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# “Noseological” Parody, Gender Discourse, and Yugoslav Feminisms: Following Gogol’s “Nose” to Ugrešić’s “Hot Dog on a Warm Bun”

Le nez de Cléopâtre, s’il a changé le cours du monde, c’est d’être entré dans son discours, car pour le changer long ou court, il a suffi mais il fallait qu’il fût un nez parler.

If Cleopatra’s nose changed the world’s course, it was because it entered the world’s discourse; for in order to change it for the longer or the shorter, it was sufficient, but it was also necessary that it be a speaking nose.

—Jacques Lacan, “La chose Freudienne” [“The Freudian Thing”]

N.V. GOGOL’S 1836 SHORT STORY “Nos” (“The Nose”) concludes with Platon Kuz’mich Kovalev’s inviting women to envy his eponymous organ—previously severed, once anthropomorphized, finally repatriated, and now filled with celebratory snuff. Dubravka Ugrešić inspected, admired, and—nearly 150 years later—published a parody of Gogol’s story entitled “Hrenovka u vrućem pecivu” (“Hot Dog on a Warm Bun”) in the short story collection *Život je bajka* (*Life Is a Fairy Tale*). Ugrešić substitutes Nada Matić, the female plastic surgeon who finds Mato Kovalić’s penis on her hot dog bun, for Gogol’s Ivan Iakovlevich, the barber who discovers Kovalev’s nose in his bread. At once imitating and transforming Gogol’s text, “Hot Dog” exemplifies postmodern parody as Linda Hutcheon defines it: “a kind of contesting revision or rereading of the past that both confirms and subverts the power of the representations of history” (91; see, also, Lukić). Ugrešić parodies psychoanalytic interpretations of Gogol’s text, wherein the nose symbolizes the phallus, *the* privileged signifier of the symbolic order.

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Through parody, “Hot Dog” reifies and upsets characterizations of the phallus as both incorporeal and an idealized bodily image: a trickster that “ne peut jouer son rôle que voilé” (Lacan 692; “can play its role only when veiled,” 277). By materializing the “veiled” phallus as a *particular* erect penis, Ugrešić lays bare the nose’s metaphoric disguises and the phallus’s imaginary ones. The parodic phallus *literally* embodies its own loss: the specular castration always already present in the penile image of the Lacanian phallus (see Bernheimer 121). “Hot Dog” simultaneously enacts and refutes the phallus’s and penis’s ostensible difference in Lacanian psychoanalytic discourse—a difference that obscures the role of gender in any phallic signification of power (see, for example, Silverman 89). Finally, Ugrešić’s parody exaggerates and subverts the contiguity of gender and class inequality in socialist discourse—a contiguity that disguises the construction of gender as a social category while conflating it with biological sex.

In short, “Hot Dog” unifies the phallus and the penis, giving them a single physical form in order to unmask gendered biases in both psychoanalytic and socialist responses to gender inequality: Lacan’s separation of the phallus from the penis (as its idealized *image*) and Yugoslavia’s inclusion of women into the workforce (as an answer to Engels’s “woman question”).<sup>1</sup> “Hot Dog” suggests that socialism’s habit of defining gender inequality through reference to, and confusion with, class inequality is not wholly unlike the phallus’s derivation of its meaning through reference to, and confusion with, the penis. Both discourses legitimate the continued distribution of power among men.<sup>2</sup> Through the simultaneous ironizing and installing that Hutcheon attributes to postmodern parody (89), Ugrešić embeds a feminist critique of the socialist discourse on gender inequality within her psychoanalytic rereading of Gogol’s “The Nose.”

Downplaying the significance of its own feminist interventions, this “double process” fingers the source of “Hot Dog” as beyond not only Ugrešić’s parody and 1980s Yugoslavia, but also Gogol’s story and 1830s Russia. While identifying her “Hot Dog” as a product of early-nineteenth-century Russian “noseology,” Ugrešić acknowledges more specifically in her “Author’s Notes” the influence of V.V. Vinogradov’s 1929 “noseological” literary history: “Naturalisticheskii grotesk (Siuzhet i kompozitsiia povesti Gogolia ‘Nos’)” (“The Naturalistic Grotesque [The Theme and Composition of Gogol’s Short Story ‘The Nose’]”). According to Vinogradov, Laurence Sterne’s eighteenth-century *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, which was published in Russian translation in six serialized parts from 1804 to 1807, inspired a distinct literary sub-genre called “noseology” in 1820s and 1830s Russia (8). Tristram’s preoccupation regarding the length of his and Diego’s noses (among others) spearheaded the tradition of detailing for comic and satiric effect the misadventures of long-nosed characters (Vinogradov, “Naturalisticheskii” 13). “Noseology” includes numerous panegyrics, such as

<sup>1</sup> The “woman question” might be phrased as “Why are women oppressed?” Engels locates the origin of women’s oppression in the rise of class society: “*The first division of labor* is that between man and woman for the propagation of children. . . . The modern family contains in germ not only slavery (*servitus*) but also serfdom, since from its beginning it is related to agricultural services. It contains *in miniature* all the contradictions which later extend throughout society and its state” (51–58).

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted here to Jane Gallop’s astute observation that “as long as the attribute of power is a phallus which can only have meaning by referring to and being confused by a penis, this confusion will support a structure in which it seems reasonable that men have power and women don’t” (127).

Tsshokke’s “Pohvala nosu” (“In Praise of the Nose”); Karl Gref’s *Rhinoplasty*, which was translated into Russian and furnished material for several newspaper and journal articles; and personal correspondence among writers, including Gogol’, who coyly brag about the length of their own noses (see Vinogradov 13–15).<sup>3</sup>

Ugrešić alludes to Vinogradov’s literary history throughout her own text, but draws the parodied psychoanalytic interpretations from other, unmentioned, writers such as I.D. Ermakov, whose opus typifies the Freudian criticism of early-twentieth-century Russia (see Young). Although Ermakov’s work engages some of the same literary interests as Vinogradov’s, it does so from a Freudian perspective that was “invariably dismissed” by Marxist and Formalist critics (Young 73).<sup>4</sup> For Ermakov, the nose represents the penis and the phallus (between which Freud did not distinguish) in all “noseology,” including Gogol’s tale. Copying and expanding upon both psychoanalytic and Formalist symbolism, Ugrešić mischievously collates Vinogradov’s and Ermakov’s disparate works, often misdirecting her reader from the text’s observations about gender discourse.

