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# GLOBALIZATION, IDENTITY, COMMODITY

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## THE CASE OF *STINKY ONION* (TAMARA JECIĆ) AND *THE PENULTIMATE JOURNEY* (GORDANA ĆIRJANIĆ)

**Abstract:** *This paper discusses the issue of identity formation focusing on the transformative potential of hybridity, in two contemporary Serbian novels: Gordana Ćirjanić's *The Penultimate Journey*<sup>1</sup> (*Preposlednje putovanje*, 2001) and Tamara Jecić's *Stinky Onion*<sup>2</sup> (*Stinky Onion*, 2009). The novels relate the stories of displacement of two Serbian migrants at the end of the 20th century. In their difficult endeavor to localize themselves in an increasingly globalized world, the protagonists negotiate their identities through computer-mediated communication and consumerist societies. Their identity formation is analyzed through a hybridity paradigm, which, as proposed by the postcolonial theoretician Homi Bhabha, has the potential to challenge the dominant mechanisms of the construction of meaning allowing for the emergence of new meanings and identities.*

**Key words:** *identity formation, hybridity, computer-mediated discourse, self as commodity, displacement*

### *Introduction*

The world has always been on the move; since the times of pilgrims, people have migrated, been exiled and traversed vast distances in search of spirituality, far-off wonders, and economic

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1 Cited hereafter as *TPJ*

2 Cited hereafter as *SO*

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gain. No matter how (un)successful, the primary goal of these stories of displacement was to chart the unknown territories and ensure the stability of meaning regardless of the cost. Modern displacement stories, however, serve an altogether different purpose; their aim is to point to discontinuities, splits and contradictions lying at the heart of every place and identity as social constructs. With the rapid flow of information, capital and people brought about by the globalization and decolonization, the concept of identity has been rethought to reflect the complex realities of displacement, while challenging the ideas of community, nation-state, diasporas, home, culture, belonging.

Gordana Ćirjanić and Tamara Jecić's novels follow the stories of displacement of two Serbian migrants at the end of the 20th century. In their difficult endeavor to localize themselves in an increasingly globalized world, the protagonists negotiate their identities through and with computer-mediated communication and consumerist societies. Both lay claims to a hybrid identity which has a special potential to dismantle the power differential and they both consider identity from a third place where it actually emerges from and where it is continually remade.

### *Challenging Identity*

In view of the displacement brought about by globalizing and decolonizing processes, many scholars (Gupta and Ferguson, Bhabha) within cultural and postcolonial studies turned to the concept of hybridity not only to describe but also to critically analyze identity formation.<sup>3</sup> Such a concept is used purposefully to challenge the essentialist idea of a natural connection between identity, culture and place. Computer-mediated communication, online identities and virtual communities are areas of human interest that play an important part in dealing with displacement. Appadurai's contention that "there are numerous new forms of community and communication that currently affect the capability of neighborhoods to be context-producing rather than largely context-driven"<sup>4</sup> illustrates the role of modern communication technologies in the shift away from essentialism in the processes of identification. He also warns against the danger of "opposing highly specialized neighborhoods to these virtual neighborhoods" as the virtual ones can "mobilize ideas,

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3 Perhaps as many scholars oppose such a conceptualization of identity. See Tomlison J. Globalization and Cultural Identity, *The Global Transformations Reader*, ed. David Held – Anthony McGrew, Cambridge-Oxford-Malden 2004.

4 Appadurai A., *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization*, Minneapolis-London 2006, pp. 195.

moneys, and social linkages that often directly flow back into lived neighborhoods.”<sup>5</sup>

“Unlike the largely negative pressures that the nation-state places on the creation of context by local subjects, the electronic mediation of community in diasporas creates a more complicated, disjunct, hybrid sense of local subjectivity.”<sup>6</sup>

With the spread of capitalism embodied in consumer culture, even the Self began to be viewed as a potential commodity. Joseph E. Davis defines it as “a strategy of cultivating a name and image of ourselves that we can manipulate for economic gain.”<sup>7</sup> Explaining how the idea of progress has turned away from discovering lands towards discovering personality, Stephen Jones quotes Reisman who claims that “the product now in demand is neither a staple nor a machine; it is a personality.”<sup>8</sup> This process takes place in spatial and virtual realities alike, opening up different possibilities for identification.

