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FRATRICIDE OR PATRICIDE – THE CRISIS OF PATRIARCHY IN THE NOVELS *ĐUKA BEGOVIĆ* BY IVAN KOZARAC AND *ZEMJA* BY ELIN PELIN

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Keywords: patricide, fratricide, transgression, crisis, authority, modernism, mimetism, gender.

Summary: Since the plots of the novels *Đuka Begović* and *Zemja* (*Land*) by Elin Pelin are constructed around the ancient mythical murder motifs of patricide and fratricide, this analysis relies on mimetic theory by Rene Girard that is also constructed as a theoretical explanation of the afore mentioned mythical murders. Although Girard denies libidinal and object-directed causation of desire, in his polemics with the Freudian model of the libidinal desire Girard implies that there is a privileged object of desire in the patriarchal order – i.e. women because the father is the natural model for the son, and men's desire for women is interindividually directed and intensified. Money and some other types of property are the privileged objects in a capitalist society – since the desires of all members of the society are concentrated around them. The crisis of patriarchal order in *Đuka Begović* causes the loss of degree and the elevation of the structural positions of the father and the son, which then becomes the motive for Đuka's patricide. On the other hand, the idealization and the persevered authority of the older brother causes Enjo's repentance and the semi-establishing of the patriarchal order in the novel *Zemja*. The idealized older brother in the Pelin's novel preserves the function of the paternal authority, and the father in Kozarac's novel loses his authority and degree so he functions as the rival brother within the framework of the Girardian mimetic theory.

FRATRICID ILI PATRICID – KRIZA PATRIJARHATA U ROMANU *ĐUKA BEGOVIĆ* IVANA KOZARCA I PRIPOVIJESTI *ZEMJA* ELINA PELINA

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Ključne riječi: patricid, fratricid, transgresija, kriza, autoritet, modernizam, mimetizam, rod.

Sažetak: Budući da je zaplet romana *Đuka Begović* i pripovijesti *Zemlja* Elina Pelina konstruiran oko drevnog mitskog motiva oceubojstva, odnosno bratoubojsta, analiza počiva na mimetičkoj teoriji Renea Girarda koja je također konstruirana kao teorijski model tumačenja navedenih mitskih motiva. Iako Girard negira libidalno utemeljenje žudnje, odnosno njezino utemeljenje u kvalitetama objekta, u vlastitoj polemici s Froeudovim modelom libidalno utemeljene žudnje Girard implicira da u kontekstu patrijarhalnog poretka ipak postoji povlašteni objekt žudnje u liku žene zato što je otac za sina prirodni model oponašanja pa je žudnja muškaraca prema ženama interdividualno usmjerena i međusobno pojačana. Novac i određeni tipovi vlasništva su privilegirani objekti u kapitalističkom društvenom kontekstu jer su žudnje svih članova društva međusobno usmjerene na njih. Kriza patrijarhalnog poretka u Đuki Begoviću uzrokuje gubitak stupnja i izjednačavanje strukturne pozicije oca i sine što u konačnici motivira Đukin patricid. S druge strane, idealizacija i očuvani autoritet starijeg brata motivira Enjovo pokajanje i polovičnu rekonstrukciju patrijarhalnog poretka u pripovijesti Zemlja. Idealizirani lik starijeg brata u Pelinovoj pripovijetci čuva funkciju patrijarhalnog autoriteta, a otac u Kozarčevu romanu gubi svoj autoritet i stupanj zbog čega funkcionira kao brat-rival u okviru Girardove mimetičke teorije.

The focal point of the novel *Đuka Begović* by Ivan Kozarac and the novel *Zemja* by Elin Pelin are characters marked by some sort of absolute transgression, in Western culture these transgressions are primarily associated with mythical murders in the form of fratricide or patricide. The psychoanalytical concept of the Oedipus complex was established on the mythical template of Oedipus's patricide, which represents the dominant discourse regarding this motif, while the biblical motif of Cain's murder of Abel, along with the mutual fratricide committed by Oedipus's sons, represents the main mythical-religious template for reflection on the concept of fratricide. On a theoretical level these motifs were developed by Rene Girard, the author of the theory of human desire "on the other side of eroticism", which is largely based on critical reading (dialog and polemic) and Freud's psychoanalytical concept of desire, and he also offers a critical analysis of Freud's Oedipus complex as part of his own mimetic theory.

