



Vešče

LUČKA KOŠČAK

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Z Lučko Koščak se večkrat pogovarjava o položaju žensk v današnji družbi in tudi, ko sem ji prenesla vabilo Galerije Krško za razstavo, je pogovor nanesele na to temo. Ker je bilo ravno okrog noči čarovnic, se je iz tega pogovora porodila ideja za razstavo o rehabilitaciji čarovnic. Ideja je postala še bolj zanimiva, ko so nama povedali, da so ravno v Krškem zažgali zadnjo čarovnico na Slovenskem. In ko sva izvedeli še, da je galerija pravzaprav cerkev in da se termin razstave skoraj v celoti prekriva s koledarsko pomladjo, je odločitev padla.

Razstava problematizira tipiziran, a z današnjega vidika zgrešen in ideološki pogled na čarovnice kot zlobna in škodoželjna bitja z nadnaravnimi močmi. Ta pogled se je ohranil tudi v izrazu vešča, ki v slabšalnih pomenih označuje hudobno staro žensko, zavajalko ali mazačko, čeprav je prvotno pomenil isto kot ženska, ki je nečesa vešča, ki ima znanje, ki ve. V tem izrazu se na nek način ohranja dolga zgodovina preganjanja čarovnic, skozi katero so se nanj lepili vse bolj negativni pomeni, ki so postopno prekrili pozitivnega. Hiter pogled na to zgodovino pa bo pokazal, zakaj.

Enchantresses

On several occasions Lučka Koščak and I have discussed the position of women in contemporary society. Our conversation happened to turn on the subject also when I brought her the invitation to exhibit at Galerija Krško. As it was just around Halloween, our debate gave rise to an idea of an exhibition exonerating witches. We got even more intrigued by the subject when we had been told that it was in Krško that the last Slovene witch had been burnt. And when we found out that the gallery is situated in a desacralized church, and that the exhibition was scheduled almost entirely for the duration of calendar Spring, the decision was made.

The exhibition discusses a stereotypical (but from a modern perspective flawed and ideologically informed) treatment of witches as evil and malevolent creatures with supernatural powers. This perception has been preserved in the expression "vešča" (a moth) which in a derogatory sense denotes an old woman, a seductress, or a charlatan although it originally signified a woman of a certain skill or knowledge. In a way, this expression reflects the long tradition of persecuting witches – the gradual sedimentation of negative connotations on the originally positive ones.

Čarovništvo je mogoče definirati v širšem smislu kot način predstavljanja sveta in sil, ki ga prežemajo, v ožjem pa kot večšino razumevanja in obvladovanja teh sil. Kot takšno je osnova vsake religije, pa tudi osnova za spopadanje z nadlogami vsakdanjega življenja. V predkrščanski Evropi je na obeh področjih igrala ključno vlogo ženska. V poganskih religijah je osrednje božanstvo Velika mati (zemlja), ki nastopa kot simbol enotnega kozmosa, kjer sta življenje in smrt, svetloba in tema, dobro in slabo samo dve strani istega. Rituale vodijo svečenice, ti pa zaznamujejo ključne prehode v človeškem življenju (rojstvo, poroka, smrt) in naravnih procesih (poletni in zimski solsticij, lunine mene), s čimer slavijo kroženje življenja, plodnost in rast. Tudi na področju obvladovanja vsakdanjih težav so imele ženske pomembno vlogo, saj so, medtem ko so moški lovili in se bojevali, varovale dom in ogenj, nabirale hranljive rastline in zelišča, skrbele za rast in razvoj otrok. V primerjavi z moškimi so se tudi bolj ukvarjale s svojim telesom, saj ga (ritualno) zaznamujejo menstrualni cikli, pretrgani himen, nosečnosti, rojstva in nazadnje menopavza. Skozi vse te procese so pridobivale znanja o naravi in človeškem

A quick glance on the history shows how it came to be.