Ugrešić’s use of misdirection, intertexts, and puns imitates Gogol’, who frequently points the reader beyond literature: “Кто что ни говори, а подобные происшествия бывают на свете; редко, но бывают” (88; “Whatever anyone says, such things happen in this world; rarely, but they do,” 89). “Hot Dog” also adapts Gogol’s versions of Sterne’s interpolated digressions, authorial commentaries, verbal games, and *skaz* narration (see Shklovsky). Just as Tristram Shandy credits Slawkenbergius for the yarn about Diego’s long nose in Strasburg, so Ugrešić’s narrator blames the tradition of “noseological” interpretation for her tale about the “hot dog” in Zagreb: “držao sam se *sujeta*” (26; “I have stuck to the plot,” 162). Simultaneously copying Gogol’s (and Sterne’s) writerly techniques and altering their meanings—per Iu.N. Tynianov’s 1921 understanding of parody—Ugrešić ironically refashions the meaning of the Formalist and psychoanalytic concepts she employs.

Ugrešić identifies her parody as a “psihoanalitičko-interpratatorska tlapnja” (131; psychoanalytic-interpretational chimera). She fattens this postmodern creature “teorijskom kašom” (13; “with the pap of theory,” 150) by rephrasing the questions of “literariness” (“literaturnost”) that preoccupied Vinogradov and his colleagues—including B.M. Eikhenbaum, V.B. Shklovsky, B.V. Tomashevskii, and Iu.N. Tynianov—in “Opojaz” (“The Society for the Study of Poetic Language”). Unlike strictly Formalist critiques of Gogol’s work, Ugrešić’s theoretical *mélange* posits material consequences for every word, intimating that all discourses—including psychoanalytic and socialist ones—gender daily experiences.

Linking discourse to everyday life, “Hot Dog” was written at a time when Yugoslav literary critics remained unsure about how to define *postmodernizam* (129;

<sup>3</sup> For example, in a letter to E.G. Chertkov, Gogol’ writes: “Наша дружба . . . началась на две тавлинки. Там встретились наши носы. . . [В]аш — красивый, щегольской, с весьма приятною выгнутою линиею, а мой решительно птичий, острокопечный и длинный” (qtd. in Ermakov 268; “Our friendship . . . started with the two *tavlinki* (birch snuff-boxes) where our *noses* met. . . [Y]our [nose] is beautiful and smart, with a pleasant curve, while mine is resolutely *bird-like*, long and pointed, Vinogradov, “Natural School” 36).

<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Vinogradov once wrote that “О книге . . . Ермакова . . . не буду говорить в виду отсутствия у меня чувства юмора” (*Naturalnaia shkola* 20; “I shall not speak about . . . Ermakov’s book . . . because I lack a sense of humor,” “Natural School” 45).

postmodernism), which was adopted not as a “pojma” (129; concept), but as “*trač* o pojmu” (129; gossip about a concept)—gossip “iz dalekog književnog svijeta” (129; from a distant literary world). Ugrešić’s use of this interpretational gossip isn’t idle. Her postmodern parody functions as a *métaterxie*, a term invented by Ugrešić in her English “Author’s Notes” to signify “a metatextual-therapeutic tale” (247).<sup>5</sup> “Hot Dog” is therapeutic in the sense that its connection to psychoanalysis always gestures within and beyond the text.

According to Jasmina Lukić, Ugrešić’s *métaterxie* at once asserts and refutes literary autonomy: “Tekst se više ne posmatra kao samostalan i samodovoljan, već kao deo postojeće diskurzivne prakse koja nužno determiniše njegova značenja” (The text is [no longer seen as] an entity in itself, distinguishable from all the other forms of discourses on the grounds of its specific features, but as a part of [the] discursive practices that necessarily frame its meanings). In other words, the counter-discourse in “Hot Dog” commits to the very psychoanalytic discourse it parodies. Ugrešić is not the first writer to “гоняется за Гоголем” (Pletnev, qtd. in Tynianov 198; chase after Gogol’), but her parody installs feminist readings into the “noseological” tradition, masking its own political engagement by ironizing nineteenth-century Russian “noseology” as Yugoslav “testicology.”

Slavenka Drakulić coined the term *mudologija* (“testicology”) in her 1981 essay “Mitologija mudologije” (“The Mythology of Testicology”), which was reprinted in the 1984 collection *Smrtni grijesi feminizma* (*The Deadly Sins of Feminism*). The word *mudologija* combines *muda* (testicles) and *logos* (language and law). Drakulić defines *mudologija* both as a way of thinking and as a discourse that privileges men because of their biological sex:

MUDOLOGIJ[A] (*muda*= muške spolne žlijezde, . . . testisi, lat. scrotum; *logos*= riječ, zakon). Već i samo ime govori o sadržaju ove meta-znanosti: riječ ili zakon, način mišljenja, svjetonazor, weltanschauung. (64)

TESTICOLOGY (*testicles*= male sex glands, . . . testes, Lat. scrotum; *logos*= the word, the law). Even the name itself speaks to this meta-science’s contents: the word or the law, a way of thinking, a world view, *Weltanschauung*.

Drakulić cites Plato, Aristotle, and Freud as early *mudolozi* (testicologues), but ventures that an increasingly virulent new wave took hold in industrialized 1980s Yugoslavia. This backlash followed the economic and social reforms of the 1970s, including the increased commodification of explicit sexual language (whether verbal or pictorial).

Recalling the social climate in 1980s Yugoslavia, Ugrešić—in the Croatian “Author’s Notes” written decades later—acknowledges that “Priča na posredan način izražava i autorski stav o podjeli književnosti na onu *s mudima* i onu *bez muda*, koja je tada u domaćoj književnosti bila na snazi” (131; The story indirectly expresses the author’s attitude about the classification of literature into that *with*

<sup>5</sup> “Interpretational gossip” (249) is the English rendering of “*trač*.” The English “Author’s Notes” is significantly shorter than the Croatian version, reduced from eleven paragraphs to three. The English “Notes” omits the stories of Prayoon Eklang, Ante Matić, and Nada Dimić, and so speaks more generally of “interpretational gossip.” It also introduces the term *métaterxie*, which it derives from a (fictional) manuscript by Abbot Adalbéron. The French title of the Croatian “Author’s Notes”—“De l’horrible danger de la lecture” (“On the horrible danger of reading”)—points to the possibility that literature can turn into life—while deconstructing the nineteenth-century idea that reading is particularly treacherous for women.

*balls* and that *without balls*, a classification which was then powerful in Yugoslav literature).<sup>6</sup> Ugrešić borrows these unsophisticated categories from her writer-character Mato Kovalić, who applies them to what he perceives as literal (ballsy, masculine, good) and metaphoric (ball-less, feminine, bad) literatures. By doing so, she engages feminist debates regarding both literary history (“noseology”) and socialist discourse (“testicology”). Noseology thus becomes co-extensive with testicology in Ugrešić’s parody.