In the contemporary cultural theory, “hybridity” has come to be a highly contentious term. Originally used in biology for the mixing of different species of plants, hybridity, used primarily to foreground racial mixing as a negative practice, became a key concern of the 19th and 20th century thought. Hybridity was seen as a sign of transgression of established divisions and therefore a threat to the established system of values which is partly a reason why the term has been accepted in cultural theory. As Papastergiadis proposes: “Should we use only words of pure and inoffensive history, or should we challenge essentialist models of identity by taking on, and then subverting, their own vocabulary?”<sup>9</sup>

Hybridity is thus conceptualized as emerging in a Third space where elements never represent a sum of parts but transform each other, giving rise to something different yet retaining something of their original shape. Hybridity insists on the presence of the excluded Other in the processes of identification and representation. In his essay “Culture’s In-Between”, Bhabha writes:

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5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., pp. 197.

7 Davis J., The Commodification of Self, *The Hedgehog Review: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Culture*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2003, pp 41.

8 Jones S., The Internet and its Social Landscape, *Virtual Culture: Identity and Communication in Cybersociety*, eds. Steven Jones, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi 1998, pp 22.

9 Papastergiadis N., *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*. Cambridge-Oxford-Malden 2000, pp 169.

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“Strategies of hybridization reveal an estranging movement in the ‘authoritative’, even authoritarian inscription of the cultural sign. At the point at which the precept attempts to objectify itself as a generalized knowledge or a normalizing, hegemonic practice, the hybrid strategy of discourse opens up a space of negotiation where power is unequal but its articulation may be equivocal. Such negotiation is neither assimilation nor collaboration. It makes possible the emergence of an ‘interstitial’ agency that refuses the binary representation of social antagonism.<sup>10</sup>”

Wider application of such conceptualization of hybridity is possible in cultural (and literary) studies with the purpose to address “the heterogeneous array of signs in modern life and the various ways of living with difference.”<sup>11</sup> It is in this context that I use the concept of hybridity in the analysis of the novels TPJ and SO. Following Bhabha’s contention that “The individuation of the agent occurs in a moment of displacement” and that identity is in the “twixt of displacement and reinvention,”<sup>12</sup> I will turn to identity formation in TPJ and SO.

*SO: Identity and computer-meditated  
communication*

The anonymous main protagonist of Jecić’s cyber epistolary novel is a thirty-something USA immigrant from Serbia. He is introduced by the narrator as an Indian whose story is conveyed to the narrator in his dreams and electronic mail. This generic term, Indian, brings about references to the lost land, particularly the city of Chicago, which Native Americans called Stinky Onion, and a history of displacements which define his life as well.

“It can be noticed that I call myself the same [an American Indian], because, I indeed am the underpaid working class, whose degree and knowledge is not needed here. I, too am the one who is expected to be happy when given any job and who will grin and bear it, work, pay taxes at the end of the year, and when the time comes, vote for one of two provided presidential candidates.”<sup>13</sup>

His first encounter with the new world is a prolonged stay at an airport while working as a wheelchair assistant. Working

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10 Bhabha H., Culture’s In-Between, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall – Paul Du Gay, London Thousand Oaks-New Delhi 2003, pp 58.

11 Papastergiadis N., op.cit., pp. 192.

12 Bhabha H., *The Location of Culture*. London and New York 1994, pp. 185.

13 *SO*, pp. 48.

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at an airport allows him to observe closely the contemporary obsession with moving:

“Most passengers were irritable, angry, quarrelsome, as if I had done them something wrong, and forced them into the wheelchair. After all, if a man is already half-dead from old age, illness or if he can only move his eye muscle, isn’t it insane that such a person, deficient, should go about the world alone?

Nobody is waiting for him, nobody is seeing him off, but he is still going somewhere.”<sup>14</sup>

In addition, the airport introduces the feeling of the non-place of “super-modernity“ (J.G. Ballard) which is to follow him throughout his stay in the USA. Stinky Onion turns out to be a non-place both to him, to the ex-Yugoslav diaspora with their practice of “going garbaging”<sup>15</sup>, to the working class African Americans, to the black *au pair* from Eritrea (whose home country also becomes a non-place). The feeling of the non-place is also linked to cyberspace as another site of reinvention.

