

Innovative Impact of the Classical Tradition on Early Modern Serbian Literature

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Abstract

The strongest impact of the classical tradition on Serbian literature occurred in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, primarily as a consequence of the rise of modern humanistic education among the Serbs, but also due to the influence of the contemporary European Enlightenment and neoclassical literature on Serbian writers. The result was a large number of literary innovations in Serbian literature of the time, including the adoption (and adaptation) of several classical literary genres and techniques, such as classical versification, and intellectual enrichment through themes and ideas borrowed from classical literature. The classical tradition gave the Serbian literature in this period a broader artistic and cultural framework and some of the most original writers and thinkers, such as Jovan Rajić, Dositej Obradović, Lukijan Mušicki, and Jovan Sterija Popović.

Keywords: humanistic education; neoclassicism; reception of classical literary genres; Serbian literature; techniques; topics; versification

This chapter explores the seminal effects of Serbian writers' use of the classical tradition in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. During the early modern period, Serbian literature was isolated, due to the unfavorable circumstance of the Ottoman occupation, from the current European literary processes and subsequently from the increased interest in classical antiquity, which marked the Western literary, cultural, and intellectual history between the Renaissance and Enlightenment. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Serbian literature produced in the lands recently taken by the Habsburgs turned

toward the Baroque style, prevalent in the neighboring Western literatures. At the same time, there was also a sudden and strong tendency to adopt the classical tradition in the form in which it had been developed and preserved by the early modern humanists.¹ As a result, Serbian literature in the eighteenth century was a mix of the earlier Renaissance and the current Baroque. The classical literary heritage was also spread through Enlightenment and neoclassical literatures. The joint influences of the ancient classics and of these literatures led, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to the appearance of neoclassicism, which represents the apogee of the classical tradition in Serbian literature.

As part of the espousal of humanistic traditions, the subjects of poetics and rhetoric, which introduced the genres and other principles of classical literary tradition, were taught in the Serbian schools of that time in Latin.² Therefore, for a long time the Serbs used Latin rather than their mother tongue in joining this tradition. Thus, the classical literary genres were imitated by Serbian writers, first in Latin, and then in Serbian (Ristović 2007: 64). The innovations inspired by the classical tradition first appeared in literature written in Latin. Serbian neo-Latinity was, thus, the precursor of classicistic literary trends in Serbian literature. However, these innovations remained an isolated literary field that never played a decisive role in the transformation of early modern Serbian literature. For this reason, I focus here on the literature written in Serbian, which reached a broader readership and permanently transformed the landscape of Serbian literature.

Intellectual Enrichment

The surge of the elements of the classical heritage into the Serbian literature of this time can be followed on two planes—that of the ideas and that of the forms. The former was the revival of the classical intellectual influences, which can be traced back to the medieval beginnings of the Serbian literature. In the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century this aspect of the impetus acquired from classical antiquity was present more strongly than ever before, and did not come through intermediary sources but directly from the classical texts. Serbian writers, educated in the spirit of modern classical humanism, found both inspiration and support in the classical literature. In the beginning this was tied to the efforts to organize Serbian humanistic education, the best example of which is the work by Dionisije Novaković, *Slovo o pohvalah i polzje nauk svobodnih* (*Speech on the glory and usefulness of liberal arts*, 1742) (Ristović 2013: 66–7). In this exhortation to classical erudition Novaković found the answers to the current problems of Serbian society—antagonism toward education, preference for a military career—which mirrored the opposition between *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa* debated and resolved in classical thought (Flašar 1997: 14–59). For similar reasons, Zaharija Orfelin referred to the classical world in his work *Zrcalo nauke* (*The mirror of knowledge*, c.1760), while his poem *Sonnet* (1768) promoted even more modern

attitudes: he advocated the emancipation of women by lauding women of classical antiquity prominent for their capabilities and virtues:

“Women are less than nothing!” And anyone can see,
That many men for women feel respect unalloyed.
Hercules for a woman’s love did fight readily;
It was for a woman that splendid Troy was destroyed;

Semiramis exposed even kings to ridicule;
Over Dido’s demise the whole of Carthage did grieve;
Everybody did praise Cleopatra’s prudent rule;
Aspasia’s words even Socrates did believe.