While using literalized metaphors to unveil the phallus and unresolved class/gender issues in 1980s Yugoslavia, Ugrešić frequently employs a “slovesnaia maska” (“verbal mask”)—a stylistic and semantic device that fascinated Russian Formalists (see Tynianov and Vinogradov, *Gogol’ i naturalnaia shkola*). She parodies Gogol’s own “verbal masks” by naming characters in such a way as to evoke the phallus’s specular veils in multiple languages. For example, Ugrešić refers to the reified phallus as *hrenovka* (hot dog)—rather than, say, *viršla* (sausage) or *kobasica* (kielbasa). *Hrenovka* evokes the Russian use of *khren*, meaning horseradish, as a euphemism for the penis. Just as *khren* replaces the penis when it already signifies something else,<sup>7</sup> so *hrenovka* stands in for the penis that acts as a phallus.

Similarly, the names of Ugrešić’s characters conjure the concepts of penis envy and lack, while forging together Mato and Matić. Nada Matić’s name at once suggests Mato’s hope and/or mother’s hope (*nada* = hope in Croatian, Matić = the masculine first name Mato + -ić [suffix for last names approximately meaning “of”] and/or *mat’* [mother in Russian] + -ić); Mato’s hope or the hope of having (Matić also evokes *imati* [to have in Croatian]); nothing of Mato or nothing of the mother (*nada* = nothing in Spanish); and to have nothing. Kovalić’s name—like Kovalev’s—contains the Slavic root *kov-*, which can mean to forge as well as to confine. (*Kovati* means “to forge” in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian; *kovat’* means “to forge” in Russian.) Therefore, “Mato Kovalić” implies having and forging the phallus, while “Nada Matić” implies lacking and being the phallus. These multilingual “masks” play with psychoanalytic discourse’s definition of gendered categories according to one masculinized referent: the phallus.

With an eye towards women’s experiences after the sexual revolution of the mid-twentieth century, Ugrešić thus parodies “The Nose” as it might be perceived by “people living in a post-Freudian era [who] effortlessly and unembarrassedly identify the *phallus* . . . as apparently ‘out there’ in dream sticks, dream vultures, materialized pipes, hats, drills, swords, skyscrapers, obelisks, . . . rockets,” and, shall we add, noses (Scarry 282). Her parody highlights instances in which the symbolic reveals tension between signifier and signified, as well as between the imaginary and the real. The penis of Ugrešić’s text is more like the phallus than a penis. And Ugrešić’s text is more her own than Gogol’s. As she engages the shared symbolic vocabulary of pop culture and psychoanalytic discourses on gender, she articulates and masks a feminist critique that defies socialist ideology from within its own discourse.

<sup>6</sup> *Muda* (testicles) defines each gendered category through having (“s mudima” [“with testicles”]) and lacking (“bez muda” [“without testicles”]).

<sup>7</sup> Examples include: “ни хрена не знају” (“they know nothing,” lit. “they don’t know horseradish”) and “старый хрен” (“impotent,” lit. “old horseradish”). In each case, “horseradish” stands in for the impolite “хуй” (“cock”).

### There's something in the bread . . .

Ugrešić, following Gogol's lead, situates her plot—rather than its political revelations—as extraordinary. The ways in which Ugrešić's characters react to Matic's discovery in individual but strangely incorporeal terms is what makes the discovery so incredible. Psychoanalytic discourse seems to mediate their abstract responses to the severed penis, whereas a protean “noseology” governs (or doesn't) the reactions in Gogol's story. Although the found penis has balls (to use Kovalić's phrasing), it is more an artefact of discourse than an appendage. Neither weapon, blood, nor physical pain precede the penis's appearance on Matic's bun—or the nose's in the barber's bread.

Indeed, the penis seems to appear *because* of Matic's powerful hunger one morning. *Penisneid* (penis-envy) seems to direct her to the symbolically-named “Pod neboderom” (“The Skyscraper Café”), which serves equally symbolic hot dogs on warm buns. This pervasive symbolism does not diminish Matic's surprise when she suddenly notices something peering “[i]z . . . duguljastog peciva, iz oker pjene senfa” (10; “through the longish bun and ocherish mustard foam,” 147). She falters before she can name the penis for what it is, exclaiming: “pravi pravcati . . . !” (10; “genuine, bona fide . . . !,” 147). Whereas Matic's conscious desire for a hot breakfast remains unfulfilled, the reader's expectations regarding the symbolism of the café's name and Matic's chosen dish are exceeded and literalized. The post-Freudian omnipresence of phallic symbolism places the penis on the hot dog bun with the textual intimation that, had Matic received an ordinary hot dog instead of a penis, it still would have had phallic significance—not unlike Gogol's symbolic nose—for the post-Freudian reader.

Ugrešić parodies the penis envy that, in a Freudian reading of “The Nose,” focalizes Ivan Iakovlevich's discovery of a nose in bread baked by his indignant wife, Praskovia Osipovna. Whereas Matic elects to purchase a hot dog from the *prodavačica* (female vendor), but receives a penis instead, the barber's wife makes the bread (with a nose inside). The barber pontificates about his wife's baking, but has no insight into the nose's appearance: “ибо хлеб—дело печёное, а нос совсем не то” (34; “bread is something baked, and a nose is something altogether different,” 35). Yet, even though it is detached from the barber's client, the nose acts as a masculine “subject,” determining the wife's use and exchange values for and among men (see Irigaray, *Ce sexe* 30).<sup>11</sup> What seems to anger Praskovia Osipovna most is the idea that her husband's behavior, of which the nose is evidence, reflects on *her*.

Praskovia Osipovna blames her husband when the nose shows up in the bread *she* baked, whereas Matic—aware of concepts like “penis envy”—questions her own culpability in discovering the “hot dog.” In Gogol's story, the nose only raises the question of what Praskovia Osipovna's unarticulated wants *might* be. The events involving the nose are dream-like; *nos* (nose) contains the anagram *son*, the Russian word for *dream*. Not unlike the dreaming butcher's wife of Freudian fame (see *Dreams* 229), the barber's wife is known only according to her husband's trade and class (see Harbord). The nose seems to be the mark of someone else's identity, someone else's individual and familial prestige or lineage.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Gogol' toys with this idea in an 1844 letter: “You think that I have such a long nose that it will stick out even in short stories which were written at the time when I was still a boy” (qtd. in Gregg 365).

