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THE CHRONOTOPE OF THE HOUSE (*KUĆA*) AND THE DISCOURSES OF WOMEN IN THE MODERNIST NOVELS OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA[1]

The modernist literature of the former Yugoslavia inherited the legacy of realist literature in terms of "chronotope" and "subject," while also differing drastically from the legacy, conceptually speaking. This is most obviously revealed in psychological literary discourse about the low-ranking subjects of traditional society, particularly women. A typical example is the traditionally patriarchal space of the house (*kuća*), which typically functions as a negative motif of chronotope in the discourse about women and family by modernist writers of the former Yugoslavia.

Key words: modernist novels from former Yugoslavia, chronotope, discourse of women, discourse of family, psychologism, patriarchal culture

Modernistična literatura bivše Jugoslavije je podedovala tradicijo realistične literature, kar zadeva kronotop in književni lik, vendar se od te tradicije konceptualno tudi pomembno razlikuje. To se najočitneje razkriva v psihološkem književnem diskurzu o likih, ki zasedajo nizka mesta v hierarhiji tradicionalne družbe, kar so posebno ženske. Značilen primer je tradicionalni patriarhalni prostor hiše (*kuća*), ki v pisanju modernistični avtorjev iz bivše Jugoslavije običajno deluje kot negativni motiv kronotopa v diskurzu o ženskah in družini.

Ključne besede: modernistični roman v bivši Jugoslaviji, kronotop, diskurz o ženskah, diskurz o družini, psihologizem, patriarhalna kultura

0 Introduction

The modernist novels of former Yugoslavia (hereafter, Yugoslavia) realistically reflect the various geographical, social, and ethnic situations of the western Balkan area and indirectly reveal the area's unique cultural and semiotic mindset. The individual authors of the modernist novels of Yugoslavia have certain characteristics: each of them notably manifests the natural environments, material foundations, and sociopolitical relationships of their home places, and each author's consciousness shows in the formation of a distinct ethnic chronotope with constant tension between conservation and innovation according to the local environmental features.

The literature of Yugoslavia, whenever cultural modernization created contention from its naissance until today, has presented tradition and innovation as central issues; the metaphor of "centrifugality",[2] which concisely encompasses the attributes

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[2] In this paper, the concepts of "centripetality" and "centrifugality" include social and cultural meanings in addition to the literary categories of "traditionalism" and "reformism," which are commonly re-

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of modernist literature, is also specifically confirmed by analyzing the chronotope in the region's representative novels (Meštrović 1993: 134–39). Although most of the authors were unable to deviate from provincialism and traditionalism, which are the characteristics of pre-modernism, they tried to transform the traditional values and conventional culture of each locality and to raise them to the level of world culture through sophisticated art forms that represented avant-gardism, innovation, freedom, individuality, pluralism, and democratic values. The Balkans' pursuit of national identities while under the control of foreign powers, such as Ottoman Turkey and Austria, reached a critical point at the time of modernism that opened the prologue to the history of Yugoslavia. Thus, we may conclude that the need for enhancing life through the arts and for creative responses to contemporary cultural trends was the fundamental reason for which modernist novelists, who constituted the intellectuals in each ethnic group, sought new artistic forms.

The cultural model for the mentality of the Balkan people (*balkanskij mentalitet*), which is the worldview of the Balkans (*Balkanskaja Model' Mira*)[3] proposed by Russian semiotic scholar Tatijana Civ'jan in her analysis of a vast amount of data, helps to identify their universal mindset (Civ'jan 2006: 71); however, it is insufficient for interpreting the unique cultural model of Yugoslavia in the western Balkans. In addition to aesthetic values, modernist novels from Yugoslavia characteristically provide detailed information about the social environment and folklore of the western part of the modern Balkans. As is usual with cultural models, the cultural value system of Yugoslavia does not have entirely homogenous and standardized elements; here, contradictory values and oppositional worldviews are sometimes mixed. This complex model of worldviews is clearly expressed in the culture at the turn of the century, which was a period of political and social upheaval. We can say that various literary texts produced in the modernist period in the western Balkans actualize this foundational, potential value system.

1 Mental division and the Dinar traditional culture of Yugoslavia

In the early 20th century, Serbian anthropologists Jovan Cvijić and Milivoj S. Stanojević extensively probed the mentality of the Dinaric race, the prototype for the people of Yugoslavia, from the perspectives of anthropology, sociology, and the stu-

ferred to in the history of Yugoslav literature. A group of Western thinkers (Durkheim, Parsons, Giddens, and Habermas) explain the characteristics of modernization with reference to globalization and universality, the Enlightenment, and centrifugality, and contrast them with centripetal pre-modern culture, which tends to conserve regionalism, nationalism, traditional values, and internal integration. Using this viewpoint, we looked for the essence of the modernist novels of the former Yugoslavia at their point of breaking away from pre-modernity, and used the metaphors of "centripetality" and "centrifugality" in defining the pre-modernity and modernity that coexist in these novels.

