

Olivera Kusovac*
University of Montenegro

Tjaša Mohar**
University of Maribor

BREAKING THE SILENCE: *PALE HORSE, PALE RIDER* IN THE BALKAN REGION

Abstract: Belonging to the “literary plague canon” (Cooke 2009: 8), K. A. Porter’s novella *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* has recently found itself under the spotlight again. This is unsurprising considering the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that this work is a highly valued account of a survivor of this pandemic’s devastating 20th-century counterpart: the Spanish flu. However, except for an article published in the Slovenian journal *Delo* in 2020, in former Yugoslavia currently there appear to be no voices about the work in the media. This does not mean that *Pale Horse* did not reach the region though, as the latter gained access to the novella through the 1968 Serbo-Croatian translation by Zora Minderović. Despite the reputation of the work as a superb literary achievement, along with sporadic English copies available in libraries, this translation was the only point of contact between the novella and the readers in the Balkan region. Over half-a-century later, the situation remains the same since the work has neither been re-translated nor has the existing translation been reprinted or published as a new edition. In this paper we pose some questions as to why *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* has been undeservedly neglected among the wider audience in the Balkans. Since the paper is part of a still ongoing wider research project, our aim is just to open some questions rather than offer any conclusive answers. Providing an account of the context of the translation, the paper thus focuses on the elements of the work that may have affected its reception in the region, with particular emphasis on the pandemic and the strong female anti-war position.

Keywords: K. A. Porter, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*, translation, female perspective, war.

* olivera.k@ucg.ac.me

** tjasa.mohar@um.si

1. INTRODUCTION

Belonging to what has been termed as illness narratives or “literary plague canon” (Cooke 2009: 8), encompassing works that deal with epidemics, such as Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, Defoe’s *A Journal of the Plague Year* or Camus’s *La Peste* (*The Plague*), to name but a few, the American modernist Katherine Anne Porter’s novella *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* has recently found itself under the spotlight again. Over the past two years, numerous articles dealing with it or at least making reference to it have been published in the media, written from various perspectives but predominantly with the focus on the pandemic, either from the standpoint of cultural memory and cultural studies or from the standpoint of medical humanities. This is no surprise considering the fact that the world has been unexpectedly facing the Covid-19 pandemic and that this work is a highly valued account of a witness and survivor of the Spanish flu, the current pandemic’s devastating 20th-century counterpart. On the other hand, the high literary value of *Pale Horse* has been proven through numerous literary criticisms written on it since the 1950s onward, in which the novella is almost unanimously treated as a superb literary achievement. Perhaps the most illustrative are the relatively recent observations by Jewel Spears Brooker, who offers an insightful analysis of *Pale Horse*, presenting the work as “a modernist masterpiece of narrative art” (2009: 232). Analysing the strategies employed by Porter, Brooker claims that Porter’s achievement can best be valued in the framework of the modernist determination to be “simultaneously true to history and (through mythic engagement) to art, and within those realms, to exhibit the continuous interplay of past and present, and within the present, of individual consciousness and external events” (2009: 213). In the rich complexity of Porter’s work, the individual and the historical are both de-personalized and de-temporalized, which gives them “the shape and significance they otherwise would not have” (Brooker 2009: 213). Recognizing this quality in *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*, Brooker puts this novella side by side with works like *Ulysses*, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Waste Land*, the authors of which pioneered the narrative strategies used by Porter.

It is against this background that we approach the work *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*, wishing to explore its status in the former Yugoslav republics. In the following chapters we will first describe the situation with the novella in the Balkan region and then offer some potential reasons accounting for such state of affairs.

2. *PALE HORSE, PALE RIDER* IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Unlike the English-speaking world, the territory of former Yugoslavia seems to have been silent these past two years when it comes to *Pale Horse, Pale Rider*. Notably, with the exception of an article published in the Slovenian journal *Delo* in June 2020, the year of the Covid-19 outbreak, in former Yugoslav republics there appear to be no voices about the work in the news media, despite the pandemic making its theme more than topical.