Furthermore, although Ivan Iakovlevich identifies the nose as belonging to his customer Platon Kuz'mich Kovalev, it is Praskovia Osipovna, if anyone in the story, who hints at its significance: “Вот уж я от трёх человек слышала, что ты во время бритья так теребишь за носы, что еле держатся” (34; “I have already heard from three people that you jerk their noses about so much when shaving that it’s a wonder they stay in place,” 35). Here, the nose seems to reveal the uncertainty of her husband’s—and, by extension, her own—position in a rapidly changing St. Petersburg society. It is important to recall in this regard that in the early 1800s, when Gogol’ wrote “The Nose,” Russia was undergoing a period of socio-economic reorganization as serfdom began to loosen its hold. (When Kovalev later attempts to place an advertisement for his missing nose, the clerk even asks him if his serf ran away.) The nose thus reveals nothing of Praskovia Osipovna’s own life choices, but speaks to her socio-economic status as determined by her husband, a shave-happy tradesman whose shop sign bears not his name, but the declaration “И кровь отворяют” (32; “Also blood-letting,” 33).

### To whom does the “finger of fate” point?

If Gogol’s Praskovia Osipovna is identified by an impersonal sign, Matic’s identity is written on the body—or, at least, on someone’s body part. She thus sees her life choices coalesce under the gaze of her hot dog’s Cyclops eye:

vježbe iz anatomije, stažiranje na plastičnoj, njezina namjera da specijalizira estetsku protetiku, sve je, dakle, bljesnulo poput kakva mističnog znaka, opomene, samog prsta sudbine, što li. A prst je, neka nam bude oproštena prostota poredbe, virio iz peciva tvrd, opipljiv, svjež, rumen i baš nimalo nalik na privid. (10)

the anatomy lesson, plastic surgery, the desire to specialize in aesthetic prosthetics—it had all flashed before her eyes like a mystical sign, a warning, the finger of fate, a finger which if we may be forgiven the crudeness of our metaphor, peered out of the bun in so tangible, firm, fresh, and pink a state as to be anything but an illusion. (148)

The penis, now in Matic’s possession, re-introduces the possibility of organizing her own narrative around the feminized lack of psychoanalytic discourse. Whereas it is difficult to know why the nose appears in the barber’s bread,<sup>9</sup> the penis seems to reach Matic’s hands because she knows Freud’s work equates femaleness with a lack. If so, the hot dog ironically realizes Matic’s *Kastrationsangst* (castration anxiety).

If the barber’s discovery of a nose in homemade bread is textually believable in his fictional St. Petersburg, then Matic’s finding is symbolically ordered in her fictional Zagreb. Psychoanalytic discourse falsely locates Matic’s perceived lack by presenting the penis as a prosthesis for her undesiring female body. The textual suggestion that Matic got what she deserved for specializing in “aesthetic prosthetics” speaks to a widespread cultural devaluation of female bodies as utterly lacking, as “*pičkin dim*” (“cunt smoke”).<sup>10</sup> As the penis *acts* as the phallus, it presents the

<sup>9</sup> Is the nose nonsense that conforms to no system, not even a nonsensical one (see Morson 226)? Does the nose embody—through its amputation—Russia’s imagined cleft with its own pre-Petrian history, a “kind of counter-semiotic to that of westward-looking ‘correspondence,’ and as such [set] the stage for national identity” (Seifrid 389)? Is the nose an acknowledgement of the instability of somatic boundaries as projected by the subject or the empire? Like the phallus, the nose’s history is veiled.

<sup>10</sup> For an exposition of this term, see Dubravka Ugrešić’s *Kultura laži* 141 (*Culture of Lies* 115).

possibility of unifying what are constructed as the separate discursive worlds of having and being: ideality and disability, male and female, penis and lack.

The phallus functions as a textual prosthesis—to use Mitchell and Snyder’s term for a narrative supplement that relies on a metaphoric concept of disability—to make the concept of lack thinkable in psychoanalytic discourse. Within Freud’s model of polymorphous infantile sexuality, narrative prosthesis burgeons during the phallic phase in the form of the Oedipus complex that, in the male body, ends with the castration complex. Because the child only recognizes the penis (and observes accordingly that each subject either has or lacks the phallus [*Essays* 195]), the opposition phallic/castrated emerges during the phallic phase and is later re-inscribed at puberty as a male/female binary. Whereas the penis *is* the phallus in the Freudian phallic phase, Lacan claims that no subject can be or have the symbolic phallus that emerges via narrative prosthesis during the mirror stage. The phallus’s veiling functions like a textual prosthesis, covering the site of the subject’s projected castration/ amputation.

In other words, the prosthetic phallus promises the impossible: to restore the fragmented body to a mythical wholeness, to concretize lack, and to establish discursive power as an unknowable entity outside history. The tangibility of the penis on the warm bun emphasizes the difference between symbolic castration and literal amputation, since the consequences for the *hrenovka*’s migration from Kovalić to Matić—and back—are disembodied. In Ugrešić’s story, the Lacanian phallus—which acts as a textual prosthesis in psychoanalytic discourse, masking lack when the subject enters into the symbolic order—is made into an actual prosthesis that Matić rejects.

Matić’s own doubts about her life choices, presented comically as penis envy, serve to highlight the tension between “the woman problem” in socialist ideology and quotidian life. Matić, who discovers the disembodied phallus in a mass-produced bun procured on the way to work, fears being identified as a feminist who eschews traditional patriarchal values. She thus quickly hides the greasy “hot dog” in her pocket to prevent her boss, Otto Waldinger, from seeing it.<sup>11</sup> Although new feminisms began to develop in late 1970s and early 1980s Yugoslavia, challenging the official view on the status of women, “feminism” remained a dirty word (see Jancar 209) that distinguished bourgeois women’s organizations from socialist women’s groups. Being in sole (rather than collective) possession of the penis—the idealized image of phallic power—threatens to mark Matić as seeking autonomy from approved socialist outlets. The *hrenovka* identifies Matić as a “Western feminist,” thereby signifying her ostensible aspirations toward fetishistic consumption.

A perceived over-extension of the word “sexism” in America further galvanized this dominant “testicological” attitude towards feminism in 1980s Yugoslavia:

Riječ seksizam skovana je pred desetak godina u Americi . . . U originalnom značenju seksizam se odnosi na predrasude prema ženskom spolu, ali u širem smislu, termin sada označuje svako proizvoljno i stereotipno određivanje muškarca ili žene na osnovi njihova spola. (Drakulić 60)

The word *sexism* was forged some ten years ago in America . . . In the original meaning, sexism refers to prejudices against the female sex, but in a wider understanding, the term now designates every arbitrary and stereotypical definition of men or women based on their sex.

<sup>11</sup> Perhaps the boss’s Germanic name contributes to the possibility of Matić being identified as a “Western” feminist.



