

# A CONCEPTUAL MNEMOTOPE OF OSIJEK IN JASNA HORVAT'S *BIZARIJ*

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*Abstract:* The novel *Bizarij* (2009) preserves the cultural memory of the town of Osijek, while recycling faction through fiction just as the author has done in her other novels (*Az*, *Auron*, *Vilikon*). We approach the novel as a *post-OULIPO* (*Ouvroir de littérature potentielle*) narrative that shapes a conceptual romanesque structure, primarily as grammatical code for subordinate conjunctions and their dependent and independent clauses in the Croatian language. Apart from the grammatical code for the structure of the novel and its conceptualization, as well as its 15 chapters, the novel provides important ties between the narrators and the characters, and their elaborate distribution. A key figure is the phantasmagorical character of Isabella von Habsburg, functioning as the novel's recurrent theme, but also a Lacanian-like *point de capiton*. The conceptualization of the romanesque structure is also achieved by a further elaboration of the symmetry motif, used at several discourse layers in various ways. The symmetry exists in the distribution of the narrators' voices, as a key order of narration. The novel has 15 different narrators, and particular importance is given to the interconnection between the characters and the narrators as well as their ties to the socio-historic periods they belong to. It is the very order of the characters and/or narrators through different criteria – gender, the his-

toric period, their profession, and their ethnicity – that gives the convincing and credible multi-layered cultural memory of the town of Osijek. At the same time, it deconstructs some established notions and prejudices, and yet builds new, possible ways of perceiving the town or its history. A distinct, narrative set of methods characteristic for a scientific, lexicographical discourse type additionally proves our 'reading' of Osijek as a cultural mnemotope.

*Keywords:* *Bizarij*, Jasna Horvat, cultural memory, recycling of faction, mnemotope

## I. INTRODUCTION

The novel *Bizarij* (2009), written by contemporary Croatian author Jasna Horvat, preserves the cultural memory of a region, by situating the stories of 15 chapters into different historic periods of the town of Osijek, thus recycling faction through fiction in the same way this author has done through her other novels (*Az*, *Auron*, *Vilikon*). Although her narrative strategies characteristic for fictional texts are superior here when compared to those characteristic for non-fictional texts, on the one hand, the documentary mate-

rial acts as a starting point for each of the 15 stories-chapters while on the other hand, it is what defines the method of discursive presentation (especially in the paratextual parts where popular scientific discourse collects information related to powerful historical persons, events and places documented by official historiography). The chapters, however, do not refer to points/periods in time which would, following one after the other, form a continuous chronological sequence; instead, they are lined up to pierce different, mutually distant points in the diachrony. The time span encompassed by the chapters of *Bizarij* is extremely wide – it spans the period of approximately 1600 years. More precisely, the oldest historical period included in the story is the period of Constantius II in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, while the most recent story is situated in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Due to the complexities of the cultural memory spanned, the novel *Bizarij* is one of the most precise and the most interesting mnemotopes in Croatian prose in general.

## II. BIZARIJ AS A (POST)OULIPIAN NOVEL

*Bizarij*, a multiplied coded text, is viewed here as (post)Oulipian narrative, that is, a text shaped by constraints and strategies characteristic of the French group Oulipo<sup>1</sup>. Considering such determination of the text, its coding and conceptuality can be viewed under the concept of Oulipian *constraints*<sup>2</sup>. The role of *constraints* in shaping the narratives of *Bizarij* is played by the following concepts participating in the recycling of faction:

- symmetry – combining male and female characters and narrators within 15 chapters, where 7 male and 7 female characters appear, as well as an anthropomorphised character (a house)
  - the permutations of the character of Isabella von Habsburg in all the chapters – a motif functioning as a Lacanian *point de capiton* (*anchoring point*) of the text.
  - lexicographic discourse – the shaping of paratextual additions to a lexicographic instrumentarium.
- The said concepts not only offer multiple readings of the text, shaping it ludic into an interactive and multi-layered textual *museum*, but also present information and enrichment of the less-known cultural topics of Osijek through pointing to its musealisation and archiving of the cultural, world-view and historical context. However, regardless of the historic framework and factual personalities in reconstructing and recycling said cultural memory, this documentary discourse is subordinated to the individual sequences of fiction (e.g. through the formation of a grammatical code). At the same time, we can see a highlighted documentary quality through lexicographic discourse and intermedial (visual, in particular) additions (photographs, paintings, sketches).