Sorcery can be defined in a broader sense as a way of conceptualising the world and the forces permeating it, while in the narrow sense, it denotes the skill of understanding and controlling these forces. As such, it is at the core of any religion, as well as central to coping with the nuisances of everyday life. In pre-Christian Europe, women had key roles in both fields. The central deity in pagan beliefs is a mother goddess, Mother Earth, symbolizing the unity of cosmos in which life and death, darkness and light, the good and the evil are just two sides of the same coin. Rites of passage were performed by priestesses to mark the key transitions in people's lives (the birth, the wedding, the death) and natural processes (summer and winter solstice, lunar phases), celebrating the circle of life, fertility, and growth. While men were in charge of hunting and fighting, women were responsible for everyday activities such as guarding the fire and home, picking plants and herbs, and raising children. Comparatively, women were more concerned with their body as it was (in a ritualised manner) marked by menstrual cycles, broken hymen, pregnancy,

telesu, spoznale so se kontracepcijo, porodništvo in medicino nasploh, vse to znanje pa uporabljale za pomoč sebi in drugim.

Pred približno 2000 leti je vzporedno s procesom razpadanja rodovne družbene ureditve začel potekati tudi proces delitve kozmosa na dva dela, pri čemer moška, sončna božanstva zasedejo pozitivni pol, ženska, tradicionalno povezana z mesecem, pa negativnega. Ta negativni pogled na žensko prevzame tudi krščanstvo, ki jo v uradni doktrini poveže s hudičem, v praksi pa izrine iz bogoslužja. Krščanstvo postopoma postane vodilna religija, s stopnjevanjem njegove moči pa se stopnjuje tudi negativni pogled na ženske, ki doseže vrh v lovu na čarovnice. Pomembna prelomnica v tem procesu je pojav herezij v 12. stoletju, kjer med drugim ženske ponovno prevzamejo vlogo svečenic. Cerkev za pregon herezij ustanovi inkvizicijo, ki jih ščasoma izenači s čarovništvom in vzpostavi temelje za njegov pregon. Inkvizicija heretikom očita čaščenje Satana na t. i. sabatih, ki vključujejo letenje, nebrzdano žretje in pitje ter spolno občevanje, pa tudi sposobnost uročanja in povzročanja nesreč. Vse to, kot tudi različne

giving birth, and finally the menopause. It was through these processes that women acquired knowledge about the nature and human body, contraception, obstetrics and medicine in general, and used the expertise to help themselves as well as others.

Approximately 2000 years ago and parallel to gradual dismantling of primitive society, the process of dividing cosmos into two parts started whereby the male solar deities occupy the positive pole while the female ones, traditionally associated with the moon, are ascribed the negative one. This negative perception of women is also embedded in Christianity as its official doctrine associates women with the devil and expels them from performing the rituals of worship. Gradually, Christianity becomes the leading religion and, parallel to its gaining power, the negativism concerning women intensifies, reaching its peak in witch-hunt. An important turning point in the process is also the emergence of the 12th century heresies, during which women reclaim the role of priestesses. To persecute heresies, the Church establishes the institute of inquisition and gradually equates them to witchcraft. The inquisition accuses the heretics of worship-

metode mučenja za pridobitev priznanja (npr. znani preizkus z vodo), in končni sežig na grmadi, postane značilno tudi za poznejši lov na čarovnice. Ta se je v svoji intenzivni, množični obliki odvijal v 15. in 16. stoletju, na prehodu v novi vek. Takrat so v Evropi nastopile izredne razmere, pustošila je kuga, divjale so politične, socialne in verske vojne, vladala je lakota in revščina. Vse to je zdesetkalo prebivalstvo, še posebej moške, v preostalih pa zbudilo občutja pesimizma, obupa, grešnosti in krivde. Odgovor na to je bil množični lov na čarovnice, ki je dobil odločilni zamah s knjigo *Malleus Maleficarum* (Kladivo čarovnic) iz leta 1486. Knjiga je vsebovala teorijo čarovništva z značilnim opisom sabata, v katerem danes prepoznavamo sprevržen pogled na poganske rituale čaščenja življenja, različne načine prepoznavanja in preganjanja čarovnic, ki ga je inkvizicija preložila na civilna sodišča, predvsem pa sovražni govor proti ženskam, kot bi to označili danes, s katerim je nanje zvalila vso krivdo. Knjiga je imela katastrofalen vpliv. Povsod po Evropi so se začeli množiti posvetni čarovniški procesi, v katerih so po današnjih ocenah pobili od nekaj deset tisoč do nekaj milijonov ljudi, med njimi pa je bila