By looking “Westward,” both Drakulić and Ugrešić elliptically address the Yugoslav backlash against feminism, and their indirect approach underscores the significant resistance in 1980s Yugoslavia to autonomous Franco-American feminisms. Indeed, when “Hot Dog” and *Deadly Sins* were published in 1983 and 1984, respectively, indigenous feminisms continued to be perceived widely as bourgeois imports, despite their roots in the formation of post-WWII Yugoslavia.<sup>12</sup>

Even as feminisms were disparaged, “Yugoslav socialism persisted . . . in its political, cultural, and symbolic use of women. . . . The female body, very much like the Soviet female body, was the visual sign of the new social order in mass culture” (Slapšak 98). Yet if women were celebrated as “surrogate proletariats,” patriarchal structures persisted. Ugrešić writes:

*Image* žene nisu naškodile ni političke promjene koje je sa sobom donio Drugi svjetski rat (gdje su žene ravnopravno s muškarcima sudjelovale u partizanskom pokretu), ni . . . praksa socijalizma (koja je barem zakonski izjednačila prava muškaraca i žena), . . . ni pojava feminizma. (*Kultura* 140)

The *image* of women has not been tarnished by either the political changes brought by the Second World War (in which women, for the most part highly educated, participated on an equal footing with men in the partisan movement), or . . . socialism (which made men and women equal, at least in law), . . . or the phenomenon of feminism. (*Culture* 114)

In other words, treating sexism as a class problem didn’t rectify all aspects of gender inequality.

As in many other countries, mass entrance into the job market post-World War II feminized particular job categories. Women remained concentrated in certain professions and were underrepresented in leadership bodies (Ramet 96). Women came to make up 41.8 % of all workers in trade and catering industries—including, of course, “The Skyscraper Café.” The other two main areas of employment were public services and administration (42 % women in the field) and cultural and social welfare activities (56.3 %) (Jančar 203). Out of all employed women, 37% were in manufacturing; 18% in trade, catering, and tourism; 11% in education and culture; and 11% in public health and social welfare (Jančar 203). These figures clearly identify Matic’s career as only marginally privileged within her fictional 1980s Zagreb, and, based on the way she interprets her meaty discovery, she knows it. Class doesn’t explain adequately her own—or anyone else’s—gendered interactions with the *hrenovka*.

### Discarded Wrappers and Other Freudian “Things”

Although Matic is educated and has a specialized job in the city, gender equality continues to elude her—and all women in the narrative. Matic has minimal interaction with the *prodavačica* and quickly uncovers what she attempts to veil: the *hrenovka*. Ugrešić interjects in parentheses: “Uvijek strgnem tu nepotrebnu, grubu papirnatu krpicu u koje naše prodavačice, umjesto u papirnate salvete, zamataju peciva” (10; “I always dispose of those unnecessary and shamefully tiny scraps of paper waitresses use for wrapping hot dogs,” 147). This declaration seems to oppose Matic to the *prodavačica*, even though they are both workers. The scraps

<sup>12</sup> Slapšak, for example, notes that educated urban women were a major support base for the Yugoslav communist movement. During WWII, a propaganda campaign that “enlightened” uneducated rural women about their “rights” and “the bright communist future” coincided with guerilla actions outside cities (98). As elsewhere, women participated in the war in various ways.

of paper that enclose the hot dog also cover possible causes of persistent gender inequality. A fog, representing gaps in Ugrešić's narration, precludes further consideration of the differences that socialism at once recognized and diminished through the discourse of *bratstvo i jedinstvo* (brotherhood and unity). Certain differences—which no doubt would inform Matic's and the *prodavačica*'s classed and gendered experiences—simply are erased from the text. That the *prodavačica* is unnamed limits contemplation of how she may differ from Matic. Their community affiliations and individual identifications remain unannounced.

Through Matic's unveiling the hot dog, Ugrešić parodies the shrouding of gendered difference in psychoanalytic and socialist discourses—and the wrapping of noses in Gogol's story. Unlike Matic, the barber carries Kovalev's nose only after wrapping it in cloth. Ermakov claims that the olfactory organ symbolizes the taboo against the scatological.<sup>13</sup> More interesting, and more relevant to Ugrešić's parody, is the noseless Kovalev elbowing past beggar women “с завязанными лицами и двумя отверстиями для глаз” (44; “with bandaged faces and two slits for their eyes,” 45). The women's attached but hidden noses evoke Kovalev's detached one, swathed in cloth by the barber. Seemingly because of this connection, Kovalev complains that “Мне ходить без носа, . . . это неприлично. Какой-нибудь торговке, которая продаёт на Воскресенском мосту очищенные апельсины, можно сидеть без носа” (46; “For me to go about without my nose . . . is unbecoming. It's all right for a peddler woman who sells peeled oranges on the Voskresensky Bridge, to sit without a nose,” 47). A *babushka* would have been devalued culturally long ago, but Kovalev only recently has been feminized by his nose's absence. There are no grandmothers in Ugrešić's version, but the *prodavačica* is just as powerless. While Gogol's old woman peeling oranges covers herself in cloth, Ugrešić's *prodavačica* cloaks herself in darkness.

In Ugrešić's parody, the darkness explicitly problematizes the ideological relationship between class and gender, since the *prodavačica*, like Nada and Lidija, has already been brought into the workforce. The *prodavačica*, Nada, and Lidija all encounter the phallus, but only the unnamed *prodavačica* does so in the shadows and without self-reflection. Sitting with parted legs in the darkened Skyscraper Café, she acts out a Freudian conception of lack, but without Nada's or Lidija's knowledge of psychoanalytic discourse. She binges on hot dogs after the policeman Vinko K. interviews her, apparently in response to Matic's discovery: “Pokažite mi svu zalihu hrenovki koju imate” (15; “show me all the hot dogs you have on the premises,” 152). Like Gogol's nose, and unlike Matic's *hrenovka*, the ingested hot dogs merely *symbolize* the penis and phallus. However, an image of lack—“velik[a], gladn[a], mišj[a] ženka[a]” (22; “a gigantic, ravenous female mouse,” 158)—(momentarily) interrupts this feeding frenzy.

Ugrešić juxtaposes the mouse, whose tail the Freudian Ermakov considered a phallic reference (like the nose), with the turnip, which Ermakov classified as a feminine symbol (see Ermakov 272–73). Matic collates the symbolism of the mouse and the turnip in a dream. First, her boss, Mr. Waldinger, and a sausage-nosed Matic harvest a beet (castration); then an oversized mouse's claws dig into

<sup>13</sup> He enumerates possible examples of this symbolism, including Gogol's noting that the nose's proper place is between two cheeks; the doctor's suggestion that Kovalev wash the nose-less place regularly; and the nose's sounds (see 272).

Matić thighs—just as she dug into the dirt. In this sequence, the mouse, as a symbol of lack, casts violent blame for what seems to have been a nonviolent castration. By attributing the sausage and beet imagery to nightmares from the author’s own childhood, the narrator also suggests that the dreamscape features a symbolic vocabulary of lack that has informed Yugoslav women’s experiences from before the 1950s and 1960s of Ugrešić’s childhood into the 1980s of Matić’s fictional adulthood.