If we look back into the past, we will find just one translation of *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* into what was known as the Serbo-Croatian language, published in 1968 in Belgrade by the publishing house Rad, three decades after the novella's first publication.¹ The translation was done by Zora Minderović, with an afterword written by Dušan Puvačić. Since the year of the original publication coincided with the outbreak of the Second World War, it is not surprising that some time had elapsed before the work was translated in former Yugoslavia, as its theme was undoubtedly of little interest during the war and post-war years. The translation obviously came towards the end of a decade which was quite dynamic for the author, since in 1962 Porter published her novel *The Ship of Fools*, a best-seller made into a successful film in 1965, also the year of publication of her collected stories which earned her a number of prestigious awards: the Pulitzer Prize (1966), the National Book Award (1966) and the Gold Medal Award for Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1967). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the series of events exhibiting Porter's increased recognition and popularity in the US was what prompted the translation of *Pale Horse* in former Yugoslavia, published as part of the Contemporary World Literature edition, including the works of Henry James, Iris Murdoch, Cesare Pavese, Carlo Cassola, Lao She, Hjalmar Bergman, Erskine Caldwell, *André Schwarz-Bart and others*. Through the legal deposit requirement, the translation was distributed to the national libraries across the country and, along with the sporadic English copies available in some of the libraries, it was the only point of contact between the novella and the readers in the region. Over half-a-century later, the situation remains the same since in the meantime the work has neither been re-translated nor translated into the other languages

¹ It is interesting to note that the novella was in its incubation for a very long time, appearing as late as 1939, two decades after the Spanish flu pandemic.

in former Yugoslav republics, nor has the existing translation been reprinted or published as a new edition.

The question arising here is why this highly-appraised work regarded as a modern classic, seen by some as an icon of high modernism, has attracted so little attention and has been neglected by the media and the wider audience in the Balkan region. Today's surprising neglect at the time when all kinds of illness narratives are increasingly gaining in popularity might actually be connected to the apparently poor reception of the Serbo-Croatian translation published four decades ago. This leads us to the potential reasons of the apparent neglect of the work in the decades after the publication of the translation that need to be further explored and tested.

It goes without saying that the fact that the novella was written by a female author did not help its reception in the Balkans. Prejudices against women authors are visible across the globe even today, when the situation in that regard has hugely improved compared to the decades following the publication of the translation. However, for the purposes of this paper we are going to focus on some of the aspects issuing from the text itself.

3. A GLOBAL CALAMITY EVERYBODY WANTED TO FORGET

As already stated, the novella is an account of the Spanish flu pandemic by a witness and a survivor, exhibiting numerous parallels with Porter's life (Givner 1982: 125–130), which make it her most autobiographical piece (Davis 2011: 57). Thus, Porter's main character Miranda, the author's alter ego who, just like Porter herself did, works as a journalist writing theatre reviews, has her own dramatic experience with the flu which shares many traits with Porter's experience. We follow Miranda's experience from her first dream that the novella opens with, in which, still unaware that she has contracted the virus, Miranda prophetically dreams of her encounter with death, embodied in the pale rider. Very soon her first symptoms appear, worsening so rapidly that, having been looked after by her boyfriend Adam, she was finally admitted to one of the overloaded hospitals, where she struggled for life lying in the hall for days. Miranda's dance with death, manifested through her disease-induced delirious states and dreams – "variations on the theme of a journey through a twilight zone toward death" (Brooker 2009: 230), will last to the very end of the work, when she is miraculously brought back to life by an experimental injection of strychnine. One of the most chilling

and at the same time captivating moments when she, depersonalized, almost embraces death, “the seductive edge of non-existence” (Ditum 2020: 89), is highly illustrative of her psychological state caused by the disease: “Silenced she sank easily through deeps under deeps of darkness until she lay like a stone at the farthest bottom of life” (Porter 1979: 310).

Considering its vast scale and deadliness, the Spanish flu pandemic depicted in the novella represented an appalling global calamity. In Spinney’s words, the Spanish flu was “the greatest tidal wave of death since the Black Death, perhaps in the whole of human history” (2017: 255), which, as Barry notes, killed more people in one year than the Black Death had in a century (2005: 5), and more than any other disease, such as tuberculosis or smallpox (Davis 2011: 63). More specifically, according to a more recent and very detailed study, “the most rapacious killer in modern history” (ibid.: 63) claimed the lives of at least fifty million people across the globe, the exact number probably being closer to two times as many as this (Fisher 2012: 14). At the same time, according to Barry, it was the “first great collision between nature and modern science”, “between a natural force and a society” determined to use the developing technology and all other available resources to combat it (2005: 5), but apparently with disastrous results.