In producing his localization, the Indian redefines his collective and personal identity by negotiating his sense of belonging to many different communities, spatial and virtual. One of them is the immigrant community of Stinky Onion, which he calls “a small American Indian community”. The protagonist makes a distinction between “domestic” and “other American Indians” – the former being composed of prototypes of “the negative hero and the esthetics of the ugly”<sup>16</sup> and the latter of potential and actual friends. Since many different diasporas figure prominently in the Indian’s life, the phrase ‘he scattering of seeds’ which is the literal meaning of the Greek term *diaspora* is useful here to describe this new hybrid perspective on an old issue of migration and community. The seeds of the modern scattering grow with a different understanding of roots than the pre-modern ones, which were defined in relation to an ancestral homeland. Ien Ang, following Paul Gilroy explains: “diaspora signifies the constant renewal of identity through creative hybridity and transformation under the very conditions of dispersal and difference, rather than the need to return to one’s ‘roots’”.<sup>17</sup> One such example is seen in the domestic Indian community (the ex-Yugoslav community) in what they call ‘going garbaging’, which basically means to scour wealthier neighborhoods

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14 *SO*, pp. 20.

15 Garbidžarenje

16 *SO*, pp. 44.

17 Bennett T. Grossberg L. and Morris M. (eds), *New Keywords: A revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Malden-Oxford-Victoria 2005, pp 84.

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looking for discarded but useable household items, clothes and furniture which they later sell. This is interesting because even wealthy domestic American Indians go garbaging. Following the hybridity paradigm, this emerges as a practice of creative re-inscription of displacement, a transformation occurring in the third space of the contact zone.

The protagonist's identity construction is also challenged by computer-mediated communication, which is a "technology of the Self", as Foucault terms the forms of the representation of the individual<sup>18</sup>. To the protagonist, the potential of this technology seems limitless at first but very quickly turns into an addiction:

"I tried to kick the habit, I really did, but the ropes tying me to the leather chair (I bought the most expensive one) and forcing me to spend hour after hour staring into the 17-inch screen were very strong.

Miraculously strong. Stronger than meeting real, live people that I really craved. But, as there were none to my taste of a picker, I continued to surf all over cyberspace."<sup>19</sup>

What prompts the protagonist to seek companionship through CMC is hunger: intellectual, emotional, sexual. In search of "a real, spoken word permeated by a feeling,"<sup>20</sup> he enters the present-absent-present state of cyberspace. He confirms the contention of Stephen Jones, a theoretician of cyberspace, who claims that the role of communication in modern society seems to have been somewhat idealized. As the verbs to *surf/chat* imply, an important dimension of CMC is leisure, which excludes the power of communication to affect moral life, for which the character is searching. The appeal of cyberspace is in part related to its anonymity allowing the participants to reinvent themselves through language and narrative. The language of cyberspace is ultimately hybrid since it is never a sum of its parts (not speech, not writing) but a new "third medium."<sup>21</sup>

The world of the protagonist and his virtual friends is also market-mediated and what they are experiencing is "consumer-style loneliness"<sup>22</sup>. They have what he calls a "consumer-style freedom," a type of freedom that allows them to get rid of the unwanted, to make and unmake their choices, and to disconnect painlessly. After fifteen years in the States, he decides to return to

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18 Foucault M. Martin L. Gutman H. and Hutton P., *Technologies of the Self: a seminar with Michel Foucault*, Amherst 1988.

19 SO, pp. 68.

20 SO, pp. 67.

21 Crystal D., *Language and the Internet*, Cambridge 2001, pp 52.

22 Bauman Z., *Consuming Life*, Cambridge-Malden, 2007, pp 107.

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Serbia. Instead of constantly getting rid of the unwanted, what he is after is “getting hold of the desired.”<sup>23</sup> The diversity of choice in such circumstances is just an illusion, just like the selection of coffee in Starbucks which he frequents and the goods in an oriental shop where he goes, to observe something different; difference has become just another word for commodity.

*TPJ: Self as a commodity*

With the trend of celebrating all sorts of mixtures and crossovers brought about by processes of globalization, the concept of hybridity, has been, following Hutnyk “in danger of becoming just another marketable commodity,” Morley contends.<sup>24</sup> This is particularly evident in TPJ. In order to illustrate this concept, in TPJ two different versions of hybrid identity are juxtaposed: the one which is subversive and the other which represents commercial exhibitionism and commodification of the Self.