Matić does not believe herself to be lacking, but she seems to acknowledge displaced symbols of her own sexual difference. She projects a lack onto all men, seeing each one as the potential *castrato* to whom her hot dog belongs. Later, she responds to an ad for a lost umbrella as if it were a coded admission of lack. The ad’s use of “riječ stvar” (20; the word *thing*) and “šifra Miško” (20; the cipher *Miško* [“Little Mouse”]) make the metaphor unmistakable to her guilt-ridden mind. She meets with the advertiser, Milan Miško—a mouse-man by family name and in the language of Homi Bhabha’s 1995 article on masculinity, “Are You a Man or a Mouse?”—but the events become enveloped in a mist, abbreviated by an ellipsis.

Rather than mitigating phallic power through an exchange with Milan Miško, Matić attempts to dispose of the phallus’s image—which flashes before her eyes in forms projected by psychoanalytic discourse—by banishing the hot dog down an open drain “kao mrt[av] miš” (11; “like a dead mouse,” 148). “[P]redebelo” (11; “too fat,” 149) to be pushed into the orifice, the phallus clings to her as concretized blame in the image of the penis. Aware that the penis once belonged to *someone*, Matić herself personalizes orthodox psychoanalytical conclusions: “si certaines personnes n’ont pas de pénis, c’est qu’on le leur a coupé” (Irigaray 39; “if the penis is lacking in certain individuals, it is because someone has cut it off,” 38). The penis’s presence in Matić’s life begs the question: who cut it off? This question remains unanswered in both Gogol’s and Ugrešić’s texts, but in the latter it acquires mock moralistic significance as the phallic prosthesis is parodied as the fate befitting feminists in an era of “penis-chopping.”<sup>14</sup>

Ugrešić’s use of this disturbing English term dramatizes the imagined connection among American feminisms and this unsavory international “trend,” capitalizing on the misogynist fear that all feminists are really man-haters. Ugrešić’s tale also invokes urban legends about castration that dismiss and/or condemn feminism’s power. In the Croatian “Author’s Notes,” Ugrešić even discusses Prayoon Eklang’s 1997 unsolicited penectomy at the hands of a jealous wife and the phenomenon of “penis-chopping” in Thailand (132–34)—at least one hundred such amputations and ten surgical reattachments, Ugrešić claims, between 1980 and the time she wrote the “Author’s Notes.” She furthermore insists that there is a Thai idiom linked to angry wives who nourish poultry with their husbands’ penises: “Budi dobar ili ću nahraniti patke” (132; Be good or I will feed the ducks). Explicitly reminding the reader that life imitates fiction, Ugrešić thus mocks cultural anxieties about the proliferation of castrations in proportion to feminisms’ popularity.

<sup>14</sup> This query—who cut it off?—acquired new significance during and after the violent *dismemberment* of Yugoslavia, when feminists became “national traitors” and women “function[ed] as a collective screen of culpabilization” (Slapšak 99, 100). In 1992–93, for example, in articles with such titles as “Croatian Witches Rape Croatia,” the media vilified Ugrešić—as well as Drakulić and other women authors—for being “insufficiently patriotic” (Slapšak 94).

In the American context, folklorist Mark Glazer documents the proliferation of testicolgical legends in Alton, Texas since the 1960s—in other words, since the sexual revolution. Common variations include: a wife arousing her husband and then cutting off his penis with a knife or razor to avenge his infidelity, or a wife placing superglue on her husband's penis while he sleeps, with the end result being castration in a hospital. But Glazer misconstrues castration as a feminine articulation: “the wife in these legends does not exactly fall into the category of powerless!” (145). Having the capacity to threaten someone else's bodily integrity through brutality is *not* the same as being empowered or as having one's body socially invested as the image of power. The mythic wife cannot, as Glazer suggests, display or assimilate power by doing violence to a particular image of the phallus, because it is *not only* an image: it is a real penis with receptors to signal pain. The member in Matic's possession differs from Eklang's, as well as from those of Glazer's urban legends, because Kovalic experiences bodily harm not from castration but from reattachment. His pain radiates from the difference between the penis he once had and what Matic finds in the fold of her bun: the embodiment of the Lacanian phallus according to all its discursive contradictions.

### Immaculate Castration

*Unlike* the fabled husbands from Texas, Mato Kovalic loses his member in bed. He notices his castration upon waking early one morning and complains that a more noticeable “penis-chopping” would have been preferable: “ne bih imao ništa protiv, da mi ga je tko amputirao” (14; “if somebody had chopped it off, I wouldn't have made a peep,” 150). His member's disappearance leaves him not only less manly, but also less human. He perceives himself as having been stripped of the substance signifying masculinity and consumed by lack, leaving a “prazno, glatko mjesto” (12; “perfectly smooth surface,” 149). This smooth surface represents not only “the lack of a penis but the presence of the wrong thing” (Nussbaum 32). He envisions his new body as “na golu, plastičnu mušku lutku kakve se vidaju po izlozima prije nego im navuku odjeću” (12; “one of those naked, plastic dummies in the shop windows,” 149). Furthermore, although his castration is more like a theoretical revision than a discernible event, it changes his relationship to language by feminizing him.

Whereas Kovalic recognizes that his loss as written on his body is formed in discourse, Kovalev has no insight into the relationship between his nose and discourse. Kovalev's discovery still seems to coincide with his re-entry, upon waking, into spoken language—a waking symbolized by the onomatopoeic vocalization “brrr.” His mirror reveals, instead of his nose, a “совершенно гладкое место” (40; “perfectly smooth surface,” 41). More than the loss of the nose itself, Kovalev laments the imposition of a lack that is an index of lost potentiality. He longs for a prosthesis so that he may take snuff and seduce women: “Хотя бы уже что-нибудь было вместо носа, а то ничего!” (44; “if at least there was something in place of the nose, but there's nothing!,” 45). He is now, like the “lacking” women he longs to possess, what Aristotle considered “a deformed man.” Kovalev's lack thus engages the nineteenth-century discourse on disability, especially in relation to amputa-

tion and prosthesis.<sup>15</sup> He perceives his lack as being inscribed on *his* body, but the act of naming officially liberates his nose as the esteemed Gospodin Nosov, “Mister Nose.”