One might have expected that this collective trauma would unavoidably unleash the creative energies of various professionals, from artists to scholars of diverse profiles, and yet, for almost a century, this did not happen. Instead, there was a long silence. This is most visible in comparison with World War I, the “lethal twin” (Fisher 2012: 1) of the pandemic, the timing of which to some extent overlapped with WWI. Notably, unlike the war with hundreds of books published documenting it, the pandemic, with its incomparably higher death toll, has been recorded by only a few. The influenza that marked the transition from war to peacetime was neglected in many areas, such as medicine, history or popular culture, for example, and occurs mostly in the margins of literature. Even more surprisingly, despite the convergence of the two scourges, with the pandemic being part of the cultural context of WWI, the majority of WWI historians and critics mention the pandemic only in passing, if at all, usually in relation to the death or some historical figures (Fisher 2012: 2). Thus, the Spanish flu became “a small footnote to history, one rarely discussed in the conversation of World War I” (Stettler 2017: 482), the latter for a long time being seen as something far more worth writing about and discussing.

The “near total historical amnesia regarding the influenza pandemic of 1918–19” (Sontag 1978: 71) has puzzled scholars for a long time, and they have been trying to solve this scientific and cultural mystery, to grasp and describe “the complex processes of repression and recollection... allowing (the pandemic) to reemerge in the last decade of the twentieth century as a vital part of public discourse” (Fisher 2012: 1). The potential reasons for this silence are many. To some, the surprisingly rapid forgetting of the outbreak may have resulted from war fatigue in Europe and America, along with a rush to embrace the promise of the 1920’s (Kusovac, Mohar & Gadpaille 2021: 32). Similarly, Fisher claims that documenting the pandemic “conflicted with attempts to maintain post-war public optimism” (2012: 6). According to Ditum, by contrast, the reason why the pandemic simply did not catch the imagination of the 20th century like the war did lies in the fact that not all fatalities are the same: “Death in the trenches was public, noble, dramatic; death from influenza was private, undignified, prosaic” (2020: 89). In a similar vein is the explanation offered by Barry, who states that “(p)eople write about war...about horrors that people inflict on people. Apparently they forget the horrors that nature inflicts on people, the horrors that make humans least significant” (2005: 394). Some, on the other hand, hypothesize that the impact of the pandemic was deliberately diminished and the public’s attention diverted from it by the U.S. Army medical officials because it certainly did not represent a success, quite the contrary (Byerly 2005: 184).

Whatever the reason, due to the scarcity of its literary and non-literary depictions, the Spanish flu was by many referred to as “the forgotten flu”, even though for an American reader of the modern novel, Spanish flu was synonymous with Porter’s novella *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* and was thus far from forgotten but indelibly memorialized (Kusovac, Mohar & Gadpaille 2021: 43). However, the pandemic was undoubtedly for a long time overshadowed by the war and neglected in many areas, which may have contributed to the neglect of the novella in the Balkan region. This region obviously did not keep pace with American culture in this respect, which over the past few decades has become ready and, with the fear of swine and avian flu pandemics as well as with the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, even eager to recollect the 1918 pandemic (Fisher 2012: 3). In the Balkans, by contrast, this neglect of and lack of interest in this global calamity has apparently continued to the present day, despite the epidemics and pandemic that have shaken the world in the meantime.

4. A FEMALE PERSPECTIVE ON THE WAR

Apart from the pandemic, depicted through the main character's personal experience with it, the war is also very much present in the novella. However, the war is observed from an untypical and several decades ago possibly not so desirable perspective – that of the female protagonist. The fact that this is not a story of a male hero fighting in a major battle to defend his country, but of a heroine fighting her own small female battles on the home front might be another potential reason for the silence about *Pale Horse* in the Balkan region. Notably, the novella focuses on the female subject and her vulnerable identity in the time of war, which was a particularly difficult time for women on the United States home front. With the men away, many women went to work to replace the absent men fighting overseas, as Meredith Hindley (2017) notes; some took up positions in manufacturing and agriculture, and some even went to join men on the front lines as nurses, ambulance drivers, doctors etc. (NWWIMM, 2021). However, although the war opened new job opportunities for women, the patriarchal society wanted to keep control over the women on the home front, as Mary Titus (2005: 162) notes. This control was carried out through an intensive war propaganda, the aim of which was, as Robert A. Wells (2014) notes, to encourage the women's support for the war. The protagonist Miranda agrees to play the roles assigned to women by the war propaganda, such as performing good deeds for the wounded soldiers; however, on the inside she is rebellious. The social pressure that Miranda finds herself under and its damaging effects on her identity are articulated in the question she asks herself in a dream she has before falling ill with the influenza: "Do I even walk about in my own skin or is it something I have borrowed to spare my modesty?" (Porter, 1979: 270)