[...]

If they are truly nothing, how come that they say now
Of someone born of a woman that he adores her
Wants to be her equal, or that he is worse than her?³

This early enlightenment, based on the program of Christian humanism and neo-Stoicism, was for a long time used to promote classical heritage among the Serbs. An important work of this kind is the first Serbian printed collection of poems, *Kratkoje napisanije o spokojnoj žizni* (*A short writing on tranquil life*, 1788) by Aleksije Vezilić. Here, through themes and ideas borrowed from classical literature (especially from Cicero’s and Seneca’s philosophical works), we have the beginnings of the topics of the contemporary Enlightenment—the criticism of superstition and the praise of common sense. Thus the modernizing role of the classical tradition, which was introduced through the humanistic education, would gain its highest prominence among the Enlightenment authors. And due to the significant influence of the schools based on humanistic principles, this was precisely the way in which the Serbian reading public perceived the classical authors, invoked as the highest authority by Serbian Enlightenment writers.

The exploration of the topics of the Enlightenment—such as nature, reason, skepticism, tolerance, cosmopolitanism, individualism, citizens’ rights, happiness, friendship—primarily by approaching them through the classical tradition reached its peak in the works of Dositej Obradović, especially in his *Basne* (*Fables*, 1788) and *Sobranije* (*Miscellanea*, 1793). Obradović was not only the most important figure of the Serbian Enlightenment, but also the biggest admirer and propagator of classical thought in Serbian culture. And he was also a representative of modern rationalism and anti-dogmatism, with traces of anti-clericalism. His works reflected most fully the intellectual secularization of Serbian literature, which happened under the influence of the classical-humanistic tradition. He saw classical antiquity through the eyes of neo-humanists (J.J. Winkelmann, G.E. Lessing, J.G. von Herder), and placed the ancient Greeks far ahead of other ancient and modern peoples, perceiving their culture as the ideal expression of human self-realization (Ristović 2008: 163).⁴

Adoption and Adaptation of Classical Literary Genres and Techniques

Classical literature is present along every step of Obradović's work—he quotes, translates, paraphrases, and imitates it. Although the function of his use of classical literature was exclusively didactic, he also brought some literary innovations. Obradović introduced the genre of fable into Serbian literature, and wrote the first essays using the compositional-argumentative scheme which in classical rhetoric had been used in *chreia* (Jelić 2005: 64–67). His *Život i priključenija* (*Life and adventures*, 1783, 1788)—the most important autobiography in the whole of Serbian literature—owes a lot to the classical tradition, in the first place, its purpose—to give examples of certain philosophical-pedagogical principles through personal experience (Flašar 1993: 7–8). On a smaller scale, much of its fabric was also adopted from the classical tradition, some of it completely new to Serbian literature, for example, Socratic dialectics, which is very effectively inserted into the narrative. Apart from this, Obradović superbly executed a phenomenon which can be observed already in the works of Novaković and Orfelin—he intertwined the literary text with reminiscences from classical texts which were given either as *comparatio*, or as *exemplum*, or as *testimonium maiorum*, in the function of the rhetorical method under the title of amplification, or for the purpose of “rhetoric proof” (*probatio, argumentatio*) as a logical method called *inductio*. Finally, Obradović's prose is one of the most cultivated examples of periodic diction among the Serbs (Grdinić 2013: 54–77).