### A. THE CONSTRAINT OF GRAMMATICAL CODE

In *Bizarij*, the grammatical code represents a constraint of syntax and the levels of structure. Such a constraint emphasizes the combinations of syntactic segments in the storylines of the chapters, where combinations of conjunctions and conjunction syntagms appear in the first paragraphs of a chapter. On the structural level, besides the 15 chapters being sys-

tematised and divided according to the dependent and independent clauses of the Croatian language, there is also a (co)relation of storylines and titles in terms of themes and motifs. The grammatical code in the text serves as the means of interconnection. By emphasizing the function of conjunctions of the Croatian language, and by incorporating them into a literary utterance, the text examines not only the possibilities of the language but also of forming narratives. Hence, the novel functions as a playground for grammatical combinations where cultural and historical characters of collective memory of the town of Osijek are inscribed, and where they fill in semantically appropriate places of conjunctions and conjunction collocations according to their corresponding classification. The means of everyday communication - language - becomes an instrument for remembering culture.

According to the grammatical code, the characters in the text are "lined in imaginary connective series – from dependent, conditional, causal to clauses of concession, manner, purpose, consecutive, declarative, relative, to component, disjunctive, adversative, conclusion, exclusive and grading connections" as stated by Kos-Lajtman (2010, p. 13). Conjunctions and connective words in the chapters are listed so that they follow the chronological sequence of events within the chapters, and only by reading the chapters as separate units can the natural timeline be reconstructed. On the other hand, the grammatical code not only shapes the structure of the novel and connects chapters and stories, but it is also superior to the linear course of history and development of the town. Time sequence, and temporality in general, is an important segment of the culture of memory, but "it is unusual that a time sequence represents precisely a series of breaks and

incoherencies" (Augé, 2001, p. 58). Therefore, the longitudinal quality of the plot of global history is disrupted and marginalized with the aim of presenting the affinity and closeness in diversity. This disruption of the global chronological structure of the text results in a stronger emphasis of spatial segments: geographical, geological and geo-cultural. With the marginalization of the time sequence, its spatial and mnemotopic qualities are highlighted. Relationships between the chapters, finally, are established through the structure of the grammatical code, i.e., a conjunction system of Croatian – dependent and independent clauses – where the global image of the town's history is mirrored.

#### *B. THE CONSTRAINT OF SYMMETRY*

Using symmetry as a limitation and a concept is evident on the conceptual and structural levels of the text but also on the thematic and motif levels. Special attention should be paid to the level of conceptualization of text through symmetry. More precisely, the analysis of structural symmetry will lead to insight regarding its disruption in the deep structure of the text, considering the polyphonic character of narration.

1) *The symmetry of the structure as a mirror projection of the symmetry of the main characters:* Symmetry is not only found as the leitmotif in certain chapters but it is also incorporated into the global structure of the novel. More precisely, in addition to connecting some of the chapters by motif connections, symmetry also appears on a completely different discourse level, namely in the very structure and conceptual code of the novel. The first level where symmetry is visible is the dual structure of the novel, consisting of: *Part 1 - Dependent connections, Part 2 - Independent connec-*

tions, and accompanying chapters formed by the lexicographic instrumentarium (Kos-Lajtman and Horvat, 2012) – *Index of Characters, Old names of some streets in Osijek and Legend*. Besides this one, there is also another level, i.e., the level of the organization of the 15 chapters where 7 male and 7 female characters narratively bring together the chapter of the only anthropomorphized character – the Lekic House. Structural-formative symmetry, however, can also be found in the titles given to chapters. More precisely, if the female characters named in chapter titles are added up, as well as the male ones, we come up with symmetry of number 14-7. But if every chapter is read carefully, it is

evident that the main characters are not always the ones announced in the titles. Besides, the text creates a polyphonic structure based on complex, polyvalent relations of narrators, characters and focalizers. The reason for multiple shifts and changes of narrators and focalizers, even within a single chapter, is undoubtedly the attempt to create a dynamic rhythm in narration, as well as credibility and interest for the story. This will be presented in Table 1., which sheds light on the complex relations of three instances we mentioned by allocating a particular chapter title the main character and the type of narrator, and placing it into a historical period where the action takes place.<sup>3</sup>