However, Miranda's realization that she has been reduced to a set of simulacra by the society's war-oriented demands does not happen only in her subconscious. According to Titus, Miranda is fully aware that the war effort is "a way to control potentially disruptive female energy, not channelled into heterosexual relations with the men off fighting the war" (2005: 162). While listening to the man delivering war propaganda before a theatre play she has come to see, Miranda is thinking to herself:

So all the happy housewives hurry during the canning season to lay their baskets of peach pits on the altar of their country. It keeps them busy and makes them

feel useful, and all these women running wild with the men away are dangerous, if they aren't given something to keep their little minds out of mischief. So rows of young girls, the intact cradles of the future, with their pure serious faces framed becomingly in Red Cross wimples, roll cockeyed bandages that will never reach a base hospital, and knit sweaters that will never warm a manly chest, their minds dwelling lovingly on all the blood and mud and the next dance at the Acanthus club for the officers of the flying corps. (Porter, 1979: 290)

Miranda is even more disturbed by the war propaganda when she is pressurized to buy Liberty Bonds² to help the country win the war. Not having the means to pay for the Bonds owing to her low salary, she is threatened to lose her job, which clearly shows the vulnerability of her economic position. Andrea K. Frankwitz (2004: 16) notes that as Liberty Bonds were intended to support the war, which is a patriarchal symbol, the two men who come to intimidate Miranda and try to persuade her to buy the Bonds represent (another) patriarchal intrusion in Miranda's life. Prior to this, she and her colleague Towney were already "degraded publicly to routine female jobs" (Porter, 1979: 275) after having been "real" journalists, because their female solidarity prevented them from providing a full account of an elopement scandal.

Miranda feels her identity is slowly disintegrating after experiencing several losses. According to Fisher (2012: 112), Miranda loses her social freedom, her economic freedom, and her self-respect; additionally, she also experiences the fear of losing her sweetheart Adam, as he needs to go to war, and later on, when she falls ill with the influenza and nearly dies, of losing her own identity. However, after being on the verge of dying, Miranda miraculously conquers the illness and returns to the world of the living. Feeling like "an alien who does not like the country in which he finds himself, does not understand the language nor wish to learn it" (Porter, 1979: 313), Miranda makes "symbolic preparations for entering the world of withered beings who believed they were alive (Hendrick 1965: 80), ordering her colleague to bring her "cosmetics for her mask, gray gauntlets for protection, gray hose without embroidery" (Hendrick 1965: 80), and a "walking stick of silvery wood with a silver knob" (Porter, 1979: 316). The items that Miranda gathers to face the world again seem remarkably theatrical, showing that she assumes a new mask behind which she can reclaim herself from the devouring simulacra.

² Liberty Bonds were securities issued in 1917 and 1918 by the US Treasury "to help finance the war effort and build patriotism" (MAF, 2021)

5. THE NOVELLA'S HIGH MODERNISM

To a great extent, the novella delves into the subconscious workings of Miranda's mind, through myth- and symbol-laden dreams and delirious states, which some see as the height of Porter's achievement (Mooney 1957). Notably, due to the described situation, when Miranda contracts the virus bringing her the trauma of the near-death experience, her identity disintegrates, with all the war and personal traumas being dramatized right through these dreams and deliriums with the use of complex modernist stream-of-consciousness technique, making the novella a demanding reading and thus, like many other modernist works, not appealing to a wider audience. This might be another potential reason for the work's neglect in the former Yugoslav republics; however, an in-depth research on the popularity of modernist works in this region would be needed to either confirm or reject this hypothesis.