The formal influence of the classical tradition, which had an impact on Serbian prose writers through the study of rhetoric in schools and the reading of classical authors, was first felt in oratory. The cultivation of oratory was in itself a novelty, as it did not exist as a practice in older Serbian literature. It is therefore even more important to stress its sudden development in accordance with the classical regulations learnt in the humanistic schools. The speeches were in deliberative (i.e., political) and demonstrative genre (especially funeral orations). Another novelty in Serbian prose was secular biography, which in older Serbian literature was insufficiently differentiated from hagiography—it started to develop fully and in direct correlation with the classical works of this type. Obradović wrote the first individual biographies, and quickly this genre expanded to the form of a biographical collection modeled on the examples of Nepos, Suetonis, Plutarch, or Diogenes Laertius. One such biographical collection was Lazar Bojić's *Pamjatnik mužem u slaveno-serbskom knjižestvu slavnim* (*Memorial on the famous authors of Serbian literature*, 1815), the first history of the Serbian literature. An especially productive biographer was Jevtimije Ivanović, who wrote four collections of biographies of important individuals under the general title *Novi Plutarh* (*New Plutarch*, 1809–1841). Apart from his interest in Plutarch (whose biography was also included), it is important to mention Ivanović's biography of Homer in which he introduced the Serbian audience to the “Homeric question.”

In the realm of poetry, the formal aspect of the influence of the classical tradition on early modern Serbian literature has a richer and more complex history. Artistic poetry as the art of verse and of stanza developed in Serbian literature in the eighteenth century. The influence of the classical tradition was first visible in the domain of techniques, then in genres, and finally in versification. Mythological apparatus was one of the newly accepted classical literary conventions which marked the beginnings of modern Serbian literature. In contrast to prose, the use of mythology in poetry was not limited to exempla: the expected decorum meant bringing mythology into play in numerous ways—from the invocation of a Muse or a deity to figures of speech which feature mythological characters (such as the metonymous use of Venus for love).⁵ Mythological paraphernalia were introduced in a grand fashion by the earliest Serbian play, Manuil Kozačinski's *Traedokomedija o smerti Uroša Pjatago* (*Tragicomedy on the death of Uroš V*) from 1736. It placed before the Serbian audience a *mise en scène* with characters from classical mythology—Mars, Minerva, Bellona, Sybil—who were given important roles in the scenes which depicted internal struggles of the heroes or in the comments on national dilemmas. The later adaptation of this play—*Tragedija sirječ pečalnaja povjest o smerti posljednjago carja Serbskago* [...] (*Tragedy or sad history on the death of the last Serbian emperor* [...], 1798)—written by Jovan Rajić, gave the classical element an even more important place and function. The special role of pronouncing the main moral of the story—the promotion of education—was given to Minerva, as well as to the personification of history perceived as Cicero's "magistra vitae" (Grbić 2010: 280, 296–298). Through this adaptation, transforming the hybrid genre of tragicomedy, which suited the Baroque literary taste, into tragedy, more closely based on the classical poetics (Ristović 2010: 60–63), Rajić steered Serbian drama toward neoclassicism.

In other work important for the study of the classical tradition in the Serbian literature of the time, Rajić took a different approach to the prescribed classical poetic principles. In his epic, the first Serbian artistic epic, *Boj zmaja s orlovi* (*A battle between the dragon and the eagles*, 1791), he described the war (1787–1791) between the Ottomans (the dragon) and the Habsburg and the Russian Empires (the eagles). He thus introduced the epic into Serbian literature through its parody, although the main topic was serious enough (the conflict between Islam and Christianity). He constantly mixed the high and the low styles (the latter was reserved for portraying the Muslim side), while the composition was a combination of the poetic of epic and the poetic of tragedy (Stefanović 2008: 119) with the elements of pastoral. Thus this work represents a metamorphosis of the epic genre and contains more modern than classical elements in its artistic approach. Nonetheless, Rajić scrupulously observed the rules of the classical literary tradition by keeping the ancient gods as the characters of the epic. Contrary to their role in classical epic, however, the gods do not have a crucial or direct influence on the development of the events or the destinies of the main heroes. Also, the pagan gods are not on Mt. Olympus but in the underworld. As a priest, Rajić saw the classical gods in light

of their Christian demonization, although he portrayed them supporting the Christian side in the conflict he depicted. They have the role of advisors whose authority is indisputable. In the epic Rajić clearly followed the artistic realization of the literary theory attitudes present in the works of the Neoplatonic late antiquity writers (Macrobius) who saw gods as moral-philosophical categories (Flašar 1957: 199). Here we have, therefore, a more typological than genre level of reception of the classical poetics (Stefanović 2008: 116–117).