In both of the analyzed works, pursuant with modernist poetics, the main character is an alienated individual whose alienation is tied to radical excess – with Đuka Begović the excess is manifested as overindulgence in libidinous urges which leads to patricide and indulgence in unbridled sexuality and wanton spending, while in Pelin's work it appears as opposite symmetrical positioning – his main character, Enjo, commits the transgression by completely suppressing erotic desire and focusing on acquiring wealth, which in the end leads to violation of the law, namely attempted fratricide. It is already evident here that in both cases economics and sexuality are the two aspects of human life which were used to articulate the crisis represented by modernity, and it is a well-known fact that the two great synthesizing modern theories – Marxism and psychoanalysis – are based on observing man and society from an economical or pansexual perspective. Rene Girard has the ambition to subsume both great theories into his own mimetic theory, which he manages to achieve by denying that desire is based in the libido as well as by denying the relevance of the object's properties. Here he actually comes close to the viewpoint of Marxist theorists who associate the desire to own certain goods with prestige and narcissism, but he himself does not elaborate in closer detail the relationship between his own theory of desire and Marxism.

The highlighting of characteristic motifs related to the Oedipus's complex (patricide and incest) has been a constant part of the analyses of the *Đuka Begović* novel for a while now, while Tvrtko Vuković (2012), by adhering to Lacanian tradition, intends to infer the Oedipus complex from the "scandalous" text structure, and not from the highlighted motifs of fratricide and incest. However, in the analysis, I start from Girard's

reinterpretation of the Freud's Oedipus complex set out in the seventh chapter of his work *Violence and the Sacred* (1972/ 2005), titled *Freud and the Oedipux complex,* in which Girard equates the organization of mimetic desire modeled on the Oedipus complex with the period of modernity as a period in which hierarchical differences of traditional societies are being decomposed, „in which the father's authority has been greatly weakened but not completely destroyed; that is, in Western society during the course of the recent centuries." (2005: 199). In Girard's reinterpretation of the Oedipus complex the function of brother and father are interconnected in a very special way, namely, the relative loss of paternal authority within the framework of modernity as a crisis of social differences which brings the role of the father closer to the role of the brother. Girard, among others, describes the mimetic crisis as a crisis of degree or *gradus* (Girard 2005: 53,200) on which social hierarchy is based, and one of the key differences, which is lost due to this within the Oedipus complex model, is precisely the difference between the position of the father and brother, while Girard sees the ancient mythical motif of conflict between brothers as an emblematic example of mimetic conflict. Since Pelin's text is less radical in the way it severs relations with lost traditions and seeks to re-establish them, and unlike Kozarac, Pelin's work contains numerous antimodernist templates which criticize modernity and idealize past, while past and tradition are mainly absent in Kozarac's work, so his novel is more focused on depicting the present as a period of crisis and decomposition – both in terms of society and identity of the individual, while both authors set aside a special place for the motif of murder, namely, patricide or fratricide.

Even though Rene Girard bases his own theory on the idea of mimetic character of desire[1], and explicitly negates that desire is based on the libido and characteristics of the object, and insists on the arbitrary selection of the mimetic model, he also rejects feminist criticism based on emphasizing male violence in the establishment of religious and social structures (Jay 1992, Shea 1994), nevertheless, in his own critical analysis of Freud's concept of Oedipus complex, he accepts the constellation in which the privileged mimetic model for a boy is his own father, and the privileged object of desire is a woman, whereby the masculine desire is active and the female desire is passive (the man is the subject of desire, the women is an object), while, in principle, he deems the Oedipus complex as characteristic for a seriously compromised but still present patriarchal order. The

[1]According to Girard, desire is always the result of imitating the desire of another man or the mimetic model.

existence of a privileged object of desire, within the framework of Girard's mimetic theory, can be interpreted with mimetism, or the mutual channeling of desires by social actors towards certain objects, and while in the patriarchal system the central subject is the man and the woman is the privileged object of desire, in the capitalist order the privileged object of desire is money or certain forms of private ownership. Even without mimetic theory, it is clear how the capitalist order emphasizes competitive relationships associated with the imperative to accumulate goods. The capitalist ethics is based around the imperative to accumulate and save, and the traditional patriarchal ethics[2] is based around sexual control[3]. Because the selected texts are placed in the rural context of the early decades of the twentieth century, it should be pointed out that in the context of rural economy, which is based on agriculture, the privileged object is land. The distinguishing feature of Đuka Begović is the constant violation of fundamental imperatives of the two abovementioned orders and thus, as Tvrtko Vuković (2012: 282) said in his Lacanian analysis of the novel, represents an "incident of spending without acquisition and sin without remorse". Unlike Đuka Begović, who questions the imperatives of the capitalist and traditional patriarchal order by committing numerous transgressions, the main character of the novel *Zemja*, Enjo, is excessively zealous in adhering to the imperative of acquiring property and repressing erotic desire, which challenges capitalist logic from the opposite side.