6. CONCLUSION

Whether any of the mentioned aspects may account for such poor interest in the novella among the wider audience in the Balkans remains to be seen in our further research, but what we are certain of is that *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* deserves greater attention in the Balkans. The time of the corona virus pandemic seems to be the perfect timing for efforts to put the work under the spotlight in this region, too.

REFERENCES

- Barry, J. (2005). *The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Brooker, J. S. (2009). Nightmare and Apocalypse in Katherine Anne Porter's '*Pale Horse, Pale Rider*'. *The Mississippi Quarterly*, 62.2, 213–34.
- Byerly, C.R. (2005). *Fever of War: The Influenza Epidemic in the U.S. Army during World War I*. New York: New York UP.
- Cooke, J. (2009). *Legacies of Plague in Literature, Theory and Film*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Davis, D. A. (2011). The Forgotten Apocalypse: Katherine Anne Porter's 'Pale Horse, Pale Rider,' Traumatic Memory, and the Influenza Pandemic of 1918. *The Southern Literary Journal*, 43.2, 55–74.
- Ditum, S. (2020). The Art of Survival. *The Lancet*, 396.10244, 89.
- Fisher, J. E. (2012). *Envisioning Disease, Gender, and War: Women's Narratives of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Frankwitz, A. K. (2004). Katherine Anne Porter's Miranda Stories: A Commentary on the Cultural Ideologies of Gender Identity. *The Mississippi Quarterly* 57.3, 473–488.
- Givner, J. (1982). *Katherine Anne Porter: A Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Hendrick, G. 1965. *Katherine Anne Porter*. New York: Twayne Publishers.
- Hindley, M. (2017). World War I Changed America and Transformed Its Role in International Relations. *Humanities*, 38.3. (3 September 2021) <https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2017/summer/feature/world-war-i-changed-america-and-transformed-its-role-in-international-relations>.
- Kusovac, O., T. Mohar and M. Gadpaille (2021). Gotovo zaboravljena pandemija: *Blijedi konj, blijedi jahač* Katherine Anne Porter. *Književna smotra*, 53.201(3), 31–43.
- Liberty Bond, *Museum of American Finance*. (26 April 2021) https://www.moaf.org/exhibits/checks_balances/woodrow-wilson/liberty-bond.
- Milek, V. (2020). Umetnost v času pandemije. *Delo, Sobotna Priloga*, 13 June.
- Mooney, H. J. (1957). *The Fiction and Criticism of Katherine Anne Porter*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Porter, K. A. (1979). Pale Horse, Pale Rider. In: K.A. Porter, *Collected Stories*, New York/London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Porter, K. E. (1968). *Bledi konj, bledi jahač*. Beograd: Rad.
- Sontag, S. (1978). *Illness as Metaphor*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Spinney, L. (2017). *Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How It Changed the World*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Stettler, C. M. (2017). The 1918 Spanish Influenza: Three Months of Horror in Philadelphia. *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, 84.4, 462–487.
- Titus, M. 2005. *The Ambivalent Art of Katherine Anne Porter*, Athens: The University of Georgia Press.
- Wells, R. A. (2014). Propaganda at Home [USA]. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*. (26 March 2022) https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/propaganda_at_home_usa.
- Women in World War I, *National WWI Museum and Memorial*. (7 September 2021) <https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/women>.

Olivera Kusovac
Tjaša Mohar*

RAZBIJANJE TIŠINE: *BLIJEDI KONJ*, *BLIJEDI JAHAAČ*
NA BALKANU

Rezime: Pripadajući književnim narativima o bolesti, novela *Blijedi konj*, *blijedi jahač* višestruko nagrađivane američke autorke Ketrin En Porter nedavno je ponovo privukla pažnju javnosti širom svijeta. Ovo nije iznenađujuće s obzirom na pandemiju Kovida-19 i činjenicu da je riječ o veoma cijenjenoj priči o razornom pandanu današnje pandemije iz 20-og stoljeća: tzv. španskom gripu. Međutim, za razliku od engleskog govornog područja, u bivšim jugoslovenskim republikama, uprkos aktuelnosti njene teme, čini se da u medijima nema pomena o ovoj noveli, izuzimajući članak objavljen u dodatku *Sobotna priloga* slovenačkog časopisa *Delo* iz juna 2020., godine izbivanja pandemije Kovida-19. Štaviše, ako pogledamo unatrag, naići ćemo samo na jedan prevod novele na srpskohrvatski jezik, koji je uradila Zora Minderović i koji je objavljen u Beogradu 1968. godine, tri decenije nakon što je djelo prvi put objavljeno. Prevod je distribuiran nacionalnim bibliotekama širom zemlje i, uz sporadične engleske primjerke dostupne u nekima od njih, bio je jedina tačka kontakta između novele i čitalaca u regionu. Uprkos reputaciji djela kao vrhunskog književnog ostvarenja, više od pola stoljeća kasnije situacija je nepromijenjena jer u međuvremenu djelo nije niti ponovo prevedeno, niti je postojeći prevod ponovo štampan ili objavljen kao novo izdanje.