Literary forms of purely classical origin were used only by Serbian authors of neoclassical orientation, for whom the principle of *imitatio* became increasingly important. Thus neoclassicism introduced several new genres of the classical origin into Serbian poetry—ode, elegy, eclogue (idyll), epigram, epitaph, satirical poem, verse epistle, epithalamion. At the same time, the variety of themes and motifs in Serbian literature increased through different types of discourse, which characterized these genres, such as consolation, gratulation, prosphneticon, propempticon. One of the many important novelties which neoclassicists brought to Serbian poetry was landscape, which was introduced, as already witnessed in the prose, through the adoption of the repertoire of the classical topoi such as *locus amoenus* and literary devices such as ekphrasis. Neoclassical stylistic forms were attained by continuing the poetic of the Enlightenment, although in a modified form—that is, the writers, rationalists, inserted quotations from classical authors into their own texts, while the neoclassicists made them normative (Stefanović 2008: 116).

Imitation of Classical Versification and the Peak of Neoclassicism

In the eighteenth century, among the classical authors Horace gained an especially prominent place. The poetry of this Roman author was a type of credo of the Enlightenment (Ćorović 1999: 279–284). In the Serbian case, it became the subject of intensive imitation, thus making ode the predominant poetic genre of the 1780s—a poem with a solemn tone, occasional nature, and homostrophic structure. It was written in rhyming rocaille stanza, and at the beginning its form differed from the original, Horace's *Carmina*. However, the desire to imitate the original more closely gradually led to the appearance of odes with the metrical characteristics of Horace's work. Thus in Serbian literature the road to the complete acceptance of the classical poetic led from the rocaille to the neoclassical ode. As rhyme was also a novelty, which had only become common in Serbian artistic poetry in the eighteenth century, this process was slow. One variant of Sapphic stanza, in the form of three hendecasyllabic lines and one pentasyllabic line with the rhyming scheme of *aabb*, was already present in Serbian literature from the 1730s.⁶ Atanasije Stojković was the first to abandon isosyllabism in favor of the foot organization of verse, and wrote unrhymed hexameters in the form of

two laments with the common title *Na smert bezsmertnago Ioanna Raiča* (*On the occasion of the death of immortal Jovan Rajić*, 1802).⁷

However, it was the work of Lukijan Mušicki that was crucial for Serbian poetry that relied entirely on the classical literary tradition—including classical versification. Although he himself started as a representative of syllabic rhymed poetry, he was also eager to strengthen ties with the classical tradition. In 1802 he wrote the first Serbian bucolic eclogues (of the Vergilian allegoric type). In 1808 he made the decisive step in directing Serbian poetry toward the elite belletristic idiom of the epoch when he wrote his first ode in Alcaic stanza, an example of his program of the reception of classical verses and stanzas in Serbian literature. He strived to “accustom the ear to the Flaccus’ lyre” through poetry which would have the “dress of a Serbian woman and the walk of a Roman woman.”⁸ He wrote poetry that followed the meter of Horace’s odes by organizing the classical foot on the basis of alteration of stressed and unstressed syllables, and partly by observing the quantitative nature of classical meter—he took the length of syllables into account (in spondaic feet) and respected the *positio* (vowels before two or more consonants were considered long). Mušicki introduced numerous classical stanzas into Serbian literature—Alcaic, the second, the third and the fourth Asclepiad, the first and the second Archilochian, as well as Alcmanian and the first Pythiambic system. He promoted hexameter and elegiac distich, and also created one original type of stanza compiled of classical verses—two Phalecian hendecasyllables, one Pherecratic and one Archilochian verses (Grdinić 2007: 66–68). Sapphic stanza (in its unrhymed form) would be included in the repertoire of Serbian neoclassical poetry by his followers. Thanks to Mušicki, Serbian verse acquired a completely new sound through the forms of classical meter. He also gave Serbian poetic diction a completely new geometry by imitating classical poets in hyperbaton, enjambment (even from stanza to stanza), and the correlation between verses, words, and sentences. This aspect of new poetic language led to a degree of artificiality, which was characterized by the calques of the classical origin (particularly the adjectival composita). Mušicki’s work had such a strong impact that Serbian literature became the only one in the South Slavic framework in which neoclassicism developed into an independent poetic movement (Deretić 1989: 16).