Despite the abovementioned contextualization of Đuka Begović, which links him to the Oedipus complex, the mentioned works do not include an analysis of the motivation behind the conflict between father and son, which eventually leads to patricide. Unlike the original Oedipus story, at the very beginning of the novel the mother, as the original object of desire, is absent, and the cousin, Ola, with whom Đuka has sexual intercourse, does not have the role of the privileged object of desire, she is just one of a number of women with whom Đuka has had sexual relations so, unlike the well-known analysis by Velimir Višković presented in the foreword of the 1996 edition of the novel, I would not associate the incestuous motif with the Oedipus complex. The motif of sexual intercourse between Đuka and his cousin merely serves to further emphasize the extreme level of transgression,

[2]As opposed to the fraternalist treatment of women as collective property.

[3] Puritan ethics is the most notable example in which two control mechanisms have been united, and even though those two control mechanisms work together in practice, I think that they should be separated as a rule, because in different stages the capitalist system establishes different relations towards sexuality.

namely that there is no obstacle or law which Đuka will respect or which could stop him.

Krešimir Nemec points out that the cause for the first serious confrontation between father and son was precisely the shared mistress (2012: 290), but he does not associate that conflict with the Oedipus complex. However, the Oedipal triangle is present in the plot twist involving the inkeeper Julka – the father and son are both sleeping with the same woman and fight over her – whereby, unlike the original story of Oedipus and Freud's interpretation of the Oedipus complex, this woman does not act as the privileged object, she is just one of many women in the lives of Đuka and Šima, what makes her extraordinary is the fact that she becomes a common object around which the desires of the father and son intersect. The explanation of the conflict is further complicated by its double motivation – the father and son are simultaneously clashing over property (money and estate which Šima is selling) and the woman, because money has become the means for securing the woman's sexual availability, therefore in that commercial relationship the money and the woman, more precisely the land as well as the woman who is selling herself for money, are interchangeable objects. The traditional patriarchal order is so disrupted towards equalizing the position of father and son, therefore towards fraternalism (and not towards emancipation of women), that from a Girardian perspective it is no longer clear who is whose model, who is imitating whom, is Đuka imitating the father or is it the other way around. The only thing that is clear is that they are clashing over the same interchangeable objects – the woman and the land, and it is precisely the equal degree of their desire which leads to conflict and results in Đuka killing his father, Šima. We can interpret Šima's provocative urging for Đuka to hit him in the head as an allegoric reading of his role as a mimetic model who directs his son's desire – first he urges his juvenile son to grope women, and then shows by example "what women are for" and encourages him to sexually objectify and exploit women, which in the end causes them to clash over the same object: the woman and money, with which he places himself in the double role of a model and obstacle, namely he motivates his son to commit violence, which is additionally explicated in the text by him literally urging his son to kill him.

Visković (1996: 24) relies on the traditional Freudian theories on the Oedipus complex and describes Đuka's father, Šima, as traditionally dominant and authoritative, while he interprets the patricide as a rebellion against paternal authority. However, if we take a closer look at the text of the novel we notice that Šima has a completely different role than that of a

patriarchal father – Šima does not play the role of an obstacle or authority which issues an injunction and thus the Law, rather he is the complete opposite, Šima constantly encourages Đuka with his example and explicit verbal instructions to commit a number of transgressions against social norms and, paradoxically, satisfies his wishes or directly encourages him to satisfy his own wishes before they can even be established:

> „Pa i njega, svog 'jedinka', vodao sa sobom. I opijao ga, da je svijet sve zakretao glavom. A kako su se tek onda snebivali ljudi kad stari Šima pijan pijana 'jedinka' podbada na psovke…"

"He even took his only son with him. Got him drunk, which made the people shake their heads. And how shocked the people were when old, drunk Šima needled his drunk "only" son with foul language..."