Aleksa is a Yugoslav immigrant in Spain who figures as what Zygmunt Bauman has called “a modern pilgrim,” and whose purpose in moving is building identity: “Pilgrimage is no longer a choice[...] Pilgrimage is what one does out of necessity, to avoid being lost in a desert”.<sup>25</sup> This desert is no longer a place where one goes to become anonymous, like early Christian pilgrims did, but a place in need of contours, borders, meaning and identity. Life as a pilgrimage is a solid, continuous story, “saving for the future [...] but saving for the future made sense as a strategy only in so far as one could be sure that the future would reward the savings with interest”<sup>26</sup> With the emergence of consumer culture, this strategy of identity-building loses ground. Aleksa is a pilgrim in a world “inhospitable to pilgrims,”<sup>27</sup> as the purpose in moving shifts away from identity-building to the question of how to “prevent it from sticking.”<sup>28</sup>

His displacement is augmented by the terminal illness he suffers from; the imminent death overshadows both his previous journeys and the penultimate one dealt with in the novel. Suffering from a debilitating illness and barely able to move, Aleksa and his Spanish wife, Dolores, are drawn by an advertising snare for

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23 Ibid.

24 Morley D., *Home territories: Media, Mobility and Identity*, London and New York 2003, pp 233.

25 Bauman Z., From Pilgrim to Tourist – or a short History of Identity, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall – Paul Du Gay, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi 2003, pp 21.

26 Ibid., pp. 23.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid., pp. 24.

a gift car. They embark upon what he fashions as a journey of adventure to claim the car. In a letter to his daughter, Aleksa explains:

“You will surely think that my ‘refuge’ was miserable, the wish for a new car which I don’t need any more, the wish to own a pile of iron when it would be natural that every thought of possession has left me. But it’s not so simple, the soul sometimes simulates desire and by clinging fiercely to a petty thing, or even a sandbar, it’s actually clinging to life.”<sup>29</sup>

The simulated desire Aleksa discusses is the simulated desire of a consumer society that obliterates present and past, offering promises of new beginnings. In *Consuming Life*, Bauman explains:

“It boils down to just one although truly miraculous change in the human condition: the newly invented (although advertised as newly discovered) facility of being born again. Thank to this invention, it is not only cats that have nine lives. Into one abominably short visit on earth, a visit not long ago bewailed for its loathsome brevity and not radically lengthened since, humans-turned-consumers are now offered the chance to cram many lives: an endless series of new beginnings.”<sup>30</sup>

The real beginning is set in WW2 Yugoslavia when Aleksa was only three and already on the run from the German invasion, his earliest memory. The next war will find him away from his home country but empathizing strongly with the plight of his people there and shouldering his share of the burden, symbolically represented by his illness.

Before they settle in Puerto de Santa Maria in the Bay of Cadiz, Aleksa and his wife travel around Spain in search of home, an elusive piece of heaven on earth. Ideally, this place should have a life of its own that is not transformed by the demands of tourism, “rooted and rootless at the same time.”<sup>31</sup> Following Aleksa’s belief in “continuity in the age when every connection with predecessors has been severed”, they end up in Andalusia which is perceived by Aleksa as “a part of the Balkans fitted into the skin of a bull.”<sup>32</sup>

Thinking about the world he has left behind, Aleksa forges a peculiar metaphor for life in a consumerist culture – an act of observing it from inside a shop, through the shop-window.

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29 *TPJ*, pp.137.

30 Bauman Z., op. cit., pp. 100-101.

31 *TPJ*, pp. 71.

32 *TPJ*, pp. 32.

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He perceives himself as an observer trapped in a series of false beginnings. Even so, Aleksa continues his pilgrimage: “Travelling is one of the rare pleasures I have not had enough of.”<sup>33</sup> His “treasure hunt” for Opel Vectra, guided by the wish for a momentary relief from the looming presence of death, backfires reminding him that there are no more beginnings, only an imminent end.

Puerto de Santa Maria is an isolated community shaped by Spain’s colonial past and African winds, not very much concerned about the speeding world and seemingly indifferent to Aleksa and Dolores. The old plants Dolores waters in their patio represent the memory of a place which still enjoys the benefits of continuation, or so it seems to her. Dolores feels like she has no influence over the plants: “They were deeply rooted, much deeper than her memory and her limited human powers.”<sup>34</sup> They find the “common people” they look for, but their experience of displacement transforms their sojourn into living among, not with people; their discontinued sense of place is not compatible with the still strong sense of place of this community (which, too, is about to experience a similar sort of displacement, namely the expansion of consumerism). Their displacement is symbolically represented by the name of the street they live on, the Sky (Cielo) street, next to the River of Oblivion (Guadaleta).

Aleksa’s strategies of localization include imaginary dialogues with the past of the city, embodied in the figure of admiral Bernardino, a historic personage. Describing the 18th century colonial topography of Puerto de Santa Maria and his imaginary adventures with Bernardino, Aleksa attempts to creatively rewrite the history of the city to include him. By investigating “the adventure of living” of the Cadis bay during the colonial era, he links travelling with art but also with money which made possible such a canon of art in the first place.