The biggest star on Mušicki’s poetic horizon was Horace (followed by German and Russian neoclassicists such as F.G. Klopstock and G.R. Derzhavin). Celebrated as the “Serbian Horace” during his lifetime, he did indeed achieve many qualities of the poetic work of his “arbitrator of elegance,” and not only those relating to the meter and the various technical elements—morphological, verbal, and motif-related. In the first place, it was the discipline of the spirit—his motto was “reduce the expanse of the power of phantasy,”⁹ which in the literary-historical context of the time indicated refusal to conform to the poetics of sentimentalism and Romanticism. Mušicki gave to Serbian poetry an intellectual aspect and breadth. Using Horace’s tone of unpretentious sobriety and cheerful irony, he addressed in his poems the most important people and commented on the most significant

cultural and political events in Serbian society, discussed matters of language and literature, and showed a patriotic loyalty which did not exclude a critical attitude. His poems contain broad intertextual links; their meanings are discursive, and full of allusions and quotations. They constitute a continuation of the literature of the Enlightenment. This is especially visible in the didactics of two of his poems, primarily based on the Stoic understanding of moral norms, which brought him wide popularity among his contemporaries—*Glas narodoljubca* (*Voice of the patriot*, 1819) and *Glas arfe šišatovačke* (*Voice of the harp of Šišatovac*, 1821). Musicki's intellectual poetry of European outlook counted on an educated reader, one who was familiar with the classical tradition. To Mušicki, the classical tradition represented the ideal, to an even higher degree than to the Serbian Enlightenment writers. At Mušicki's time, not only ethics but also aesthetics mattered, and that involved artistic beauty which could be rationally perceived and which enabled the expression of ethics (Stefanović 2005: xix–xx).

Let us take a closer look at Mušicki's poetry by using the ode *Prokopiju Boliću* (*To Prokopije Bolić*) from 1816 as an example. It was written in Alcaic stanzas and, like his other odes, has an occasional background: the poet is visiting his friend, the abbot of Rakovac monastery. The visit takes place (we are made aware of this through periphrase) four years after he had been promoted to archimandrite¹⁰ at that same monastery by archbishop Stefan Stratimirović. The topic of the ode is *otium*, which is tied to the Arcadian atmosphere provided by the slopes of Fruška Gora mountain. To describe the surroundings the poet uses both the Platonic/Stoic idea of *harmonia mundi* and Horace's expression "aurea mediocritas,"¹¹ and also *πανήγυρις*, Pseudo-Longinus' metaphor for the world.¹² Figurative devices used in the geographic descriptions of the nearby cities Petrovaradin (military headquarters) and Novi Sad (cultural center) serve as a basis for sententious comment, while the description of the landscape elegantly leads to autobiographic reminiscence on his favorite poet. At the end of the ode the balance between the particular and the universal is established by the motif of *brevitas vitae*, with the message that salvation lies in Stoic philosophy:

'Tis for the fourth time, my beloved Bolić,
 The shiny sun has completed its circle,
 Since Stefan with his hand so renowned
 A shiny cross on my bosom did lay;

 And also since I last saw this lovely sight.
 Today's a doubly happy day for my lyre
 'Mongst the noblemen who have gathered
 Out of love and friendship they feel for you.

 Phoebus shines prettily and mountains stand proud,
 While wine-growers dig their vineyards merrily.
 There's celebration on a tall ridge,
 In good taste and golden moderation.

Even with naked eye, that artistic glass,
One can see clearly the rocks and palaces,
 Of Pétérvarad and Novi Sad
 Underneath the clear, blue vault of the sky.