> (***)
>
> A kad priđu pokladnomu kolu, uhvati on svog 'jedinka' za ruku pa zaigra s njime onako iza kola. I zapjeva… I uzme ga upućivati da štiplje cure i snaše…"
>
> And when they came closer to the carnival circle dance, he took his only son by the hand and started dancing with him behind the circle. And he started to sing... and instructed his son to grope the girls and daughters-in-law..."
> (Kozarac 2005: 204-205)

Unlike the traditional patriarchal father, who forbids his son from approaching his erotic object of desire, Šima explicates the position of his model of desire which the son should follow:

> „Tako jednom, o njegovoj petnaestoj godini o pokladama, kad su došli napiti kući – pijan se otac uvalio u postelju kraj pijane takove žene i ona se morala tamo razmiljavati i svašta je bilo… A otac Šima još i pregrizavajući govorio s kreveta:
> – Samo budi taki… bećar ko ja-a… Zna-aćeš da si živio! Da-a…"
>
> "One time after the carnival, when he was fifteen, they came home drunk – the drunken father crawled into bed next to the drunk

woman and she had to twist and squirm, and all sorts of things happened... and the father, Šima, spoke from the bed:

– Just be like that... a reveler just like me... and you'll know that you've lived!

(Kozarac 2005:218)

After this moment, in which the father reveals his sexuality to his son, Đuka loses the respect he had for his father, more precisely, the father loses all authority because he doesn't act as a threat and obstacle – he does not authoritatively prevent his son from experiencing pleasure, he does not lay down any kind of law but rather he opens wide the gates towards pleasure and encourages him to go after it, therefore he is equated to all other men which do not represent any kind of obstacle towards the acquisition of women, because in an environment which is marked by unbridled male sexuality women represent collective property – a common object which is shared with others, we can safely say that patriarchy has been replaced with fraternalism. An important novelty here is the sexual act itself, which is laid bare before the sexually innocent Đuka, and this is done in a way which clearly represents the total denigration of the woman. The theoretical model, which can explain Đuka's drastic reversal regarding his relationship with his father, is the above mentioned loss of degrees within the framework of mimetic theory – the father loses his authority (he becomes the same as all other men, equalized in a fraternal relationship), but he retains the role of a model with regards to the relationship towards women, therefore, in the moment when the son discovers his father's sexuality in such an explicit manner, namely when he catches his father performing a sexual act, he also adopts his misogynistic and objectifying attitude towards women:

„Tim pak danom to se i nehotice prelomilo. Otac mu došao gotovo kao i svaki drugi čovjek u selu s jedinom razlikom što je na ovog – na oca – navikao, a na druge ne. I promijenio je ponašanje prema ženi svoga oca. On je u njoj vidio sad samo jednostavnu sluškinju kojoj i on ima pravo zapovijedati, a onda i stvor koji nije ni za što drugo osim za ono što je one pokladne noći čuo i vidio. To mišljenje o ženi u kući proširio je za neko vrijeme na ženstvo uopće. I u svakoj curi i ženi gledao je tek stvorenja koja su svojim spolom stvorena jedino za muškaračke užitke."

(Kozarac 2005:208-209)

> “With that day this also inadvertently changed. His father seemed to him like almost any other man in the village, with one difference, he was used to him, not so the others. And he also changed the way he behaved towards his father’s wife. Now he only saw her as a simple maid which he also had the right to command and as a creature fit for no other purpose other than that which he saw and heard on that carnival night. His opinion regarding the woman in the house grew to encompass all of the female sex... for a time. And he viewed each girl and woman only as creatures whose sex meant that they were created solely for a man’s pleasure.”
>
> (Kozarac 2005: 208-209).

Here we can observe that the loss of the father’s symbolic supremacy over the son is compensated by the enhancement of the relationship of joint male supremacy over women in the form of extreme sexual objectification and conceptualization of the sexual act as dominance over women and their subjugation, which is in accordance with the radical feminist criticism of sexuality within the system of male supremacy.

Apart from Šima, the swineherds also appear as mimetic models from whom Đuka learns how to interact with women and with whom he associates after his initial estrangement from his father, he also adopts their attitude towards women, with which the mimetic character of desire is doubly emphasized within the framework of the fraternalistic patriarchal order:

> „Ta, u to doba već se svršavala njegova petnaesta godina rođenja, a prva njegova danomičnog potucanja sa svinjarima i šalabazanja svenoćnoga po sokacima te boravljenja u kolu i na divanu. I curu je već imao kojoj je kupovao slatke kolače, koju je pratio od kola do avlijskih vrata, ali koju je i cjelivao i milovao i drpao – a tamo sa svinjarima i u kolu s momcima o čemu se i govorilo nego o ženama i curama i o svemu u njih i s njima što stvara zamamu, razbujava maštu i draž, potpiruje i pali nagon.“
>
> “At that time, he was nearing the end of his fifteenth year, and starting his first year of gallivanting about with the swineherds and embarking on nightly excursions through the alleys, as well as dancing the circle dance and lounging on the settee. He already had a girlfriend, for whom he would purchase sweet cakes and follow from the carriage to the courtyard gate, but whom he also caressed,

tenderly kissed and groped – and what else was there to discuss with the swineherds and the boys in the circle dance but women and girls, and everything about them that created temptation, stoked the imagination and appeal, fueled and ignited the instinct

(Kozarac 2005:208)

When trying to define his own identity and relationship towards other people, Đuka repeatedly asks questions and makes contradictory claims about his own similarity, or dissimilarity, to his father. In the verbal altercation with fellow villagers, it is especially important for Đuka to prove his own superiority and identity:

„Veli: živio je ne osvrćući se na druge, ne gledeći živi li još tkogod kako on. Njega je, istina, vazda nešto nagonilo na takav život. Ali tko će reći da je morao slušati. – Nisam morao – kaže zato on – a slušao sam. Zašto? Zato što sam taj prišaptavač bio ja sam. – Veli: slušao je sebe. Njegov život je njegove volje. U njih toga nije, a u tom je njegov život nad njihovim. U njemu doduše nije bilo pravog uvjerenja, da je zbilja živio po svojoj volji. Štaviše, u takav čas bi i nehotice iskrsla pred njegovim očima slika oca Šima i činilo mu se da vidi: tinjava promisao neka nevidovnim prstom upire u taj lik s razlupanom glavom i kao da govori:

– Viš, taj je tebe zavodio. Kud je on tisko, tamo si išo. Njegov je život odlučio o tvom.“

“He says: he lived without minding others, without noticing if anyone else was living like him. Truth be told, there was always something that urged him towards such a life. But who can say that he had to listen. -I didn’t have to – he says – but I listened. Why? Because that whisperer was me.– He says: he listened to himself. His life is of his own will. There is no such thing within them, and because of that his life is above theirs. But, alas, he had no real conviction that he was actually living according to his will. Moreover, at such a moment the image of his father, Šima, would inadvertently appear before his eyes and he would believe to be seeing a smoldering providence pointing a finger towards that figure with the bashed head, and it seemed as if it was saying:

– See, that one was trying to seduce you. Where he nudged, that's where you went. His life decided yours”

(Kozarac 2005:237-238)

However, the character of the dead father appears in the role of a specter that surreptitiously controls Đuka's actions. Đuka's claim on the autonomy of his own will is in direct contradiction to his inner intuitions on the lack of autonomy and the conditionality of what he calls his own will, own desires and own choices. In his first book, *Deceit, Desire and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure* (1965/2001), Rene Girard develops a theory of mimetic desire by opposing the idea of "romantic lie", namely the illusion of the autonomy of desire, "romanesque truth", or insight into the fact that desire has a mimetic character, i.e. it is the result of imitating the mimetic model, whereby he attributes to the genre of the novel the position of privileged insight into the true nature of desire.[4] Pierpaolo Antonello (2015: xxviii) considers that in light of his later works Girard's argument on Romanesque truth reveals a process of de-idealization, which concerns not only religion (particularly Christianity in the Western context) in the first instance, but all substitutive, immanent forms of religiosity (literature, elitism, snobbism, glamour, capitalism, romantic love, etc.).

The above excerpt shows that Đuka is actively suppressing his awareness of the mimetic character of his own desire, namely his own subservience to the mimetic role model who although dead still controls his actions, who he cannot be rid of even by committing the desperate act of patricide, in order to maintain the illusion of his own autonomy before himself and others on which he creates the illusion of his own superiority. It is here that Kozarac's novel reveals not only the mimetic character of desire but also the mechanism for suppressing insight into the unoriginality of

[4] In his later religiously themed works *(Job, the Victim of His People, 1985/1987, I See Satan Fall Like Lightning 1999/2011* and others) he no longer opposes the romantic idea of the autonomy of desire to the romanesque truth, namely the opposition will no longer be developed by pitting two poetics against each other, rather it will be developed by using a more complex model which contrasts the Judeo-Christian insight into the innocence of the victim against the collective belief of the victim's guilt within the framework of the mythical consciousness, whereby the two opposing views of the victim are interpreted as the result of two differing views regarding the character of desire. Girard had actually established insight into the mythical lie regarding guilt earlier in his own analysis of the tragedy *Odeipus the King* by Sophocles, as well as in works published in the book *Oedipus Unbound* (2004), in which he finds traces of repressed insight into Oedipus' innocence, that is, into the falsity of the accusations against him.

desire of a modern male subject, who also creates the illusion of his own superiority in relation to others on the basis of feigned autonomy.