Postavlja se pitanje zašto je ovo tako cijenjeno djelo, koje se smatra modernim klasikom, privuklo tako malo pažnje i bilo zanemareno od strane medija i šire publike na Balkanu. Današnje iznenađujuće zanemarivanje u vrijeme kada sve vrste narativa o bolestima sve više dobijaju na popularnosti moglo bi zapravo biti povezano sa očigledno lošom recepcijom prevoda na srpskohrvatski objavljen prije četiri decenije. To nas navodi na potencijalne razloge prividnog zanemarivanja rada u decenijama nakon objavljivanja, koje treba dalje istraživati i testirati.

Tri ključna potencijalna razloga o kojima se govori u radu tiču se tri ključna aspekta djela. Kao prvo, *Blijedi jahač*, *Blijedi konj* umjetnički je iskaz o španskom gripu kao kolektivnoj traumi iz pera osobe koja mu je svjedočila i preživjela ga, pandemiji koja je po broju umrlih višestruko nadmašila kako druge epidemije, tako i Prvi svjetski rat, na kraju kojeg je i izbila. Međutim, uprkos ogromnim žrtvama (ili možda upravo zbog njih, kao trauma koju su svi željeli da zaborave), ova pošast decenijama je bila zbrisana iz kolektivnog sjećanja. Očigledno je bila u sjenci rata, koji je privukao svu pažnju, kako u nauci tako i u literaturi, gdje je pandemija postala samo "mala fusnota istoriji koja se rijetko pominjala u razgovorima o Prvom svjetskom ratu" (Stettler, 2017: 482). Međutim, za razliku od nekih drugih zemalja koje su ovu kolektivnu tišinu prekinule još prije par decenija, na Balkanu se, čini se, nedostatak interesovanja za ovu globalnu nesreću održao do današnjih dana, uprkos epidemijama i pandemiji koje su uzdrmale svijet u međuvremenu.

Nadalje, osim pandemije, prikazane kroz lično iskustvo glavnog lika sa njom, u noveli je veoma prisutan i rat. Međutim, rat se posmatra iz netipične i prije nekoliko decenija vjerovatno ne tako poželjne perspektive – perspektive ženske protagonistkinje. Činjenica da ovo nije priča o muškom heroju koji se bori u velikoj bici za odbranu svoje zemlje, već o heroini koja

vodi svoje male ženske bitke na domaćem frontu može biti još jedan potencijalni razlog za nezainteresovanost za novelu *Blijedi konj* na Balkanu. Značajno je da se novela fokusira na žensku temu i njen ranjivi identitet u vrijeme rata, što je bilo posebno teško vrijeme za žene u Americi koje su ostajale kod kuće dok su se muškarci borili na frontu.

Najzad, novela u velikoj mjeri zadire u podsvjesno funkcionisanje Mirandinog uma. Kada se Miranda zarazi virusom koji joj donosi traumu iskustva bliske smrti, njen identitet se raspada, pri čemu se sve ratne i lične traume dramatizuju kroz snove i delirijume uz korišćenje složenog modernističkog toka svijesti, čime novela postaje zahtjevno štivo i time, kao i mnoga druga modernistička dela, ne toliko privlačno široj publici. Ovo bi mogao biti još jedan potencijalni razlog zanemarivanja *Blijedog konja* u bivšim jugoslovenskim republikama; međutim, bilo bi potrebno dubinsko istraživanje popularnosti modernističkih dela na ovim prostorima da bi se ova hipoteza potvrdila ili odbacila.

Ključne reči: K.A.Porter, *Blijedi konj*, *Blijedi jahač*, prevod, ženska perspektiva, rat.