ping Satan at Sabbaths that involved flying, uncontrollable gorging and drinking, as well as casting spells and causing misfortunes. This interpretation and various methods of torture to force confession (i.e. the water ordeal) and burning at the stake became typical of the later witch hunt with its most intense form in the 15th and 16th century during the transition to the early modern period. At that time, Europe was ravaged by plague, political, social and religious wars, famine, and poverty. These decimated the population, especially men while the survivors were consumed with pessimism, despair, and the feeling of guilt and sinfulness. The answer to the crisis came in the form of witch hunt which gained momentum with the publication of Malleus Maleficarum (Hammer of Witches) in 1486. The book contains the theory or sorcery with a typical description of a Sabbath and reflects the perverted understanding of pagan rites of worship of life, and various methods of identifying and prosecuting witches, to which the inquisition assigned secular courts. It also abounds in what would nowadays be called hate speech about women who were blamed for everything. The book had devastating impact all over Europe. During secular witch trials, between tens of thousands

velika večina, približno tri četrtine ali celo pet šestin, žensk. Ta množična norija se je podela šele v 18. stoletju, ko je nastopilo obdobje razuma in znanosti. Škoda, ki jo je povzročila ženskam, pa je vidna še danes.

Fenomen preganjanja čarovnic je izjemno kompleksen in kljub številnim raziskavam še zdaj ni dokončno pojasnjen. Če povzamem izsledke interdisciplinarnega proučevanja, je bil lov na čarovnice s političnega vidika sredstvo za nasilno ohranjanje preživetega sistema, utrjevanje absolutistične oblasti in odstranjevanje drugače mislečih, s psihološkega ventil za sproščanje ljudskega nezadovoljstva, kompenzacija za prepovedano spolnost v cerkvi in način vsiljevanja nove (puritanske) morale, z biološkega boj za nadzor nad spolnostjo, rojstvi, ljudskim znanjem o kontracepciji in medicini nasploh, nena zadnje pa tudi način prisvajanja lastnine in bogatenja. Rdeča nit, ki se vleče v ozadju vseh teh razlag, je utrjevanje in ohranjanje patriarhalne družbene ureditve. Ta se je vzpostavila skozi dolg proces odrinjanja žensk na obrobje, ki ga je ideološko utemljevalo stopnjevanje negativnega pogleda nanje, lov na čarovnice pa je bil njegov krvavi

and a few million people were murdered, among whom three quarters or even five in six were women. This mass hysteria only subsided in the 18th century with the age of reason and science. The damage done can still be felt today.

The phenomenon of witch hunt is very complex and still not completely clarified despite numerous studies. If we recapitulate the findings of interdisciplinary studies, from the political point of view, witch hunt was a means of brutal preservation of an obsolete system, reinforcement of absolute power and elimination of opponents. From the psychological aspect, it was venting people's frustrations, compensation for the forbidden sexuality, and a means of enforcing a new (Puritan) morality. From the biological point of view, it was a battle to control sexuality, procreation, folk knowledge about birth control and medicine in general, and, last but not least, a means to acquire property and wealth. The underlying theme of all the above interpretations is reinforcement and preservation of a patriarchal social order which was established through an extensive process of driving women to the margins of society, and was based in the negative percep-

vrhunec. Ženske so najprej izrinili iz religije, nato postopoma iz vseh področij človekove dejavnosti in znanja, nazadnje pa še iz sfere medicine, kjer so skozi ves srednji vek ohranile primat kot zeliščarke, zdravilke, negovalke in babice. Čarovnice, ki so umrle na grmadah, torej niso bile nič drugega kot poslednje ženske s starodavnim znanjem o naravi in lastnem telesu, ki so s svojo neodvisno pozicijo, vedenjem in močjo ogrožale samoumevnost patriarhata.