3 In relation to general semiotic oppositions, Civ'jan sees that the value systems of internal vs. external and mine vs. others' are directly associated with the mentality of the Balkan people. She considers that these value systems are specifically expressed in the texts through the Balkan locale (*balkanskoe prostranstvo* - topography, terrain and nature) and the Balkan history (*balkanskoe vremja* - social and cultural evolution, and progress of thought), and she defines this overall operation as the unique characteristic chronotope of the Balkans.

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dy of cultural mentality. In their studies, Cvijić and Stanojević agree that the Dinaric race (Serbs and Croats) predominates among the South Slavs in the Balkans. It is true that these research data reveal partial limitations as academic resources because the characterological study of these two anthropologists is not completely free from their nationalist viewpoints (Bošković 2005: 9); nonetheless, they provide considerable implications for studying the local literary texts by presenting the subtle emotional features of Yugoslavia, which foreign observers cannot easily apprehend. Cvijić and Stanojević also help with identifying the distinctive mentality of Yugoslavs, which is distinct from that of East Slavs, West Slavs, and Bulgarians, by indicating that the family structure, "zadruga," and family tradition, "slava," were appropriated by the Dinarics, who constitute a major proportion of Yugoslav people.

"Zadruga," which is the term for the unusual family structure in Yugoslavia, is a paternal hierarchical family commune of 20 to 80 kinship members under the direction of a single household head (*domaćin* or *starešina*). This family structure likely began because the early settlers, living mostly in isolated mountain areas, felt the need for mutual help and protection. In addition, it was financially efficient for a large family to be consolidated into one household, owing to the household taxes imposed under Turkish rule, and the large commune afforded some protection against external enemies. *Zadruga* gradually decreased in most places with the advent of modernism, but it lasted for quite a long time in the Dinaric area (McDonald 1973: 113–17). *Kuća*, meaning "house," is another form of the family structure aside from *zadruga*; it was constituted by the householder, his married sons and their families, and its form was superficially similar to that of the *zadruga*, although the number of constituents was smaller (McDonald 1973: 120).

The most noticeable cultural attribute of the traditional Dinaric society was its male-dominated culture (*androkratija*), based on strong masculinity and patriarchy (Dvorniković 2000: 208, 340). As indicated by a local proverb—"God does not help where the patriarch does not receive respect"—the authority of the patriarch over his family members was absolute, and it was a common social understanding that accepting the patriarchal authority was profitable to the communal development (Tomašić 1948: 20). In that patriarchal culture, the divisions of role and labor between parents and children, and between males and females were clear (Simić 1983: 82), and a strict hierarchy prevailed, even among male family members (Tomašić 1948: 20). Dinaric males were most distinguished from Western European males in their lack of chivalrous culture or courteous care for women. On the other hand, the virtue demanded of the wives was obedience to their husbands (Dvorniković 2000: 208, 343). The different family dynamics (relationships between husband and wife, mother and son, and daughter-in-law and mother-in-law) of the Dinaric traditional society were characterized by a decrease in the wife's affection toward the husband and an immense affection of the mother for her son as a coping mechanism for possible discordance between mother and daughter-in-law, should the daughter-in-law revolt against her mother-in-law's dominance (Simić 1983: 76). The ideas of male superiority over females and the preference for baby boys over girls were emphasized because of the male responsibilities to preserve the family lineage, fight in war, and support the family (Tomašić 1948: 22; Dvorniković 2000: 344). The relationship between father

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and son manifested in an extreme contradiction of love and hate, and the father did not show a daughter as much tenderness or concern as he would show a son. Within the communities, any indications of sex or any expressions of female seductiveness were also inhibited.

Dvorniković argues that the culture of Yugoslavia in the western Balkan region shows more maturation in the spatial than in the temporal aspect because of the long period of foreign occupation, cultural underdevelopment, and frequent wars with neighboring nations; therefore, the region is distinguished by the preservation of natural and unpolished traditional values rather than by the promotion of a man-made and sophisticated material culture (Dvorniković 2000: 252). In this respect, the modernist culture of Yugoslavia can be regarded as a ceaseless struggle to move from a "spatial race" to a "temporal race." In other words, it is a series of attempts to fight against and conquer the geographical space that constantly deprived someone of his or her place in historical memory.

2 The chronotope of the modernist novels of Yugoslavia: A reinterpretation of the discourse on women and traditional values

The chronotopic characteristics of the realistic novels from Yugoslavia are, first, a typification of certain ethical values through the expression of specific socio-cultural practices, and, second, spatial specificity and temporal abstraction that are described in the novels. In particular, the house (*kuća*) where the local residents' personal and social lives are merged is the central symbol in the narrative, which focuses on the human relationships inside and outside of the house.

