

Intercultural Identities in the Late Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918)



THE DIARIES OF IVANA BRLIĆ MAŽURANIĆ

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- Project funded by Croatian Science Foundation
- **Aim:** to counterbalance the historiographic approach to the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Croatia and emphasis on national movements and “authentic” national elements
- **Focus:** cultural heterogeneity and transnational contact, and its role in the formation of intercultural identities

Ivana Brlić Mažuranić (1874-1938)



Austria-Hungary



Ivana Brlić Mažuranić (1874-1938)

- diaries 1888-1891 (14-16 years old)
- correspondence with family members
- Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia
- grandfather Ivan Mažuranić – viceroy, active in the Croatian national movement, poet
- patriarchal, religious and patriotic upbringing

Diaries – Hungarian elements

- viceroy Károly Khuen-Héderváry – Magyarization, anti-Hungarian sentiment, uprisings
- Ivana shares the sentiment, but doesn't remove Hungarian culture from her life
- dances the *czárdás*
- friend Stella – passionate because of “Hungarian blood”

Diary – French elements



- best friend Marietta from France
- after her death, Ivana writes segments of her diary in French, addressed to her

Diary – French elements



“Ponedjeljak, 24. veljače 1891

Zbilja, plakala bi da se ne smijem! Ah kakav je to smijeh! Ah! *ou etez vous!... ah! de quel amour l’aimiez-vous! Ah! je ne savais pas encore vous apprecier... ne vous fachez pas. Maintenant j’aurais besoin de vous.*”

(p. 132)

(“Monday, 24 February 1891

Really, I would be crying if I wasn’t laughing! Ah, what a laughter it is! Ah! *where are you... ah! with what a love you loved him! Ah! I couldn’t yet appreciate you then... don’t be angry. Now I need you.*”)

Diary – French elements



- stream of consciousness, almost like spoken language
- an intercultural relationship plays a crucial role in her intimate life
- French is almost as close and intimate for her as Croatian
- first literary efforts produced in French

Diary – German elements



- German words and expressions
- conversations in German as part of everyday life
- social situations, interpersonal relations, behaviour

Example:

- discusses possible Croatian translations of “*den Hof machen*” and gives her own interpretation (p. 8)

Diary – German elements



“Već sam se sa mnogimi zabavljala, mnogi mi je na čas smešao pamet, dok sam se s njim zabavljala ali ‘*weiter nichts*’.” (p. 15)

(“I have already had fun with many of them, many of them messed up my mind for a moment, while I was having fun with them but ‘*weiter nichts*’.”)

Diary – German elements



“Lasse die Frauenfrage Frauenfrage sein”. (p. 16)

“Milan je bio u ‘*Hassenlaune*’, a Bučar u ‘*Schlafflaune*’.” (p. 22)

(“Milan was in a ‘*Hassenlaune*’ and Bučar in a ‘*Schlafflaune*’.”)

Diary – German elements



“I nadvojvodu Johanna smo vidjeli. Jeo je s nama, ne kod stola baš, malo dalje. *Imponiert mir garnicht*. Dosta je *hertzig*.” (p. 74)

(“We saw archduke Johann as well. He ate with us, not right at our table, a bit further away. *Imponiert mir garnicht*. He’s quite *hertzig*.”)

Diary – German elements



- when talking about her writing

“Koliki bi se vrlo smijali da, dapače svi mladi ljudi da moj dnevnik čitaju. ‘Sentimentalno, dosadno, baš glupo, *alte G’schicht*’ rekao bi Milan ‘*alle die Mädeln sind sich gleich*’.” (p. 20)

(“How many people would laugh so much, indeed all the young people would laugh if they read my diary. ‘Sentimental, boring, really stupid, *alte G’schicht* Milan would say ‘*alle die Mädeln sind sich gleich*’.”)

Diary – German elements



“Znaš, danas mi se uvijek riječ ‘**aprixomatif**’ mete po glavi. Bog zna jeli to šta znači, ili jeli sam gdje čula. Ali sada ‘**aprixomativna**’ literatura. Znaš, ja sam ‘**schüchternes Talent** ili **nichtschüchternes Untalent**’.” (pp. 79-80)

“You know, today the word ‘**aprixomatif**’ is in my head all the time. God knows if it means anything or if I heard it somewhere. But now some ‘**aprixomative**’ literature. You know, i’m a ‘**schüchternes Talent** or a **nichtschüchternes Untalent**’.” (pp. 79-80)

Diary – English and French



“(…) da lijepa je stvar ta sirota poezija. Na kakve načine joj se ta *fashionable jeunesse dorée* nije već narugala!” (p. 20)

“(…) yes it’s a beautiful thing, this poor poetry. In what ways this *fashionable jeunesse dorée* has ridiculed it!” (p. 20)

Diary – adapted foreign words

- words adapted morphologically and phonetically to Croatian mostly from German
- keeps as much as possible of the original orthography of some foreign loanwords
 - “*interresantna occoupacija*”, “*anthipatija*”
(Croatian: interesantna okupacija, antipatija)
- receptive and respectful of foreign languages
- words used without quotation marks and capitalization
 - *hetz, fratz, lustig, sechsschritt, eigentlich*

Diary – general interest in languages

- loves traveling, interest in foreign languages and cultures
- teaches herself German and Russian, wants to hear English
- intrigued by unfamiliar languages
- amused and overwhelmed by multilingual communication

Diary – foreign cultures and patriotism

- *“it feels good to hear only Croatian spoken here”*
(p. 75)
- interest in different cultures, desire to draw them closer, make them a part of her life and identity
- ideal of the nation-state, dominated by one language, one culture and one people

Diary – social circle and marriage

- very international social circle of friends:
 - Sachs, Dr Wolff, Olessa, Galliuff, Alexis, Arabella...
 - But, determined to marry only a Croat
- “If only god had created one of our Croats as a Hungarian and made him [the suitor] one of us instead, that would be better. But one shouldn’t grumble.” (p. 7)

- Ivana and her husband



Letters – later life

- keeps her interest in foreign cultures and events abroad in later life, in spite of intense family life
 - father and daughter send her foreign newspapers (*Manchester Guardian*) (1925)
 - daughter sends her illustrated guide to Italian art (1926); she reads Viennese and Parisian fashion magazines
 - she still entertains an international circle in her household (1899, 1916) and prepares international cuisine: stuffed **spargelkürbisse**, **bisquittorta**, **zimmbogen**, **gugelhupf**, **apfelpita** (Apfelstrudel)

Ivana Brlić Mažuranić



Conclusion – contradiction?

- educated girl from bourgeois family, 19th c. Zagreb
- strong sense of national identity – example of growing tendencies in the Empire
- ideal of a “pure” Croatian culture, culturally homogeneous nation-state
- fluent in several languages
- multicultural social circle
- curiosity, openness, desire for new experiences, expanding horizons culturally and linguistically
- enjoyment in diversity

Conclusion – intercultural perspective

- transnational and intercultural contact need to be taken into account in everyday life of ordinary people in late 19th/early 20th c. Habsburg Empire
- dynamic and rich subjective reality - complex and layered identities
- **cosmopolitan nationalism** – nationalists, who embraced benefits of cultural diversity and perceived mix of individuals rather than ethnic groups
- instructive for management of contemporary situations of ethnic diversity in a national framework

References

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Thank you for your attention!