	Chapter Title		Main Character		Chapter Narrator		Historical Context
1st part Dependent connections	<i>Time Connections of Isabella von Habsburg</i>	♀	Isabella von Habsburg	♀	extra-diegetic and hetero-diegetic	/	the late 19 <sup>th</sup> and early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Condi-tional Connect-ions of Ivan Korog</i>	♂	Ivan Korog	♂	Nikola Iločki – extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic	♂	the first half of the 15 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Causal Connect-ions of Antun Ben-hard</i>	♂	Antun Ben-hard	♂	Extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic	/	the first half of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Concessive Connect-ions of the Dancer Suleimana</i>	♀	Dan-cer Suleimana	♀	Suleimana, the dancer – intra-diegetic auto-diegetic	♀	a few years after 1566
	<i>Modal Connects of Adolf Waldinger</i>	♂	Adolf Waldinger	♂	extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic	/	the second half of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Intentional Connect-ions of Sulei-man the Magnificent</i>	♂	Sulei-man the Magnificent	♂	The builder of Sulei-man’s bridge – intra-diegetic homo-diegetic	♂	the second and third quarter of the 16 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Consecu-tive Connect-ions of Adela Deszant-hy</i>	♀	Adela Deszant-hy	♀	Adela Deszant-hy – intra-diegetic auto-diegetic	♀	the third quarter of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Declarative Connect-ions of Emper-or Constan-tius II</i>	♂	Con-stantius II	♂	Constantius II – intra-diegetic auto-diegetic / extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic	♂	mid-4 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Relative Connect-ions of Misses Gosseau de Heneff</i>	♀	Maxi-milian Gosseau de Heneff	♂	Misses Gosseau de Heneff – intra-diegetic homo-diegetic	♀	the last quarter of the 17 <sup>th</sup> and the first quarter of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century
2nd part Independent connections	<i>Copulative C connections of Marija Pejačević</i>	♀	Mari-ja Pejačević	♀	Marija Pejačević – intra-diegetic autodiegetic	♀	the end of the 18 <sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Disjunct-ive Connect-ions of Paulina Her-mann</i>	♀	Pauli-na Her-mann	♀	Paulina Hermann – intra-diegetic auto-diegetic	♀	the last quarter of the 19 <sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Adversa-tive Connect-ions of the Lekić House</i>	/	the Lekić house	/	Lekić house –intra-diegetic auto-diegetic	/	the second half of the 18 <sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Conclusive Connect-ions of Prince Eugene Savoy’s cousin</i>	♀	Eug-ene of Savoy	♂	The cousin of Prince Eugene – intra-diegetic homo-diegetic	♀	the second half of the 17 <sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 18 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Exclu-sive Connect-ions of Nikola Zrinski</i>	♂	Niko-la Zrinski	♂	extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic	/	mid-16 <sup>th</sup> century
	<i>Grading Connect-ions of Vlad-imir Lendić Ranko</i>	♂	Vlad-imir Lendić Ran-ko	♂	extra-diegetic hetero-diegetic	/	the last quarter of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century

**Table I** Relation between characters (in the chapter title and storyline of a particular chapter) and narrators and a historical contexts that determine them

Table 1 shows that 14 chapters are distributed so that chapter titles record 7 female characters (Isabella von Habsburg, the dancer Suleimana, Adela Deszanthly, Misses Gosseau de Heneff, Marija Pejačević, Paulina Hermann, and the cousin of Prince Eugene of Savoy) and 7 male characters (Ivan Korog, Antun Bernhard, Adolf Waldinger, Suleiman the Magnificent, Emperor Constantius II, Nikola Zrinski, Vladimir Lendić Ranko). Besides, it shows that such symmetry is disrupted in the deep structure of the story. More precisely, it is evident – after comparing the characters announced in the title and those who are the main characters – which symmetry does not function on that level.

2) *The chapter: Relational Connections of Misses Gosseau de Heneff*: The chapter's title, *Relational Connections of Misses Gosseau de Heneff*, announces Misses Gosseau de Heneff by explicitly identifying her as the main character. However, in the text of the chapter on Misses Gosseau de Heneff, she is given the position of a narrator only due to her connection to Maximilian Gosseau de Heneff, the construction engineer of the fort Tvrđa in Osijek. Her story is actually a story about him. That way, she is the narrator and the focalizer, but the one who is talked about in the chapter, the object of narration, is actually her husband Maximilian<sup>4</sup>.