The modernist novelists of Yugoslavia commonly manifest the crises and fractures of traditional society through their discourse on family and women. Consequently, the same spatial motif found in realist literature is expressed with a different meaning of chronotope. The typical example is the patriarchal space, the house (*kuća*), which typically functions as a negative motif of chronotope in the discourse on women and family from the prominent modernist novelists of Yugoslavia.

2.1 Discourses on women and family in Slovenian and Croatian modernist novels

Prežihov Voranc, a leading modernist writer of Slovenia, frequently depicted the dreadful incidents that humans encounter in the journey of life and their inevitable struggles for survival in harsh environments. In his novelette *Samorastniki*, which is regarded as his most artistically mature work, he portrays the dramatic fates of women in a traditional society. Focusing on the women and the contradictions of the community in the social and economic environment of Slovenia in the late 19th century, this work criticizes the status of single mothers in that patriarchal society, the barbaric restrictions on women within rural communities, and the inhuman and violent customs. Traditional Yugoslav society stressed the premarital virginity of the bride; if an unmarried girl became pregnant, she was considered to have defiled

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the honor of the family as well as her own, and she was implicitly forced to have an abortion (Tomašić 1948: 70). In *Samorastniki*, single mother Meta is treated as a witch by the members of the rural community; in addition, her nine children cannot avoid social and legal discrimination. Meta's situation illustrates an aspect of the traditional society in which large and wealthy families have a correspondingly greater voice within the community. People who were born in a small and poor family had no social privilege, stayed in a low social status with no influence in the community, and merited no protection when attacked by someone with greater status and power (Tomašić 1948: 93).

The story is narrated by Meta's youngest daughter, reminiscing about the life of her mother. In the main plot, the forbidden love between the eldest son of a wealthy family, Karničnik, and the daughter of a destitute family, Hudabivnik, ends in tragedy. The children of Hudabivnik are ill-treated when young, but they manage to form a well-established family, whereas the Karničnik family, once a well-to-do family, becomes impoverished in the end. The head of the affluent Karničnik family, who is in fact the father-in-law of the heroine, thinks that Meta, a poor maid working in his house, is not suitable to be his daughter-in-law, so he objects to her marriage with his son, Ožbej. He prevails upon the village community and the courts, obstructing the marriage by every possible means.

Like the servant Jernej in a work by Slovenian modernist writer Cankar, Meta asks for her freedom from the Karničnik family and relentlessly fights for it; but the marriage does not happen, and she is left as a helpless single mother. Despite the motif of marriage, the novel does not have any romantic descriptions about the love relationship between Meta and Ožbej; instead, economic superiority and power are the main motifs of the narrative, as in Ivo Ćipiko and Andrić's novel with its themes of the hierarchy of power and violence. Voranc presents the subject of social change by extending the discrimination against women to the structural contradictions of the social environment in the traditional rural communities, where a patriarchal order and the logic of power coexist.

In addition, Meta represents a typical topos that repeatedly appears in the depiction of women in modernist Yugoslav novels: These modernist novelists, in their works about violence against women and the sacrifices of women, often stress ethical messages through metaphors that underline women's physical weakness juxtaposed against the strong masculine order in order to highlight the brutality of the regulations and institutions of the patriarchal society. For example, like Andrić's *Mara Milosnica*, this novel often depicts institutional religion as a supporter of patriarchal domination over victimized women. The vicar, taking Karničnik's side, gives Meta's nine children names that indicate their illegitimate births and contributes to the collective insult toward Meta. The feudal lord, serving the role of the judge of the village, is also suborned by Karničnik and insists that Meta give up the marriage with Ožbej. When she disobeys his order, he has her flogged. Meta, by way of contrast, is portrayed as possessing a devout faith, and she appears as a virtuous woman who only loves Ožbej without considering his social status and wealth. Karničnik is reluctant to accept Meta as a daughter-in-law, mainly because he worries that she may take over his large farms; however, he is also concerned that the blood of his family will

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be "polluted" by that of a low-ranking family and that his social status will be ruined if his family forms an affinity with them. Most of the story is occupied by the tension between Karničnik, who is unwilling to legally accept the nine children born from his son, and Meta, who cannot give up Ožbej, the biological father of her children, in order to save the children from illegitimate status. The conflict is resolved in favor of the one with power in a solution that requires violence. Karničnik, who considers the honor of the family as most important, tries not to lose his son; thus, he portrays Meta to the village people as a witch (*vještica*) that has seduced a decent man and ruined him. He calls Meta into his house and tortures her brutally. Furthermore, he urges the village women to humiliate her; in the end, he expels her from the community.[4] Internalizing the patriarchal customs, the village women, instead of sympathizing with Meta as a woman, insult her in support of the powerful Karničnik.