### Prosthetic Realities

Although Kovalev does not recognize the lack itself as discursive, Kovalić does. The “empty, smooth space” of the feminized lack—the one once hidden by the phallus-as-prosthesis—confronts Kovalić in the mirror with a discursive crisis. For a writer who divides all prose into two categories—“*s mudima*” (“with balls”) and “*bez muda*” (“without balls”)—this transformation is especially significant. Kovalić had been working on a book “with balls”—that is, devoid of metaphoric content—about a butcher who loves his job. Kovalić is what Drakulić would term a *mudolog*, a testicologue. He despises “simbole, metafore, aluzije, dvosmislenosti, literarne ‘kerefeke’” (13; “symbols, metaphors, allusions, ambiguities, literary frills,” 150). But, now, with his new feminine relationship to *logos*, metaphor and metonymy overwhelm him:

Na ulici je neko dijete gulilo bananu. Kroz staklo je mogao vidjeti kako u krčmi pored koje je prolazio neki tip naginje pivo iz boce. Iz jedne je veže izletio dječak s plastičnim pištoljem u rukama. Nebo je sjekao mlaznjak. U parku je naglo proradila fontana, mlazevi vode štrcnuli su u vis. Na zavoju se izgibao tramvaj. Dvojica su radnika prenosila neku dugu cijev. Netko je nekome u prolazu rekao: *Za to treba imati muda!* (14)

In the street he saw a child peeling a banana, in a bar he saw a man pouring beer from a bottle down his gullet, in a doorway he saw a boy with a plastic pistol in his hand come running straight at him; he saw a jet cross the sky, a fountain in a park start to spurt, a blue tram come round a bend, some workers block traffic dragging long rubber pipes across the road, two men walking toward him, one of whom was saying to the other, “But for that you really need balls . . .” (151)

No longer for Kovalić does “svaka riječ znači to što znači, a ne vrug bi ga znao što” (13; “every word mean . . . what it mean[s] and not God knows what else,” 150). Denied the phallus-as-prosthesis and confronted with the inherent metaphoricity of language, he discovers lack to be a structuring principle of the symbolic order.

The way language constructs Kovalić’s body as lacking also alters his relationship to locally and nationally identified spaces. He perceives himself as occupying less space. This self-perception positions the non-disabled male body as an absolute materiality, a pure *having* untouched by feminized physical lack: a man takes up space because he *has* substance. Bhabha’s prescription for studying masculinity addresses this problem directly: “It must be our aim not to deny or disavow masculinity, but to disturb its manifest destiny—to draw attention to it as a *prosthetic reality*—a prefixing of the rules of gender and sexuality; *an appendix or addition that, willy-nilly, supplements and suspends a ‘lack-in-being’*” (my emphasis, 57). In losing his penis, Kovalić loses the illusion that his penis is the phallus; it becomes clear that his gendered identity was a prosthetic reality, structured by

<sup>15</sup> From the nineteenth to the early twentieth century, industrial capitalism positioned prosthesis as a transcendental end-point. Medical accounts of the period depict “the amputee pass[ing] from the feminine world of nervous debility”—where there is lack—“to the masculine world of inexhaustible machinery”—where prosthesis and the phallus are one (O’Connor 745). Prosthesis promises the realization of Enlightenment ideals. In Freud’s words: “Man [sic] has . . . become a kind of prosthetic God. When he puts on all his auxiliary organs, he is truly magnificent” (*Civilization* 44).

the phallus-as-prosthesis. At the same time, Kovalić's penis *functions* as a phallus in Nada's hands.

Platon Kuz'mich Kovalev's severed nose, on the other hand, behaves as a man who believes himself to be in possession of the phallus. Plato's namesake, the power-hungry collegiate assessor, pursues his runaway member as if it is a philosophical truth to be attained. His investigations span the city, as he seeks justice in the *polis*, but yield nothing. The image of Kovalev's noselessness becomes a metaphor for an empty idea, the failure to manufacture truth from disability, as does Plato's image of the deformed child destined for "exposure": "a wind-egg and a falsehood" (160e-161a). Kovalev perceives his lack as emptiness because of the mechanisms of its social construction, and his former nose takes on its own identity when it enters into discourse, becoming a high-ranking man with the body of a nose.

A collar conceals the nose's nose, but doesn't obscure its nose-ness—it is undeniably masculine. Among the phallic pillars of the Kazan cathedral, Kovalev sees his former nose, wearing a colorful uniform, with yet another phallic symbol, a saber. Consistent with medical accounts of the period, the "stump" of Kovalev's face possesses its own identity as a feminine hysteric that threatens to take over Kovalev's masculine body. Nineteenth-century "stump pathology . . . suggested not only that masculinity was contingent upon physical integrity, that a man was only as complete as his body, but also that an effeminate pain pattern could undercut the essence of a man, that an incomplete man was not a true one" (O'Connor 744–45). Yet even as Kovalev's former nose acknowledges no relation to him, declaring: "Я сам по себе" (48; "I exist in my own right," 49), he still resists this feminizing discourse, believing, despite his nose's absence, in the narrative prosthesis of his own masculinity.

Kovalić, on the other hand, bemoans his loss of narrative prosthesis: "Da sam ostao bez ruke ili noge, sve bi bilo bolje, da sam bez ušiju ili nosa, odvratno jest, ali je podnošljivije" (14; "And why not my arms or legs? Why not my ears or nose, unbearable as it would have been?" 150). To lose his arms or legs, to lose a nose that isn't a metaphorical penis but simply a nose, would mean feminization as an amputee. To lose his penis means emasculation by both the literalization of the psychoanalytic lack and the misconstruction of disability as a loss. Thinking through his body, he prevents his translator friend Lidija, who seems more concerned with naming her lover's lack than he is, from consulting an encyclopedia: "Kastracija, kompleks kastracije, koitusni trofej . . . Sve to nema veze!" (17; "Castration, castration complex, coital trophy—it's all beside the point!" 153).

Treating Kovalić's body like an English text, Lidija throws herself on its blank space "kao rogovatan prijevod" (17; "like a recalcitrant translation," 154). She polishes (*cizelirati*) this space passionately, but with clinical awareness of working "[z]a ponižene, za uvrijeđene, za potlačene, ružne, impotentne, sterilne, za siromašne tijelom, za bogalje i bolesne" (17; "for all the insulted, humiliated, oppressed, for all the ugly, impotent, and sterile, for all the poor in body, hunched in back, and ill in health," 154). Like a Victorian doctor treating a woman's "hysteria," Lidija addresses Kovalić's lack until he experiences paroxysm. Defying physiology but not the psychoanalytic tradition, Kovalić climaxes in the big toe of his left foot. This digit is "ravnoduš[an]" (17; "indifferent," 154) in contrast to Lidija's "repica"

(17; “sugar beet,” 154), the phallic potato-beet of Ugrešić’s epigraph. Although her tongue functions like the lesbian phallus (see Butler), affirming phallic transferability, Lidija considers the site of Kovalić’s de-territorialized penis as lacking.