3) *The Chapter: Conclusive Connections of Prince Eugene Savoy's cousin*: A situation where there is an entwining of the relations of consanguinity, which will serve to reshape the story, is also visible in the said chapter. In order to realize the concept of symmetry, the title of the chapter had to explicate a female character who would, in this case, act as the narrator, focalizer, and minor character, but who will get the right to tell the story of another personality.<sup>5</sup> The cousin of

Prince Eugene of Savoy, in the chapter titled based on her relation of consanguinity, tells a tale about the life of Prince Eugene of Savoy, and his renowned building enterprises and military successes. Since the thematic and structural axis of the text is the town of Osijek, so the cousin of the Prince of Savoy gives importance to those stories, recorded in the town's history as historical facts and the history of the Osijek region, by which they form the cultural and historic heritage of the town.

4) *The chapter: Concessive Connections of the Dancer Suleimana*: Symmetry is not also disrupted in that chapter, where another historically unauthorized character appears, namely the dancer Suleimana, for whom there is no point of reference in the historical sources, nor can one be guessed. Although a fictional character, documentary facts about Osijek can be found in her personal story after the death of Suleiman the Magnificent; she was also personally marked by his death: "Allah let me take a breath when Suleiman expired under Sziget, on the night from the fifth to the sixth September of 1566" (Horvat, 2009, p. 88).

5) *The chapter: Intentional Connections of Suleiman the Magnificent*: In addition to the aforementioned, there is one more disruption of symmetry, in the chapter *Intentional Connections of Suleiman the Magnificent*, where the narrative voice of a man appears, while the main character is the sultan Suleiman. More precisely, in the chapter, Suleiman gives a task to the male narrative voice, who wants to build a bridge, so as to find evidence about the symmetry between numbers in order to fulfill his wish.<sup>6</sup> The reason for choosing a narrator close to Suleiman, and not him directly, should be looked for in the abovementioned motif connection with the aforementioned chapters.

In order to ensure the mnemotopic quality of the town, and preserve the collective memory, and with a lack of sufficiently recorded female personalities who resided in Osijek in the past, a series of characters appears as they take on the roles of minor characters, so that historically verified personalities significant for the development of the town could 'carry' the historical story. The greater the time lapse, the less 'great' personalities of the town of Osijek are being recorded, especially female ones, who would play an important public role in the context of the history of the town. Such presence was, for instance, that of Mačkamama, as well as Isabella von Habsburg, who appears as the interweaving motif and who unites all chapters.<sup>7</sup>

### C. PERMUTATIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF ISABELLA VON HABSBURG

The character of Isabella von Habsburg, although the bearer of one, (the first) chapter of the novel, is specific because she is the only character appearing in all the other chapters as well. Not as the main character or narrator, but as a leitmotif, which, if we use Lacan's concept and terminology, on the level of a textual unit, she gets the role of the so-called anchoring point of all stories, i.e., chapters in the novel. It is a case of the Lacanian procedure of *anchoring* within which the elements of the narrative world are united by a certain *anchoring point* – in order to achieve successful communication, it is necessary that the metonymic creation of the signifying chain and metaphoric substitution of the signifier stop at a certain point, so that the previous signifying chain could be linked to the signified, i.e., with the image of a thing. The place where there is a stop in the signifying chain of the principally

infinite course of semantization is called by Lacan *the anchoring point (point de capiton)* (cf. Žižek, 2002, p. 125). Such a place in *Bizarij* is the permutation of the character of Isabella von Habsburg which functions, in the context of Oulipian view of literature, as a procedure of a consciously set *constraint*. More precisely, appearing in the first chapter as the carrier of the story about *time links*, Isabella becomes a key character of the novel in some way. The narrative idea, evidently, includes the condition of her appearance in all other chapters as well, though not in the way of a classical, realistically motivated character, but as a phantasmagorical motif, which at a point in their personal stories is seen by certain characters of the novel. What we see as a part of said *constraint* is a variety of appearances of Isabella von Habsburg in the stories of others. Namely, never does Isabella appear in the same way though all variations of that leitmotif have in common the fact that her appearance always includes a dose of phantasmagoria, a state on the edge of fantasy (other characters see her as a vision, phantasm, apparition, hallucination, dream, etc.), as well as the fact that she always appears as a woman in a green dress by which her character's reconcilability on the whole story level is ensured. Thus, the character of Isabella becomes the *anchoring point*, a narrative figure connecting 15 stories into a novelistic whole, uniting various schemas, temporema and spacema figures (cf. Peleš, 1999) into a single world-creating constellation. Especially interesting is the inversion of the initial figure, the one in Isabella's chapter of the novel, where Isabella as the main character of the chapter falls asleep – in all the other following chapters where other characters see Isabella, i.e., as a woman in a green dress, while dreaming and/or hallucinating, in certain critical situations