The motif of social discrimination against women is also highlighted in Dinko Šimunović's novelette, *Duga*, which represents Croatian modernist novels well. Šimunović's story, with its strong local flavors portrayed in mythical and idyllic landscapes, is based on the author's memories of childhood and the folklore he heard from his mother. The narrator in the novelette renders the psychology of the young heroine in lyrical and romantic tones, accompanied by the genre portrayal of the residents' unique lives in a small Catholic village named Čardake. The narrator directs the story toward recollecting the gloom of the dry, stiff, and artificial traditional society, by bringing back the dynamism and vitality of the natural world. The novel takes the form of a Bildungsroman, underscoring a pessimistic view of the unfortunate society that oppresses human potential, the motifs of humans' innate solitude, and their conflict with the surrounding world while describing the life journey of a growing nine-year-old girl. The feudal lord's only daughter, Srna, is livelier and more active than other children, and she suffers from discrimination of various kinds inside and outside the house simply because she is not a male. The feudal lord, Srdar Janko, and his wife believe that men and women have distinct social roles and that they should be educated differently according to these roles; thus, they hound young Srna by admonishing her to follow certain manners as a female and by monitoring her. These admonitions include an insistence that a female should not run, should not sing except in certain circumstances, should wear a tight-fitting housecoat, should not eat much, should not get tanned, and should preserve the honor of the family. Srna wants to climb trees, swim in the river, and ride a horse like a boy; she yearns for an unconfined, lively life in nature, in contrast to the sickening restriction in the house, which is filled with religious pictures, the odor of burning candles, and the smell of herbs. As the conventional manners shackle her carefree and healthy nature, she is increasingly envious of the boys, who frolic on the field or in the river. The novel indirectly criticizes patriarchal social customs, with their strict gender division, through its depiction of Srna's psychological conflicts, particularly by juxtaposing the gender division with contrasts between artificiality and nature. As a female, Srna can go not to her cherished cornfields and meadows in the moonlight, but into the dust-covered alleys of the city. Young Srna becomes thoroughly aware of the discri-

[4] According to Tomašić, in the traditional society of the former Yugoslavia, the severest punishment for a member was to be expelled from the community (Tomašić 1948: 184).

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mination against women when she encounters Sava, a tragic heroine inserted into the novel as a frame narrative. Sava tells Srna her unfortunate life story: she has become disabled, losing one hand in an accident. She manages to learn embroidery skills and succeeds in gaining independence, but she is dispossessed of all of her hard-earned savings by her cunning and hypocritical husband, only to be later deserted along with her daughter. Following the first lyrical half of the novel, Sava's story leads the narration toward a tragic ending. After Sava speaks of an old village legend that says one can become a man if one runs under a rainbow, Srna runs into fields of reeds and drowns in a swamp. Her parents, broken-hearted after the death of their only daughter and suffering the guilt of having inflicted pain on their child, end their lives by jumping off a cliff.

2.2 Discourses on women and family in Serbian and Bosnian modernist novels

Borisav Stanković, a leading novelist of Serbian modernism, was a contemporary of poets Jovan Dučić and Milan Rakić, who were influenced by elegant French symbolism; however, Stanković created an archetype of Yugoslav women that is quite different from the ideal and mysterious images of women depicted in the two poets' works. His novelette, *Pokojnikova žena,* provides such details of traditional practices that it is used by folklore scholars who research Yugoslav society. It depicts the cruel practices of a traditional culture that destroyed women's lives. In the traditional Dinaric society, a widow who had a sexual relationship with a man other than her husband was killed or punished by her premarital family (Crnković 1999: 252). Etiquette required that a widow not let any guest come into her house or go outside the house. A widow should neither meet anyone nor be seen by anyone. In other words, she must become an invisible entity (Crnković 1999: 253). In the traditional Dinaric society, the house of the deceased householder was regarded as an inviolable sanctuary which even the widow's premarital family could not visit freely after the death of the householder for fear of "sinning" by disturbing the peaceful sleep of the dead person (Crnković 1999: 253). In this novel, the widow Anica lives as a slave who silently follows the orders of her husband, Mita, when he is alive; even after his death, she cannot escape her inexplicable life as a slave possessed by his ghost. Through his depiction of the benighted Anica as lacking free will, the author critically dissects the social and cultural environments of the traditional Dinaric society, which damaged a woman's self-identity. Here Anica is aware of the all-encompassing violence of her surroundings that oppress and restrain her, but she chooses to comply with her oppressor's desires and commands instead of resisting them.

As indicated by the name Anica, which is an implicit anagram of "Hasanaginica,"[5]

[5] Centering around the motif of the "unfairly treated wife," this ballad pithily presents the distinct cultural customs that prescribe the family relationships (husband and wife, parents and children) in the western Balkan nations, communicating in a special way the region's unique male-dominated, gender-specific culture. The main motif of the work is the wife as unfairly treated by her husband, although she herself fulfills her duties as a wife.

