, the *Serbian Literary Herald*. This is not without grounds when one takes into account the strong influence of that time's criticism on the general direction of literature. Despite the journal's influence, the starting year must be tied to a somewhat earlier period written about by D. Prohaska (1921), Z. Gavrilović (1960), and recently D. Živković (2004) and J. Delić (2019):

The period between 1880 and 1900 should be marked as a transitional period at the turn of the centuries, whereas the last decade would rather belong to modernist literature of the twentieth century than to the final stage of the nineteenth century. [...] Naturalism, impressionism, and symbolism originate in Serbian literature already at the end of the nineteenth century.

(Živković, 1994, p. 180)

The year 1914 and the beginning of the First World War, almost without exemptions, is established as the boundary year of the end of Moderna. Nevertheless, D. Vitošević's reason for leaving the 'door open' until 1918 and naming the war period the *epilogue of Serbian Moderna* is quite justified. Then:

on foreign soil, not a few, and by no means only patriotic songs originated. Dučić writes there his *Imperial Sonnets*; Dis *Unfinished Poems*; and Bojić *Songs of Pain and Pride*. All of that naturally proceeds from the previous period. [...] There is a real chasm between these books and, perhaps, post-war verses of Dušan Vasiljev or Miloš Crnjanski, although they are not separated by even one or two years.

(Vitošević, 1975, p. 24)

This concludes the story of the literature of Serbian Moderna from the perspective of the contemporary reader, which certainly does not mean that this is the end of the story. It will continue in the future, including different 'aesthetic objects', caused by the changed circumstances of reading and understanding. The development of literature represents an endless process in the constant opening of new models of communication, but also in the discovery of different ways to shed light on old models from new perspectives. Therein lies the charm of all repeated and new readings of literary texts of every, and in this case especially Serbian literature at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Acknowledgement. This study was supported by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia (Contract No. 451-03-66/2024-03).

REFERENCES

- Barthes, R. (1989). *The Discourse of History. The Rustle of Language*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University California Press, p. 127 – 140.
- Благојевић-Милин, М. (1985). Музика компонована на стихове српских симболиста [Musical Settings of the Poems of the Serbian Symbolists]. У: Палавестра. П. (ур). *Српски симболизам, типолошка проучавања*. Београд: Српска академија наука и уметности, 663/672.
- Croce, V. (2017). *Aesthetic As Science of Expression and General Linguistic*. New York: The Noonday Press
- Делић, Ј. (2019). Критеријуми периодизације и периоди у српској књижевности 20. вијека [Periodization Criteria and Periods in Twentieth-Century Serbian Literature]. У: Бојовић, Злата (ур.). *Периодизација нове српске књижевности*. Београд: САНУ, 233-245.
- Деретић, Ј. (1996). *Историја српске књижевности [Serbian Literary History]*. Београд: Чигоја штампа.
- Derrida, J. (1976). *O gramatologiji [Of Grammatology]*. Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša.
- Дучић, Ј. (2011). *Сабрана дела [Collected Works]*. Београд: Паргенон.
- Дучић, Ј. (2018). Споменик Војиславу [A Monument to Vojislav]. У: Драгана Мршевић Радовић, Д., Сувајџић, Б., Милановић, А. (Ур.). *Александар Белић и „београдски стил“*. Београд: Филолошки факултет doi:10.18485/belic_slv.2018.3.ch13
- Ђурић, М. (2022). *Трансмузикализација текста [The Transmusicalization of Text]*. Београд: Српско славистичко друштво.
- Eliot, T. S. (1919). Tradition and Individual Talent. *Egoist*, september, 1919, p. 24–73.
- Епштејн, Михаил Н. (2010). *После будућности [After the Future]*. Том I. Београд: Draslar partner.
- Flaker, A. (2011). *Period, stil, žanr [Period, Style, Genre]*. Beograd: Službeni glasnik.
- Habermas, J. (1983). Modernity – an Uncompleted Project. In: *The Anti-Aesthetic Essays On Postmodern Culture*. (ed. Hal Foster). Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, p. 3 – 15.
- Iser, W. (1972). The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach. *New Literary History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 279-299.
- Iser, W. (1978). *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Baltimore, London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Jauss, H. R. (1982). *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*. Univ of Minnesota Press.
- Кашанин, М. (2001). Усамљеник [The Loner]. У: *Споменица Јовану Дуђићу*. Требиње –Подгорица- Београд: Савјет за пренос.
- Лазич, Д. (2017). Фотографија између документа и уметничког дела пачворк (patch work) и тумач (too much) фотографије Бранимира Карановића [Photography Between the Document and the Work of Art Patchwork (Patch Work) and Interpreter (Too Much) of Photography by Branimir Karanović]. *Теме*, XLI, 4, 1073–1089. doi: 10.22190/ТЕМЕ1704073L
- Лешич, З. (1986). Појам развоја књижевности и принцип периодизације [The Concept of Literary Development and the Principle of Periodization]. У: Палавестра П. (ур.). *Теорија историје књижевности*. Београд: САНУ, стр. 51 – 62.
- Markowski, M. P. (2009). Fenomenologija [Phenomenology]. U: Markowski, M. P., Burzyńska A. *Književne teorije XX veka*. Beograd: Službeni glasnik, p. 87 – 120.
- Mukaržovski, J. (1986). Може ли естетска вредност у уметности имати универзално важење [Can Aesthetic Value in Art Have Universal Validity]. *Struktura, funkcija, znak, vrednost*. Beograd: Nolit, p. 113 – 125.