deviating from regular life. So it is not really clear who dreams about whom – is everything that the novel talks about throughout its remaining 14 chapters actually only Isabella's dream from the beginning of the novel, or all the other characters see her while she is dreaming. Hypothetically, this can be an idea of the possibility of mutually dreaming about/of each other, by which the phantasmagoria in *Bizarij* becomes even more artificial and the story, thus, more compact.

The character of Isabella von Habsburg is important for self-recording. Namely, Isabella is accompanied by her own photographs in *Bizarij*, which she herself had taken as a historical figure and photography aficionado. Although Isabella's character within the framework of her story records the time of taking photos trying to actualize herself on the level of novelistic discourse as a whole, this ensures the cultural memory, and thus confirms the possibility of using documentary records as attested images of town history.

#### D. LEXICOGRAPHIC INSTRUMENTARIUM

By shaping the chapters according to the system of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions of Croatian, and accompanying chapters, i.e., paratextual parts of the novel, as lemma discourses functioning as lexicon entries (cf. Kos-Lajtman and Horvat 2012) about historical personalities, about the streets of Osijek, etc., a clear cataloguing of the signs of urban life and the history of development of the town of Osijek is achieved. By making a list of the streets through which the characters move, an impression of networking of the stories is created, and the text starts functioning as a network, or a labyrinth of streets.<sup>8</sup> The town of Osijek, as it appears in 15 different versions according to the

requirements of each story and its anchoring in time, does not only function in *Bizarij* as a mnemotopic image of a place, but what's more, as a multi- mnemotopic image, since it presents a network of cultural identities, different periods of the town's development, different rules and rulers.

#### III. THE TOWN OF OSIJEK AS A MNEMOTOPE

Starting precisely from eccentric, often marginalized, personalities from different periods of history, *Bizarij* preserves the cultural memory of a town, which is, however, in large part connected to a wider context, namely, a history of a region, a country, a wider geographical and cultural circle. Considering the multitude of historiographic data, traces, records, diary excerpts, etc., *Bizarij* verifies Osijek as a place of cultural memory that is a mnemotope. Assmann explains that mnemotopes are places of memory, topographic texts in which memories of a specific group are localized and monumentalized (2005, pp. 70-71). In the novel, spatialization is not limited only to the area of former borders of Osijek, but it is understood as a wide landscape, so that the culture of memory also spreads to the area of the Croatian regions Slavonnia and Baranya, melting into a unique Pannonian space. Also, the areas where the main characters of the novel originated from, as well as those to which historical events are related, which are recognized as turning points in their lives.<sup>9</sup>

Traces of authenticated events are interpolated in different ways, visible through explicit citation and inter-textuality of a novel communicating with historiographic material, thus forming figures of memory through which the text becomes a *museum*. Musealisation and historization are tendencies of modern art; it

acts in conserving effect since it attempts to compensate for the cultural changes conditioned by technologization and disappearance of intimacy (Lübbe, 1993).<sup>10</sup> Due to modernization and technological development, leading to the general erosion of memory, culture and literature become bearers of memory and generators of historic awareness. Through memory games, some culture groups agree to forms of memory work such as archiving, musealisation and encyclopeding; they follow certain modes of interpreting history, for instance, its layering or palimpsest (Lachmann, 2002, pp. 221-222). If the memory of a text is understood as intertextuality, then literature becomes a mnemotechnic art since it founds and records the memory of culture (Lachmann, 2002, pp. 208-209). Thus, culture is always rewritten and writing becomes an act of remembering and new interpretations (2002, p. 209). Intertextuality and citation techniques open possibilities for the reconstruction of past events, which is particularly evident in this novel that invades different segments of the history of Osijek – both through the level of public, collective history, and through levels of personal histories, especially those histories not historiographically confirmed. The mechanisms used to achieve the reconstruction of memory in *Bizarij*, a novel about a town, take place on both key levels – the public and the private – since the history of a town cannot be written without the history of the persons who inhabited it, and vice versa, – personal histories are necessarily immersed into the history of the area, which, more or less, determines them. We should also keep in mind that history does not only reconstruct history but the present as well, so *Bizarij* can be reconstructed, i.e., structured according to certain periods to which the characters belong.<sup>11</sup>