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the structure of the novel is distinguished by its adaptation of the lyrical oral epic (ballad), prevalent in Yugoslavia, into the form of a modern novel. The novel grotesquely describes the merciless traditional social norms that controlled women's social behaviors as well as their secret desires in Yugoslavia from ancient times to the early modern period. It is also worth noting that it adopts a plot structure with a dramatic ending similar to that of the oral narration, which teaches the superiority of patriarchal dominance over women. This novel is ironical from the first sentence. "She visits the grave so often that the realistic images of her husband have long been erased from her memory" (Stanković, *Stari dani i druge pripovetke* 193). Suggesting that Anica has often visited the grave, this sentence indicates that her mourning and lamentation arise not from sadness over the loss of her late husband but from a kind of fetishistic attachment or accustomed habit. Anica increasingly enjoys being confined to the house that still seems to be ruled by her late husband, and her feeling of joy derived from wailing at his grave replaces sexual contentment. Most of the novel is dedicated to describing how these habits are repeated and naturally embodied in her.

Stanković's novel *Nečista krv*, similar to the novelette, details a coercive environment to which the heroine is confined and the process by which she becomes accustomed to it as a result of the social pressure that demands her obedience. It depicts a situation in which an urban elite family at first feels culturally superior to the country folks in Vranje, a small town that faces great changes between classes caused by the annexation to Serbia and the influx of European culture and goods in the late 19th century. The family experiences an economic downfall and humiliation in the newly changed environment. The novel's main character, Sofka, at first strongly opposes her greedy and hypocritical father, Efendi Mita, when he tries to sell her through marriage in order to save his house from being bought off in a financial crisis; but later, in self-defeat, she willingly agrees to his decision. Sofka becomes psychologically enslaved to her husband, Tomča, who mortifies and tortures her, and her self-defeat reaches its climax when she enters an abnormal psychological state in which she believes that she deserves that kind humiliating treatment. A drastic contrast develops between the first and second halves of the novel as the heroine—with her initial vitality, colorful desires and dreams, and open mind—eventually complies with the demands of the males who victimize her and becomes completely possessed by the primitive and barbaric life at her husband's house. Sofka is not treated as a person; rather, she is degraded into an exchangeable object for implicit trade relations between men. Stanković attempted to point to an actual social problem and the tragic plight of women by creating the archetype of a woman who is easily ruined by the violence of the environment and introducing a somewhat provocative material.

Ivo Andrić's novelette, *Zlostavljanje*, introduces a female protagonist, somewhat like Hasan-aga's wife and Stanković's heroine (she even shares the latter's name), to show the discourse function of chronotope, which allows dialogic relationships with previous literary traditions. The novel describes the verbal "violence" of the husband, Gazda Andrija, toward his wife through several episodes arranged in the form of an anticlimax. The narrative of the novel advances between a limited number of characters—the husband, the wife, and a member of her premarital family—and focuses on changes in their psychological states rather than external incidents. Like

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Stanković's heroine, the female protagonist of this novel is stereotypical on the surface, and the author consistently adds psychological commentaries, speaking for her silence. While describing the family's life in a city in contemporary Yugoslav society, the author analyzes the reasons for their unsuccessful marriage. He also mentions that he will analyze how the traditional conservative practices and prejudices of "our people" suppress lively and creative people, particularly women (Andrić, *Znakovi* 98). This novel is largely divided into two parts. The first half is the author's accusation of concealed domestic violence toward women, hidden under the surface of ordinary and peaceful married life, mixed with descriptions and the author's statements. The second half is a series of episodes that support the author's argument.

In the traditional society of Yugoslavia, a woman's lower social status played the role of an irritant to satisfy a husband's urge for bravado and violence. Besides, wife abuse was a convenient channel for a husband's expression of hostility without visible harm to society (Tomašić 1948: 74). The husband, Andrija, is depicted as a genuine and competent businessman during the ordinary workday, but at night a "monstrous" being who disturbs the sleep of his wife, Anica, in order to take complete control of her consciousness. Anica seeks the last bastion of her self-awareness during the short time before she falls asleep after her husband's "verbal torture" is finished; when her husband tries to deprive her of this brief moment of repose, she decides to leave the house in order to save her "life," despite others' calumnies. Receiving ceaseless "verbal torture" from her husband, who is full of machismo, lies, and duress, Anica reaches the point where she can no longer be aware of the pain. Her husband, further provoked by her reaction, increases the degree of torture; this vicious circle continues. Like Stanković's novel, Andrić's novel, as indicated by the female protagonist's name, also revives the theme of the lyrical oral epic (ballad) "Hasanaginica" through explicit metaphors. Anica embodies the recurring tragedy of women in the western Balkans, despite her temporal distance from Hasan's wife, who are constrained by males' dictatorial and absolute power and denied their right to choose and speak. Likewise, Anica's husband, Andrija, is compared to Hasan, who cannot express his natural desire outside the house because he is suppressed by the authority of the symbolic system and who passes his impotence on to the female subordinate. Andrija relieves his stress from the social life outside the house by attacking his wife, and this behavior illustrates a negative aspect of the male in a traditional society. At the same time, he tries to compensate for his inferiority to his wife (because of his physical ugliness and puniness) through garrulousness, which is prohibited for a man in Yugoslav traditional society where excessive talking was equated with arrogance and violence (Tomašić 1948: 175); thus, Andrija's pretentious chat in the presence of his wife in fact opposes the values of the traditional patriarchal culture. Most of all, the female protagonist of Andrić's novelette despises the "disorder" resulting from the mixture of traditional value systems and urban freedom that is found in Andrija, who grew up in a rural area and moved to the city not long ago. The female protagonists with the same name in both Stanković's and Andrić's novels share the archetype of Hasan-aga's wife; they regard this psychological instability as the most threatening element in their men because it can often abruptly turn into aggressiveness.