Perhaps more importantly, Aleksa talks in this way with Dolores and his daughter in Belgrade – in a letter to his daughter he describes these “silent conversations”:

“I take pleasure in these silent conversations, extensive and sincere, as conversations in person can never be. We talk with the ones we love, of course, and this love is alive and real, but it did not start because of the word, it is not confirmed by the word, nor is the word its provenance.”<sup>35</sup>

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33 Ibid., pp. 137.

34 Ibid., pp. 40.

35 Ibid., pp. 118.

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Dolores and Aleksa embody the life-giving power of love that binds the two opposites, a man and a woman, into a perfect unity. Aleksa says: “Up until recently, we really talked a lot and now we’re just remembering. As if we have become one being, and one talks differently with oneself.”<sup>36</sup> Their love seems to “exist outside cultural frames”<sup>37</sup> resembling natural elements and the land, such as the two ports in the Bay of Cadiz.

The concern for borders in the definition of identity, personal and collective, is equally present in Spain and Yugoslavia, because, as Bhabha explains, “Meaning is constructed across the bar of difference and separation between the signifier and the signified.”<sup>38</sup> In Spain, the border is discussed in the context of religion, Christianity and Islam, and Aleksa notices that: “After a thousand years, the winners still remember the borders; the towns are still called the borderland.”<sup>39</sup> This *frontera* is a discursive place where cultural and religious identity is made through the articulation of difference.

The modern concern for the tolerance of differences is, according to Aleksa, “civic indifference,” turned into virtue, which relegates difference to mere diversity. Bhabha argues that:

“The difference of cultures cannot be something that can be accommodated within a universal framework. Different cultures, the difference between cultural practices, the difference in the construction of cultures within different groups, very often set up among and between themselves an *incommensurability*.”<sup>40</sup>

Such universalizing is seen in Dolores’s endeavor to tolerate the difference she perceives in the citizens of Santa Maria, and which ultimately fails because Maria, the housekeeper, shocks Dolores when she paints over a “dirty” sculpture of Alek’s head. Likewise, in the market square in Cadis, Aleksa observes the nuns passing by “marikita”, the closeness of “humility and debauchery” and concludes that the world has become indifferent.

The traditional figure of *marikita*, a gender hybrid who lives in-between genders, and is accepted as such, testifies to the existence of the third space where new meanings are created. There is no supremacy of either gender in *marikita* – both coexists on

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36 *TJP*, pp. 20.

37 Gordić Petković V., *Ars Moriendi*: Ćirjanić G., *Pretposlednje putovanje, Letopis Matice srpske*, 177, 467, 5 (maj 2001), str. 750.

38 Rutherford J., *The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha*, *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*, eds. Jonathan R., London 1990, pp. 210.

39 *TJP*, pp. 80.

40 Rutherford J., *op. cit.*, pp. 209.

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the same level “discretely stressing the inner incongruence.”

<sup>41</sup> The acceptance of traditional *marikita* is the result of long negotiations with the dominant culture. Their hybridity is integrated into the community and, as such, becomes part of the dominant culture against which a new generation of *marikita* define themselves. They do not want to be accepted, and they act like the old *marikita* would only at a carnival, trying to overturn the existing system of meaning. Such resistance to the established system of signification does not lead to any qualitative change in understanding difference, only to a temporary relief from social constraints.

The dichotomy of old and new hybridity is found in Aleksa and Srđan as they choose different strategies in order to deal with displacement. Srđan, an immigrant from Croatia, lives on The Sunny Shore which situates him within a wealthy context. His job is the selling of the dream of comfortable displacement in the form of a new concept of holiday-making called “multi-ownership”. His job becomes him, as his wish is to propagate his own state of displacement as something desirable: “Frankly speaking, I feel like a citizen of the world. I started to travel very early and I feel at home in many places.”<sup>42</sup>

However, Srđan resorts to what Joseph E. Davis calls “personal branding.”<sup>43</sup> He used to sell his body to wealthy old ladies in the Mediterranean for a living but now he is not young anymore and is “forced to disguise himself as a tradesman. For this he uses the only weapon at his disposal – his male charm, but it, too – he doesn’t dare admit – had lost its edge.”<sup>44</sup> Srđan adopts a Spanish name, Serjio, and uses every opportunity to mention his home country and town in order to win sympathies and relate to his potential “victims”. The image he propagates is connected to the image of his home country, which is a “young and healthy Croatia, bulging with unambiguous desire, persistent, combative.”<sup>45</sup> He represents an image of marketable authenticity used to promote the exciting lifestyle of moving. In Bauman’s terms, Srđan’s identity is transformed under the pulls of consumer society into a combination of a stroller, a vagabond, a tourist and a player, where “baits feel like desires, pressures like intentions, and seduction like decision-making.”<sup>46</sup>

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41 *TJP*, pp. 165.