Namen razstave je na umetniški način restavrirati pozitivno tradicijo čarovništva in pravi pomen čarovnic/vešč, predvsem pa osvetliti moč žensk včeraj, danes in jutri. To idejo povzema osrednja figura na razstavi, ki je postavljena v simbolno središče cerkvenega prostora in predstavlja golo žensko, ki stoji napol v koraku ter zamišljeno strmi v svoje roke. To ni ženska, ki objokuje svojo usodo iz preteklosti, ampak ženska, ki razmišlja o tem, kaj želi in zmore v prihodnosti. Le kaj bo naslednja stvar, ki jo bo naredila?

Mojca Grmek

tion of women, with witch hunt at its blood-stained climax. Women were first banished from religion and later gradually from all fields of human endeavour and knowledge, ultimately from medicine where they were the frontrunners throughout the Middle Ages as herbalists, healers, nurses and midwives. The witches who died at the stake were therefore nothing more than the last women with the ancient knowledge about the nature and their own body, who compromised the self-evidentiality of patriarchy with their independence and knowledge.

The exhibition aims to restore through artistic means the positive tradition of sorcery and the true significance of witches / sorcerers, and above all shed light on the power of women in the past, the present, and the future. This idea permeates the central work of the exhibition. Placed in the symbolic centre of the church, it represents a naked woman standing astride and staring at her hands. This is not a woman grieving for her past, but a woman contemplating what she wants to and can do in the future. Whatever will be her next move?

Mojca Grmek







Lučka Koščak (1957) je študirala angleščino, slovenščino in srbohrvaščino na Pedagoški akademiji v Ljubljani, kjer je leta 1981 tudi diplomirala. Po nekaj letih poučevanja je vpisala študij kiparstva na Akademiji za likovno umetnost v Ljubljani in po končanem prvem letniku prešla na Ecole supérieure d`art visuel v Ženevi, kjer je leta 1990 diplomirala in dve leti kasneje zaključila še specializacijo iz kreativnosti na smeri tridimenzionalnega izražanja. Do danes je imela več kot 50 samostojnih razstav in sodelovala na številnih skupinskih predstavah doma in v tujini. Je dobitnica več nagrad in priznanj. Živi in ustvarja med Ljubljano in Ženevo.

www.luckakoscak.net

Lučka Koščak (1957) studied English, Slovene and Serbo-Croatian at the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana where she graduated in 1981. After teaching for a few years, she enrolled to the study of sculpture at the Academy of fine arts in Ljubljana. After the first year she continued her studies at Ecole supérieure d`art visuel in Geneva where she graduated in 1990. Two years later she completed the postgraduate specialisation in creativity in three-dimensional art. Koščak has had more than fifty solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group presentations at home and abroad. She has received several awards. She lives and creates between Ljubljana and Geneva.

www.luckakoscak.net

Mojca Grmek (1974) je diplomirala iz umetnostne zgodovine in filozofije na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Ljubljani. Od leta 1996 se ukvarja s kuratorstvom in umetnostno kritiko. V tem času je sodelovala s številnimi galerijami po Sloveniji, med katerimi so tudi Center in Galerija P74 v Ljubljani, Galerija Domžale in Kosovelov dom Sežana, trenutno pa je umetniška vodja galerije v Hiši kulture v Pivki. Do danes je kurirala več kot 140 razstav in objavila več kot 60 strokovnih študij, od katerih so bile nekatere prevedene in objavljene tudi v tujini. Živi in dela na podeželju v okolici Pivke.

Mojca Grmek (1974) graduated in History of art from Faculty of arts at University of Ljubljana. She has been working a curator and art critic since 1996, during which time she has collaborated with numerous galleries in Slovenia, such as P74 Gallery in Ljubljana, Galerija Domžale, the Kosovelov dom arts centre in Sežana. At the moment, Grmek is the Arts Manager of the Hiša kulture gallery in Pivka. She has curated more than 140 exhibitions and published more than 60 expert studies, some of which have been translated and published abroad. She lives and works in the countryside near Pivka.



K razstavi so pripomogli Simona Debenjak, Tomaž Dernovšek – Vinči, Zalka Drglin, Nuša Prijatelj, Andrej Rozman – Roza, Tone Stojko, Vasja Semolič.



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