Minerva here and Bellona there have joined
The throne of beauty to the throne of power,
 Close allies out of necessity:
 What's war without reason, peace without sword?

[...]

Playful zephyrs call me back, under an elm
Or linden, one moment 'neath a holy oak,
 The next along those pathways of old,
 Where with the great Horace I used to walk.

Oh, friend! The life that we live is all too brief,
Our days are perennially mixed with sorrow.
 Epictetus' spirit's what we need,
 If any joy in them we are to find.

Beginning of the Rearticulation of Neoclassical Poetics

By imposing high aesthetic and intellectual standards in his poems, Mušicki reduced the decorative reminiscences of mythology and classical history—the characteristics present in the early phase of his work. This was also the main feature of the early phase of Serbian neoclassical poetry, and as a novelty it was used to the maximum. Following Mušicki's example, these ornamental elements were increasingly rejected as unnecessary, and even harmful, ballast. Thus, many well-known neoclassicists wrote poetry that in its content and inspiration was close to the Romantic poetics, but observed classical form. The starting point for this type of development was given by Mušicki himself, as he based his understanding of poetry on the belief that it was possible to assimilate ancient and modern poems. Thus, an important part of his opus are the odes *ad se ipsum*, while for other Serbian neoclassicists metaphysical odes also play an important role. Neoclassical poetry gradually shifted to using classical forms only (as was the case with the oratory). This separation of form and content was already visible in Mušicki's work and can be observed most clearly in his paraphrases of the six psalms in the form of Horace's odes—a feat that makes him a unique figure in Serbian literature.

The challenge the Romantic poets posed for neoclassical poetry, as well as the personal saturation with it, inspired Jovan Sterija Popović to start a radical rearticulation of the approach to the classical tradition. Sterija was a writer of uncommon erudition and very broad literary activity, and the classical influence in his work

was both multilayered and, gradually, critically developed. Although he wrote poetry in the classical forms, he was not satisfied with their type of verse only. However, he was still primarily a follower of Horace. His collection of poems *Davorje* (Songs, 1854), like Horace's lyrical collection, has a closed structure organized on the principle of *variatio*. What is more, Sterija consciously built into its peak his own adaptation of Horace's eight odes dedicated to the question of man's personal happiness.¹³ The topics of the love of power and the love of money as the main sources of man's unhappiness with his destiny had a central place in Sterija's reflexive poetry and represented the philosophical, moral, and historiosophical message of this collection (Flašar 1988: 343–358). What is more, the moralism of Epicurean and Stoic origin from the works of Horace, Seneca, and other classical authors was present in Sterija's other works as well, for example, in his well-known comedy *Tvrđica* (Miser, 1837), whose main model was Plautus' *Aulularia* (Flašar 1988: 72–78). However, the main novelty in Sterija's work is that Horace is not only important as a lyric poet but as a satirist as well. By turning to satirical realism, Sterija affirmed a new rapport with the classical heritage in Serbian literature—both humoristic and satirical. Thus his main contribution to the Serbian classical tradition was through comedy and through satire. Except for the influence of Horace's causerie, Sterija's comedies,¹⁴ especially *Laža i paralaža* (Lier and Vice-Lier, 1830), as well as his series of texts *Milobruke* (Jokesters, 1833–1855), reflect Lucian's satires (Pavić 1983: 403–404).