42 *TJP*, pp. 99.

43 Davis J., op. cit. pp. 41.

44 *TJP*, pp. 115.

45 *TJP*, pp. 111.

46 Bauman Z., op. cit., 2003, pp. 27.

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The influence of consumerism is far-reaching, transforming even the symbolism of a culture - the billboard in the shape of a bull which used to advertise wine but later came to symbolize the Spanish countryside had to be taken down under the rules of the emerging consumer culture. Dolores observes: "How quickly we have loosened up and become infantile – fifteen years is a short time – when we dreamed of being part of Europe we didn't expect such fruit: people turned into sheep with hairdos."<sup>47</sup> But what is the alternative? In a letter to his daughter back in Serbia, Aleksa reasons:

"You might say to me: 'It's too late to take that educational tone on me, you, runaway father! Instead of saving me from the dark and miasmatic, you would have me saved from the inconceivable, bright and washed-up just because it's shallow.' And I would say to you: 'It's all the same, sunshine, a part of the same project, in which neither father nor heavenly father has any role.' 'Save yourself if you can', I'd say to you, as a castaway to a less exhausted castaway."<sup>48</sup>

Aleksa's dream of continuity is given full shape in his last architectural project, which was meant to continue the artistic tradition of Spain as seen by one of its many immigrants over time. The scale of transformation of things and people in a consumerist society is revealed through the betrayal of his friend and colleague, Laura, who appropriates his project and adapts it to suit the needs of *Interhome's* customers. Laura's ultimate measure of things is hatred, which has found new momentum in the possibility to abuse and then crush a dying man. Life, death, hope and art all lose their configuration in face of such an adversary. All, but the thought that "our inner life is the only measure of our freedom."<sup>49</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Investigating the contemporary condition of moving, Gordana Ćirjanić and Tamara Jecić portray different identities, some of which have a transformative potential, some not. Both Aleksa and the Indian are enticed by consumerist promises of instant intimacy and eternal beginnings but feel that such categorisation conflates all difference into an illusion of choice. Considering difference as diversity undermines the project of identity formation because it is the displacing character of hybridity that allows for the emergence of new meanings and identities. This is the reason why the 'double perspective' of the main protagonists

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47 *TJP*, pp 113.

48 *TJP*, pp 125.

49 *TJP*, pp 118.

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is not a privilege in itself – its benefits are hard-won through the negotiation of difference. The construction of a community in such conditions is made more complex by technologies of communication which often keep us “in touch but unable to touch.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, for a community that would go beyond mere recognition, Steffen Jones argues that “we require far more than its construction, physical or virtual – we also require human occupancy, commitment, interaction, and living among and with the others.”<sup>51</sup>

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50 Jones D., op. cit., pp 26.

51 Jones D., op. cit., pp 16.

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## ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИЈА, ИДЕНТИТЕТ, РОБА

СЛУЧАЈ *STINKY ONION* (ТАМАРА ЈЕЦИЋ) И  
*THE PENULTIMATE JOURNEY* (ГОРДАНА ЋИРЈАНИЋ)

### Сажетак

Рад се бави питањем формирања идентитета, са фокусом на трансформишући потенцијал хибридности, у два савремена српска романа, Претпоследње путовање (2001) Гордане Ћирјанић и *Stinky Onion* (2009) Тамаре Јецић. Романи представљају приче о измештању два српска мигранта с краја XX века. Настојећи да се локализују у све глобализованијем свету, протагонисти граде своје идентитете кроз компјутерски посредован дискурс и потрошачко друштво. Формирање њихових идентитета се анализира кроз парадигму хибридности, која, по постколонијалном теоретичару Хомију Баби, има потенцијал да доведе у питање доминантне механизме стварања значења, омогућавајући појављивање нових значења и идентитета.

**Кључне речи:** *формирање идентитета, хибридност, компјутерски посредовани дискурс, сопство као роба, измештање*