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2.3 The motif of sacrifice in the modernist novels of Yugoslavia and the chronotope of the house

The characteristic of the typical topos of a female character in the modernist novels of Yugoslavia is the extreme self-defeating behavior displayed in confronting injustice. Devotion to fate determines the shape of both the heroine and the plot in these novels. Here, the psychology of sacrifice overlaps with the death drive. In a typical plot structure, the protagonist "chooses" death, influenced by others, even when the choice is not inevitable and when it could be avoided, depending on the individual's will. This plot structure assumes a preference for fatalism (*amor fati*), which is part of the general mentality of the people in the Balkans, and for extreme excitement and eruptions of emotions, an intense feeling of tragedy, and the dramatic resolution of conflict (Civ'jan 2006: 92). This distinctive concept of sacrifice in the western Balkans was probably formed through a combination of social atmospheres that emphasize human relationships in a rural community, parenting practices for a female that differ from those of the male in the house, indifference toward the female in the house, and emotional asymmetry between a male and a female. Bogišić points out that women of the Dinaric society had to endure pain in "silence" and that it was regarded as misbehavior to talk about that pain to others, including a woman's premarital family (Bogišić 1874: 49, 271). Women did not have a way to release the anger resulting from violations of their personhood and discrimination. It is believed that women in the traditional severely patriarchal society of Yugoslavia, in particular Macedonia and Montenegro, suffered from neurasthenia and hysteria, and were more prone to suicide than men (Tomašić 2000: 62). Their volitional choice of such extreme behavior can be seen to be a result of redirecting their suppressed anger against the society and others towards themselves.

According to Edmund Leach, who defines sacrifice as an act of communication, sacrifice is a transitional process from the mundane present world to another world. Suppose the mundane world is the everyday experience of the world (A) and that the other world is an unusual and inverse world (non-A). Between the two worlds lies a boundary region simultaneously possessing the properties of the former and of the latter; it is a sacred space where ritual activities occur (Lič 2001: 101). Using this model, the "mundane world" is a place where humans lead helpless and despicable lives during a finite time, and it follows the law of time, which is governed by natural cause and circulation. On the other hand, the "other world" is ruled by immortality, heroism, and omnipotence; it is a space of abnormal time in which the past, present, and future coexist. In addition, the "other world" is perceived as the source of health, life, political influence, and wealth by the people in the "mundane world"; further, in order to obtain these "powers," "helpless" ordinary people communicate with the "other world" through the channel of religious rituals (Lič 2001: 100–01).

This motif of "sacrifice" is depicted differently by writers in each ethnic group. First, the "sacrifice" of Dinko Šimunović's female protagonist, Srna, is a voluntary sacrifice. For her, space A is the world of gender discrimination, and space non-A is the world of impartiality where she receives the same education and treatment as the males. The reed field that Srna runs on and "the lake of death" (*mrtvo jezero*) as the

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final destination are the ritual places she must go through in order cross over to a new world by victimizing herself.

The sacrifice of Voranc's female protagonist, Meta, is both obligatory and voluntary. What is unusual about this plot of sacrifice is that it occurs at once in space non-A, the space of the ideal, which represents human dignity and freedom, and in space A, the reality that physically exists outside the rural community, permitting her to raise her nine illegitimate children.[6] She wants only marriage to Ožbej but stays outside the village without intending to return to the affluent community of Karnice. The ritual space of sacrifice for Meta is the house of Karničnik; the castle of the feudal lord and the brutal torture imposed on her is her ritual of sacrifice. The tortures (sizzling hands, whipping of the naked body, and public humiliation by the community members) are portrayed as a kind of ceremony necessary for her to be aroused from her status as a passive, fragile maid in order to become a strong mother who protects her children.