Lidija perceives Kovalić’s lacking body as grotesque—that is, as “a visual form . . . inversely related to the concept of the ideal” (Davis 25). Lidija—after Aristotle, whom Drakulić names as a proto-testicologue—envisions the female body as potentially male (“the deformed male” [737a]) and the disabled body as the “grotesque” and “monstrous” (“monstrosity is the state of being deformed” [769b]). Her blowjob attempts to realize both potentialities in her lover’s feminized and reformed body. That is why Lidija experiences her failure in relation to her own body rather than Kovalić’s: his lack affirms her own as she loses access to the phallus she once “borrowed” from Mato. What remains are her two tongues—Serbo-Croatian and English—that further characterize her as a “monster.”

Although Kovalić’s masculine body once bridged Lidija’s speaking and spoken selves, it now propels her backwards from the symbolic (linguistic) state of development to the imaginary (identificatory) one of the mirror stage. She types out the word “disease” in English. Then she licks her image in the mirror: “Glatko i prazno. Kao njezin život” (23; “smooth and empty . . . Like her life,” 159).<sup>16</sup> Kovalić’s castration is a symbolic, yet violent, amputation of the phallus from *her* body as a site of power. After the loss of *her* “sugar beet,” she pecks at crumbs like one of the lacking “hens” that Kovalev mocks after his nose’s return. Seeking a replacement, she whistles at a policeman on the street.

### Non-surgical Procedures

The media, as represented by newspaper ads, and the State, as personified by police officers, mandate narrative prosthesis in both stories. They structure the possibility and the actuality of re-attaching Kovalić’s penis and Kovalev’s nose. Refusing to abandon hope, Kovalev places an ad, explaining: “Да ведь я вам не о пуделе делаю объявление, а о собственном моём носе: стало быть, почти то же, что о самом себе” (58; “But I’m not putting in an advertisement about a poodle—it’s about my very own nose; that is, practically the same as about myself,” 59). He even recognizes that a nose is a precondition of citizenship: “без носа человек—чёрт знает что: птица не птица, гражданин не гражданин” (66; “without a nose a man is goodness knows what; he’s not a bird, he’s not a human being,” 67). As it is, Kovalev is blamed for his disability because he lost the nose without reason—no war, no duel, no van Gogh-like gift. A commissioner moralizes: “у порядочного человека не оторвут носа” (64; “no real gentleman would allow his nose to be pulled off,” 65).

Since Kovalev fails to manufacture meaning from his amputation, his continued citizenship relies on prosthesis through rhinoplasty, and he employs an orally fixated doctor—who rinses his mouth for forty minutes at a time daily—to re-attach the returned nose. Unable to do so successfully, the doctor offers to buy it.

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<sup>16</sup> This gesture is—if you will—tongue in cheek because, in Lacanian psychoanalysis, the idealization of the real, erect penis occurs during subject formation—“the mirror stage,” wherein a child identifies with an external image of his/her body to create a unified sense of self.

Disembodied, the nose is a curio: a rabbit's foot of the masculine imaginary and an emblem of narrative prosthesis.<sup>17</sup> Finally, the nose simply returns to its localized prosthetic function one morning, re-attaching itself as if nothing had happened. His "wholeness" restored, Kovalev crams his nose with snuff, muttering: "вот, мол, вам, бабье, куриный народ" (86; "So much for you, you women, you stupid hens!" 87). He thus unwittingly celebrates as the end of his lack the return of the narrative prosthesis with which he refused to part.

Kovalić goes a step further, attempting to pleasure every woman he knows (or, at least, himself) with his returned penis. He finds himself to be, per usual, "uspravan i krut" (24; "stiff and erect," 160). Maja, one of his conquests, sees her name crossed off a list and retorts: "Monstrume!" (25; "Monster!" 161). With only one name left on the list, and no weakening of the returned tumescence, Kovalić himself begins to consider his member grotesque: "Splasni, monstrume! . . . Otpadni, mrcino!" (25; "Down, monster! . . . Off with you beast!" 161). Once merely the image of the phallus, Kovalić's penis becomes the phallus itself, one of the "papirnat[i] monstrum[i] pune skrivenih značenja" (13; "paper monsters teeming with hidden meanings," 150). As an embodiment of psychoanalytic discourse, it constructs disability, deformity, and monstrosity alike.<sup>18</sup> Kovalić now realizes that the lack projected onto his body (when he was without a penis) not only remains, but had always been there.

His own narrative prosthesis, his prose "with balls," traps Kovalić in his own body as the phallus replaces his penis. He realizes the phallus is insatiable, "le signifiant privilégié de cette marque où la part du logos se conjoint à l'avènement du désir" (Lacan 692; "the privileged signifier of this mark in which the role of Logos is wedded to the advent of desire," 277). Kovalić's phallus—in the image and shape of his former penis—is "an erection in theory." Always tumescent, it "denies him his genital experience [while identifying] women constitutionally with deficiency and mutilation" (Bernheimer 130). Unlike Kovalev's nose, Kovalić's penis only takes on its own life *after* returning to its body. No longer racialized, classed, or in possession of any individual history, Kovalić's penis is the transcendental phallus re-masked (see Bernheimer 118). It is now as cold, hard, and mechanized as a vibrator. It is what Ugrešić's parody warns against: fiction becoming life. Psychoanalytic discourse engorges Kovalić's member. That Kovalić prefers lack to this embodiment of the phallus, which he threatens with a line from his own novel—*Flajšmašina* (*Meat Grinder*): "Z menom u grob idu i moji noži" (25; "My knives go with me to the grave!" 161)—reminds us that a better understanding of lack's construction alone will not attenuate phallic power, as the phallus already contains castration.

By literalizing the slippage in psychoanalytic discourse between the phallus and the penis, Ugrešić challenges the conflation of class and gender in socialist discourse. As she reveals the parodied nose's metaphoric disguises and the phallus's imaginary ones, she suggests that socialist discourse veils gender inequality. Her

<sup>17</sup> Nussbaum considers how the discursive construction of "flawed" humans—such as Amazonian women and eunuchs—renders them empire's "collectibles" (49).

<sup>18</sup> John Wayne Bobbitt's infamously severed and re-attached member also came to embody overlapping discourses of amputation, disability, and monstrosity. See, for example, the titles of its pornographic performances: "Bobbitt . . . uncut" and "Frankenpenis."



playful mockery of “noseology” confronts the Yugoslav patriarchy that Drakulić calls “testicology.” Ugrešić’s “Hot Dog”—written in a time of unheralded social and economic transition shortly after Tito’s death and when newspapers proclaimed “Poslije Tito, biće Tito” (Ostoić 461; After Tito will be Tito)—explores gender inequality in 1980s Yugoslavia through meta-therapeutic parody: “After the phallus will be the phallus.”

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