- Николић, Н. (2015). *Проблеми савремене књижевне историје* [*Problems of Contemporary Literary History*]. Нови Сад: Академска књига.
- Павловић, М. (1992). *Есеји о српским песницима* [*Essays on Serbian Poets*]. Београд: Српска књижевна задруга.
- Рое, Е. А. (1907). *The Raven and the Philosophy of Composition*. San Francisco and New York: Paul Elder and Company.
- Schopenhauer, A. (1909). *The World As Will And Idea*. Vol. 1 of 3. Trans. R.B. Haldane and J. Kemp. 7th ed. 1909. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1909. Project Gutenberg. 27. December 2011.
- Скерлић, Ј. (1977). Једна књижевна зараза [A Literary Contagion]. *Критички радови Јована Скерлића* (прир. Предраг Палавестра). Нови Сад, Београд: Матица српска, ИКУМ.
- Solar, M. (2005). *Teorija književnosti* [*Theory of Literature*]. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Škreb, Z. (1964). Teorijske osnove literarnohistorijske periodizacije [Theoretical Foundations of Literary-Historical Periodization]. U: Flaker, A., Škreb, Z. *Stilovi i razdoblja*. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, p. 95 – 130.
- Šuvaković, M. (2005). *Pojmovnik suvremene umjetnosti* [*Glossary of Contemporary Art*]. Zagreb, Ghent: Horetzky, Vlees & Beton
- Šuvaković, M. (2009). Politika i umetnost [Politics and Art]. *Republika*, god. XXI, br.454 – 455.
- Витошевић, Д. (1975). *Српско песништво 1901-1914 (I)* [*Serbian Poetry 1901-1914 (I)*]. Београд: Вук Караџић.
- Вјежбицки, Ј. (2003). *Разговор о књижевности* [*A Conversation About Literature*]. Београд: Народна књига/Алфа.
- Wellek, R., Warren, A. (1949). *Theory of Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.
- Зивлак, Ј. (1998). Дучић — тамни обриси порекла. У: Дучић, Јован. *Песме*. Сремски Карловци: Каирос
- Živković, D. (1992). Živković, D. (ed.). *Rečnik književnih termina* [*A Dictionary of Literary Terms*]. Beograd: Nolit.
- Живковић, Д. (1994). Живковић, Д. *Европски оквири српске књижевности V* [*The European Scope of Serbian Literature*]. Београд: Просвета.

СРПСКА КЊИЖЕВНА МОДЕРНА „УХВАЋЕНА” У ПРОЦЕСУ КОМУНИКАЦИЈЕ

Јелена В. Јовановић

Универзитет у Нишу, Филозофски факултет, Ниш, Србија

Резиме

Посматрајући књижевност из угла когнитивних наука као комуникациони чин, у раду смо се осврнули на два важна процеса која из њега проистичу: књижевноисторијски преглед дијалектичке природе и интердисциплинарно укрштање. Први крак истраживања резултира схватањем историје књижевности као динамичног процеса који стално мора бити ревалоризован новим читањим, а други крак обезбеђује теоријску апаратуру из актуелних научних студија за боље разумевање литературе.

Са тих методолошких позиција тумачена је прва фаза у прегледу српске књижевности 20. века, а то је модерна. У њој смо издвојили одлике парнаизма, сим-

болизма, импресионизма, уз скретање пажње и на елементе сецесије, као и традиционалну линију преузету из претходних књижевних периода. Интердисциплинарни приступ показао је везу парнасo-симболистичке поезије са вајарством проистеклу из снажних француских утицаја, елементе сецесионистичке поетике у српској књижевној модерни; компаративним увидима експлицирали смо на који начин различите књижевне средине стварају у дослуху са другим уметностима. Такође смо указали и на окренутост књижевности српске модерне према музици, посебно у случају симболизма.

Без обзира на велики утицај европских, а пре свега француске уметности на српску књижевну модерну, у раду смо показали и њену специфичност/оригиналност која је последица и особене друштвено-историјске ситуације у Србији непосредно пред Први светски рат. Увек провокативно питање јесте и одређивање оквира књижевног периода, па смо, у настојању да и на то одговоримо, уз одговарајућу аргументацију, као почетак српске модерне навели последњу деценију 19. века, а као крај почетну годину Великог рата, са епилогом који означава година његовог завршетка. Без обзира на то што модернизација књижевности стиже у српску средину готово пола века након појаве у културним центрима Европе, она показује важан помак ка укључивању дотада периферних средина у магистралне токове уметности.