By comparison, in the case of Stanković's female protagonist, Anica, her husband's house where she lives and his grave that she visits for mourning imply a double meaning. First of all, Anica's sacrifice is heteronomous for the benefit of a third party. Her father becomes powerless after moving to the city, and her brothers take over the role of the householder. Solely to protect their social respectability, they arrange her marriage to a seemingly wealthy man without asking her opinion. She unwillingly marries a stranger who is much senior to her, and in reality is not rich. According to Edmund Leach's model of sacrifice, space A is the house of her premarital family (her brothers and her mother), and space non-A is the house of her husband, Mita. Anica's ritual of sacrifice in the boundary region is her marriage to Mita, and the beneficiaries of the sacrifice are the members of her premarital family. On the other hand, the grave of her late husband, Mita, and his house become the source of "power" that lets her lead her everyday life under the external pressure from others. Superficially, Anica's regular visits to the grave and preservation of her husband's possessions seem to show her adherence to the customs of the traditional society. In reality, she has detected her premarital family's secret plan for her to remarry another man so they can avoid the expense of supporting her as a widow, and, in opposition to their plan, she takes advantage of the traditional custom and the ghost of her late husband in order to delay her remarriage and to secure her inner freedom. While her premarital family is arranging her remarriage, she claims that she has seen the ghost of Mita and creates a hysterical disturbance. This disturbance is caused not by her guilt toward Mita, but by her fear, as a "symptom" of certainty, of repeating the life of imprisonment through another marriage. Furthermore, contrary to her premarital family's expectation, she voluntarily renounces Ita, the object of her secret love, and chooses to marry Nedeljko, an apparently less desirable choice. Superficially, that choice can be seen as a result of her guilt toward her late husband; in fact, it is her expression of fierce anger toward her mother, who has abused her by internalizing the mentality of her brothers. Thus, in this novel, the house corresponds to the grave, and the overall plot narrates Anica's journey from one "house-grave" to another.

[6] The novel does not clearly mention the place where Meta settles after she has been expelled from the community, probably because this place is actual and ideological at the same time.

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In *Nečista krv*, the female protagonist, Sofka, is born into an upper-class merchant family in Southern Serbia, in contrast to Marko's family, an ignorant peasant family near the border of Turkey. The main plot of the story centers on the contrast between the family of Efendi Mita, which, though wealthy for many generations, had lost all the wealth ; and Marko, who was a poor peasant but who became wealthy by smuggling and stealing at the Albanian border. Sofka steps into a life crisis when her father, Efendi Mita, agrees to sell her into marriage to Marko's young son; the process of this sacrifice is described in detail through Sofka's subtle and complex psychology. At the beginning, Sofka opposes the unjustifiable marriage, but her free will is too weak to escape her tragic fate. The symbol of crisis is highlighted in the scene in which Marko tries to rape his daughter-in-law Sofka, following the barbaric custom of incest that has been hushed up, which is expressed with the chronotopic motif of the threshold in the scene where he tries to get into his daughter-in-law's room. In the first part of the novel, Sofka's crisis diminishes when Marko dies. However, in the second part of the novel, her crisis increases when her husband, Tomča, who is as bad as her father-in-law, is introduced, and it hits its climax when her father, Mita, and Tomča have a violent altercation regarding the remaining wedding costs. At the end of the novel, the author mentions the deformed shapes of Sofka's children in order to suggest the dark vision of women's beauty and vitality being sacrificed to the regressive patriarchy conjoined with economic interests.

The house in which Andrić's female protagonist, Anica, lives after marriage is also portrayed as a psychological space with day-to-day functions and metaphysical symbols. This setting represents Anica's marriage as the ritual act, Anica's poor premarital family as the sender, Anica as the sacrifice, and the rich merchant, Gazda Andrija, as the receiver. At the beginning, Andrija's house offers Anica a space of freedom where she can escape from her widowed father and troublesome younger siblings, but it gradually turns into a "prison" in which she has to suffer her husband's cruelty. Anica's marriage bed is depicted as a sacrificial altar, which Andrija, the "monster," visits every night. As in Andrić's novel *Na Drini ćuprija,* the motif of human sacrifice is used to describe Anica's tragic life as she "sacrifices her entire self for her family" (*'sahrani se' u temelje porodice*) (Andrić 1991: 98). The lyrical oral epic (ballad) *Zidanje Skadra*, perhaps best known for Goethe's mention of its content as being too primitive and barbaric, is often adopted in works that exemplify the traditional ideas of Yugoslavia regarding the relationship between the birth of local culture (cities, buildings and other artifacts) and human sacrifices (Civ'jan 2006: 92).

The author further underlines the meaning of Anica's self-sacrifice and victimized silence in this work, showing the motif of martyred and self-sacrificing young women, a motif repeated from the oral literature of Yugoslavia. Forced to sacrifice and to maintain silence for the "well-being" of the community, Anica does not have any other choice than to be a runaway, although such a move may seem to be extreme to outsiders.

The table below presents certain stereotypes of female protagonists that are represented by the modernist novelists of Yugoslavia. As Crnković has pointed out, the types of women who had to cope with their low social status and gender discrimination simultaneously in Yugoslavia are clearly presented (Crnković 1999: 247).