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It is evident that strategies of textual historization in *Bizarij* are set for the purpose of (re)constructing the hypothetical history of the town of Osijek, and not some concrete historical period or personality. Thus, Osijek becomes the thematic axis of the whole novel, a superior theme that holds together all of the 15 chapters, situated in different historical periods. The strategy of narrative fictionalization which has proven to be very efficient in the process of *anchoring* separate stories into a unique novelistic whole is the permutation of the character of Isabella von Habsburg as an interweaving motif in all chapters – at the same time, it is an instrument by which the story gets an extra dimension of intrigue and mystique. By choosing non-typical characters as carriers of the story lines (eccentric and/or marginalized creators, interesting personalities), even those historically unidentified, the author offers a new possible image of the history of Osijek, but also an image of this geographical region in general. Due to a precise focus on characters engrossed by idea and creation, such literary image is in itself burdened by the idea about the act of creation as something that is universal in history, in spite of the different historical circumstances and individual characteristics of the protagonists. Although they are often *bizarre* for their surroundings (the analogy with the title is clear), such personalities – builders, painters, musicians, generals, mathematicians – ensure a vivid, sometimes bizarre, but never one-dimensional, history of the Pannonian town of Osijek. Although the spatial mnemotopic quality is the core around which the narrative is gathered, it should be stressed that its specificity lies precisely in

the fact that we rarely find spatial mnemotopes invading a timeline through a multitude of its different points, where time mnemotopy, although it is not reconstructed neither in a linear nor in a full way, encompasses a period longer than 1600 years. So *Bizarij*, through a system of dependent and independent connections (human and human, but human and space as well) forms an interesting literary-historiographic project, thus, a conceptual chronographic-geographic mnemotope.

#### ENDNOTES

- [1] The French group Oulipo was founded in 1960 by François Le Lionnais and Raymond Queneau. The goal of the group, whose name is an acronym of the syntagm *Ouvroir de littérature potentielle* (*workshop of potential literature*), is to find new potential structures, samples and models that would be used in creating literary texts. Members of the Oulipo experiment with writing techniques, most often using mathematical permutations or forms in creating texts. These forms incorporate also the techniques of *constraint* that Oulipians set for themselves and test in their workshops. The group is isolated from periods of literary history and stylistic periods stressing that their texts are neither modernist nor postmodernist (Mathews and Brotchie, 2005). Although many of their strategies are characteristic for postmodernist poetics in general, this paper is focused on those strategies that gather under the same name, under the adjective *(post)Oulipian*.
- [2] Constraint (French *contrainte*) is a notion which marks the basic element in the Oulipian practice. Each constraint is a clearly defined rule, method, procedure or structure, from which it results that the text can be called Oulipian (Mathews and Brotchie, 2005, p. 131). The *constraints* they set as concepts of their texts are not primarily literary, but some general codes taken over from science, primarily mathematics, and from language as a medium for textual transmission.
- [3] Genette's typology of the extradiegetic, intradiegetic, and heterodiegetic and homodiegetic character in the story is taken over to describe the narrator (Peleš, 1999, pp. 76-78). Later on, the typology was completed by the notion of the autodiegetic narrator as a special form of homodiegetic narrative situation (Biti, 2000, p. 439).
- [4] With the disruption of symmetry the issue of character's fictitiousness appears, i.e., the appearance of historically unverified characters. So the chapter of Misses Gosseau de Heneff is reconstructed through her own story, and we can only suppose that she was the wife of Maximilian Gosseau de Heneff. Historical sources, where the history of Osijek's fort Tvrđa, and the construction of the fortification are described, report only Maximilian's name; since there is data about the property in Nuštar owned by Gosseau de Heneff's being sold by his heirs, it is assumed that Misses Gosseau de Heneff existed after all (cf. Uzelač, 1996, p. 141). Due to the inability to find historical facts about her, she was given the right of narration in the chapter, but not the function of the main character of the chapter.
- [5] Although historical sources do not record a young cousin of the Prince Eugene of Savoy who mirrors his physical flaws, there is a possibility that she existed. Regardless of that, consanguinity served here to conceptualize the text through symmetry, which was realized in naming chapters.
- [6] The same male character also appears in the chapter *Concessive Connections of the Dancer Suleimana*, where the dancer Suleimana sees the same character trying to grasp the secret of mathematical symmetry, and the parchment on which he writes the evidence is found years later by Maximilian in the chapter *Relational Connections of Misses Gosseau de Heneff*. After finding the parchment Maximilian turns to the idea of symmetry, which he tries to implement in the layout of Tvrđa
- [7] Lachmann points out that it is important that those mnemonic images be impressive, noticeable, exciting, moving (Lachmann, 2002, p. 217). In order for the mnemonic image of the town to be complete it is important for a text to have ambivalent characters and cultural signs that will be able to reconstruct history. Characters in *Bizarij* are hence strange and bizarre personalities, sufficiently plausible to create strong mnemonic images of the town.
- [8] Topoi of the net and the labyrinth are the most frequent places of contemporary postmodernist prose (Fokkema, 1997). So, in the chapter *Conditional Connections of Ivan Korog* there is a metaphor of a net which, considering the context, functions as metonymy: "You chased your thoughts to give them to me.