Sterija's most unusual work is *Roman bez romana* (Novel without a novel, 1838) an anti-novel, a parody that made fun of the rhetorical and mannerist literary techniques of the idealistic pseudo-historical novel, which was very popular in Serbian literature of the time.¹⁵ In the tradition of novel writers and critics of the novelistic production L. Stern and K.M. Wieland, Sterija critically and polemically argued in this work against the classicistic principles of novel writing modeled on the classical epics, which used parody, travesty, and burlesque. Thus, the main male character in this novel is the travestied Vergil's Aeneas, and the main female character is the travestied Vergil's Dido, while her letter is travestied Ariadne's epistle from Ovid's *Heroides*. Sterija's *licentia poetica* builds a story through the deliberate cumulative process of "creative plagiarism" (Flašar 1988: 116–121, 286–287)—blending of borrowings of other authors' texts, and the constant play of allusions, paraphrases, and quotations. Due to its marked intertextuality and metatextuality, this work is an anticipation of postmodernist prose (Damjanov 2007: 395–401). Sterija's poetics in *Roman bez romana* is very close to Menippean satire and Cynic–Stoic diatribe. As in extant titles of Varro's satires,¹⁶ the title here is already enigmatic—because of the homophony between the name of the main character (Roman) and the Serbian word for a novel (*roman*), the title can be interpreted in different ways. Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis* and Lucian's *True History* were his bases for the prooemium in which he turns historians' "love of the truth" into parody. The influence of Horace's and Seneca's "sermo Bioneus" is most clearly visible in the dialogical resonances, anecdotes which turn into dialogues, fables and frequent series of

examples from everyday life, use of colloquialisms, vulgarisms, and folk proverbs, and in how these elements were mixed with poetically decorated sections, characteristic figures (*epidiorthosis*), and interjections of fictional interlocutors. Lucian was also Sterija's inspiration for some of these methods, as well as for the motifs of flight to heaven and dialogues with the dead, as well as for the critique of philosophers, which includes some dramatic elements, such as a fight of gymnosophists. Philosophical topics and metaphors which he turned into parody were typical for his models—for example, that man should accept his destiny¹⁷ (Flašar 1974: 249–335). Here is an example of Sterija's parody of the *σπουδογέλοιον* of diatribe, which turns upside down the traditional Cynic disapproval of luxury into praise of fashion:

You may know, for example, how many stars there are on the Eastern, and how many on the Western sky; you may also speak about love better than Ovid and be able to compete with Plato in creating republics; but go in these clothes to visit not a lady, because she would not let you into her home, but even a common girl, and see if you would be able to arise any benevolence. I do not want to listen to Crates as an example, there was only ever one Hipparchia.

The main conclusion therefore is that the classical tradition gave Serbian writers in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century a broader artistic and cultural framework of expression for their innovative ideas, so that the largest number of literary novelties and some of the most important works of Serbian literature in this period were the results of its influence.

Notes

- 1 This was in the first place the effect of the development of the humanistic education of the Western type among the Serbs.
- 2 Some of the textbooks were written by Serbian authors. The oldest were *De poesi seu de ligata oratione* (1729) by an anonymous author, and *Artis oratoriae libri IV* (1735) by M. Kozačinski.
- 3 These and other verse quotations were translated for the purposes of this essay by Novica Petrović.
- 4 This corresponds to the contemporaneous philhellenism in German-speaking countries, where Obradović attended university. However, he obtained the foundation of his philhellenism through his humanistic education in Greece.
- 5 These adornments quickly became a target for parody, a classical literary technique which also appeared in Serbian literature at this time.
- 6 The popularity of this stanza had its roots in the practice of singing poems written in this stanza to the melodies which in humanistic schools were used to sing Horace's odes.
- 7 Apart from their importance as a novelty in terms of form, these works are also of anthological importance because of their unusual metaphysical reflections.

- 8 L. Mušicki, *Andreju Volnomu* (*To Andrej Volni*), vv. 8, 12.
- 9 L. Mušicki, *Glas arfe šišatovačke* (*Voice of the harp of Šišatovac*), vv. 106–7.
- 10 Mušicki was a clergyman, like a large number of early modern Serbian writers.
- 11 Hor. *Carm.* 2.10.5.
- 12 Ps.-Long. *De subl.* 35.2.
- 13 Hor. *Carm.* 1.22, 2.2, 2.3, 2.10, 2.14, 2.16, 3.1.
- 14 Sterija's comedies, like his tragedies, were written in accordance with Aristotle's and Horace's recommendations.
- 15 Sterija himself gave the genre a try at the beginning of his literary career.
- 16 For example, *Bimarcus* or *Sesculysses*.
- 17 It is a motif taken from Horace's first satire.

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