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Main chronotopic motifs	Works	Objective	Antagonist	Helper	Crisis resolution	Realization of objectives
House (-) Green field(+)	*Duga* (Rainbow)	Gender equality	Parents / adults	Absent	Indepen-dence	Failure
House (-) Rural community (-)	*Samorastniki* (The Self-Sown)	Marriage / register of children	Master (Father-in-law)	Absent	Indepen-dence	Failure
House (-)	*Pokojnikova* žena (Dead Man's Wife)	Freedom / personal respect	Husband / Premarital family	Absent	Passive resistance	Failure
House (-)	*Zlostavljanje* (Torture)	Freedom / personal respect	Husband	Absent	Running away from home	Failure
House (-)	*Nečista krv* (Dirty Blood)	Harmoni-ous mar-riage	Husband / father-in-law / father	Absent	Absent	Failure

The house, which is where the main characters spend most of their lives, is combined with the narrative symbolism. Thus, in all the works mentioned above, it is commonly expressed as a central chronotope. In Croatian modernist novels, the natural space of the "green field" is introduced as an antithesis for "house," which is perceived as a negative space for the main character. Yet in other cases, an alternative space and a helper are absent. As the choice of the main character for crisis resolution indicates, this absence becomes the main reason for the main characters to make an extreme choice. Even if the main characters dare to escape or run away, these choices shut off and isolate them from the society; thus, in a strict sense, they cannot be alternative choices. In all the works, the house commonly functions as an environment that imposes silence on the main female character, and it exemplifies a low level of individualism in Yugoslav culture. It is not appropriate to generalize based on a few works. However, we can infer that the chosen works at least partially reflect various approaches to the gender differences in the South Slavic areas, by noting that the anti-Oedipal trajectory (*Duga* and *Samorastniki*) in Slovenian and Croatian modernist novels is in contrast with the plot (*Pokojnikova* žena and *Nečista*) of the modernist novels in Serbia, which resolves the conflicts of the main characters by returning to the existing social order.

3 Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the differences between two literary streams by closely analyzing four novelettes and one novel that represent the modernist literature of Yugoslavia. The modernist novels of this region characteristically not only display an understanding of literary symbolism and typification in the esthetic dimension, but also attempt to provide a more realistic worldview than realism does. Therefore, the development of modernist novels from Yugoslavia is characterized by a combi-

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nation of research into historical data and aesthetic symbolism in order to capture the permanent ethnic mentality.

The repetition of the chronotope of the house can be explained by "time as the major axis", the chronotope characteristic in the modernist novels of Yugoslavia. The main characters of many literary works associate "my fate" with their ancestors' fates through reenactment or identify themselves with historical figures. Derived from this concept of time is the perspective of seeing life not as growth but as repetition of the same fate. As illustrated by the analysis above, this understanding of time also explains the repetition of a fixed topos for the female protagonists by different authors.

On the other hand, the modernist novels of Yugoslavia depict the social hardship and tragedy of dehumanization faced by various "others" with naturalistic vividness and impressionistic cathartic beauty. For this reason, they are centrifugal. They are distinguished from realism in that they describe the destruction of the protagonist by means of various social conflicts, not only through external observation but also from the internal viewpoint of the protagonist. The modernist novels of Yugoslavia seem to oscillate between traditional morality, which intends to fixate permanently the boundary between "I" and "others," and the need for change, the globally universal ethical principles which try to break that boundary.

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Povzetek

Modernistična literatura bivše Jugoslavije je podedovala tradicijo realistične literature, kar zadeva kronotop in književni lik, vendar se od te tradicije konceptualno tudi pomembno razlikuje. Za modernistično literaturo je značilna preinterpretacija tradicionalne kulture lokalne skupnosti in sistema vrednot tradicionalne družbe. Modernistične in realistične avtorje povezuje dejstvo, da v svojo literaturo vključujejo specifične ljudske šege in navade ter načine komunikacije. Značilnosti postrealizma pa se kažejo v tem, da se pod površjem družbenih pojavov razpravlja o globljih problemih. Ta sredobežnost se najočitneje razkriva v psihološkem književnem diskurzu o likih, ki zasedajo nizka mesta v hierarhiji tradicionalne družbe, kar so posebno ženske. Modernistični avtorji iz bivše Jugoslavije v svoji literaturi često, čeprav na slogovno različne načine, prikazujejo krizo in erozijo tradicionalne družbe, ki se prvič pojavijo že v zgodnji modernistični literaturi v diskurzu o družini in ženskah. Kronotopski mitiv iz realistične literature se v modernistični literaturi preobrazi v isti kronotopski motiv z novim pomenom. Značilen primer je tradicionalni patriarhalni prostor hiše (*kuća*), ki v pisanju modernistični avtorjev iz bivše Jugoslavije običajno deluje kot negativni motiv kronotopa v diskurzu o ženskah in družini.