- Sometimes they were images, sometimes fog and sometime cobweb clusters. Regardless of what they were you caught them into nets and arranged them into sentences for me. You would put salt on the sentences and then write them down. (Horvat, 2009, p. 62). The topos of a net is used as a metaphor and metonymy of the entire text that invites multiple readings. The net means a hierarchical relationship, where the temporal component of the plot is marginalized but – focusing on the net of chapters and the net of linguistic characters – a formative-structural level of the text is described. At that, we should have in mind the hyper-textual theories and models of net novels. Calvino calls the net form of the text hyper-novels texts that “present an accumulative, modular, combining structure” (Calvino, 2002, p. 133). The net as topos also appears in the chapter *Relational Connections of Misses Gosseau de Heneff* where fort Tvrđa, the old town core of Osijek, is explained as a network of streets (Horvat, 2009, p. 179). On the other hand, the labyrinth appears in the semantic meaning of a net in the same chapter: “This huge edifice with eight bastions, fort’s beams, twenty-two exterior forts (Flesche) and glacis, with eight military barracks, five gunpowder-magazines, two armories, sixty-five casemates and a labyrinth of underground hallways became a town-fort where large garrison could be accommodated” (Horvat, 2009, p. 192). Hence, Tvrđa, which historically represented the town of Osijek itself and its active anthropological location (Augé, 2001) that Maximilian is outlining, represents a metaphor for writing. Tvrđa with a labyrinth of hallways becomes auto-meta poetical signal of the text. *Labyrinth* in postmodernist poetics denotes an archive or a library, a concept when the work is “structured analogously to the intertextual area of its relationship with other artworks or discourses of the theory of ideas” (Šuvaković, 2005, p. 86). In *Bizarij*, Osijek becomes “a map of the paths of a ‘complex labyrinth’” according to this interpretation (Šuvaković, 2005, p. 86).
- [9] For instance, villages Tikveš and Bilje where Isabella von Habsburg is staying, fort Korodvar in village Ivanovac near Osijek, village Nuštar where Maximilian Gosseau de Heneff is building his castle etc. All these are anthropologically important locations, trademarks of ancient times (Augé, 2001, pp. 50-53).
- [10] Oraić Tolić points out that the function of citation in postmodernist poetics is of the museum and archive sort, and that it refers to the transcribing traditions (Oraić Tolić, 1990, p. 210).

- Lachmann believes that intertextual literature is a form of mnemotechnics, and its function is to conserve and collect (Lachmann, 2002). Šuvaković points out that contemporary artists take over from museums and archives the power of collecting and interpretation, turning the artworks into a mimesis of a museum (Šuvaković, 2005, p. 113)
- [11] Historic documentation is recycled in the text by reconstructing historically verified truths as set dates, events from historical sources, photographs and images that are an accompanying the text, by reconstructing events via letters and diary entries of famous citizens of Osijek (Buljubašić, 2013, pp. 716-721). Besides, the text describes customs and traditions, such as recipes and medicines that were handed over from one generation to the next, legends, beliefs and superstitions (Kos-Lajtman, 2010, p. 13).

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