Apart from internally acknowledging his own lack of independence and being the same as his father, namely his desires being the same as his father's, as opposed to being confident in his own autonomy before others, Đuka also questions Šima's fatherhood, with which he not confirms his own independence but also calls into question his own identity:

> „Otac…? U taj tren već se u glavi rađa sumnja o sinovstvu. – A jesam li ja baš njegov sin? – pada mu na um. Tko zna? Ta eno kakove su u nas žene! Pet sinova – pet otaca!"
>
> "Father...? At that moment doubt is born regarding the sonship. – Am I really his son? – the thought occurs to him. Who knows? Look at how our women act! Five sons – five fathers!"
> (Kozarac 2005: 217)

As has already been said, according to Girard the crisis of the patriarchal order places the father and son on the same level – a key difference in degree is lost between them, (Girard 2005: 200), which nudges their relationship closer to a doubles relationship, which is oftentimes metaphorically expressed as a relationship between brothers, while on the other hand the questioning of fatherhood due to the absence of effective control over female sexuality, within the context of the often mentioned Slavonian licentiousness, again brings into question the position of the father, and with it the difference in degrees between the father and the son, namely the paternal authority and the general difference between men who are all likely brothers. It is exactly the disrupted patriarchal order which places Đuka in the position in which he is forced to make law out of his own will, even though, as we have seen previously, the autonomy of that will is questionable.

In addition to sexual excess, excessive spending is also presented as a way in which Šima and Đuka try to establish dominance over other people. In the aforementioned verbal altercation with fellow villagers Đuka is not only pointing out his own dominance over numerous women, but he is also presenting his own spending as an expression of supremacy:

> „ – A kol'ko ste vi utukli novaca a…? Vi se tobože poirošite, pociknete bajagi raspojaso, skoknete gajdašu, tucnete ga po ramenu, zazvečite škudama u džepu ko da ćete sav onaj novac sasuti pred

njega. A šta bude, a? Izvučete par krajcara, šakom ih turite u njegov rog i onda se još falite, lažovi, da ste škudu dali. A kod mene…? A kod mog oca Šima, pokoj mu duši? – Ciganinu na egedama strune pucaju, flaše idu na komade, vino se rasipa ko pljusak kiše! A to je koštalo, ej! Bankama, peticama je to trebalo plaćati!"

"– And how much money did you squander...? You're supposedly showing off, squealing with mirth, hopping over to piper, patting him on the shoulder, jingling the coins in your pocket as if you are about to dump them all before him. And what actually happens? You take out a couple of kreutzers and push them into his horn and then go about bragging as if you'd given him a gold coin, you liars. And at my place...? At my father Šima's place, God rest his soul? – Gypsies on violins, strings breaking, wine being sold by the bottle and flowing like a torrent! But that didn't come cheap! It had to be paid with tenners and fivers!"

(Kozarac 2005:237)

In addition to the highlighted relationship between mimetic rivals, here again we can observe the moment of affirmative identification between father and son in the context of the patriarchal or patrilinear structure, while on the other hand such a relationship between Đuka and his daughter, Smilja, is not possible.[5] Within that context, Đuka also sees a mimetic rival in Smilja's potential husband:

[5] We encounter the same motif in the novel *Muljika* by Dinko Šimunović (2004:37): "Muljika had no brothers or sisters, therefore she was guilty in the eyes of her father; he was the first to call her Muljika, In the beginning he loved her, but he also beat her more than once, all of it arising from great affection. However, this only lasted until she was seven, eight years old, when Joviša realized that she was going to be his only child, so him becoming the richest Namastirčanin by working from sunup to sundown was all for nothing. Since that time, he no longer beat her only because of his great affection towards her, but whenever the thought occurred to him that she was going to become someone else's trophy and he would be forced to give her up along with everything he acquired.
– By God, – he would say to himself talking to his future son in law – I hope you will not wallow in my toil. Now I'll live a little, I've suffered enough."

„Hiljadu i dvjesta kruna on da pokloni! A komu?... Kćeri? – Ne, neće to biti njoj. Ona će se udati, a muž će joj zapandžiti taj novac ko kanjo pile. I onda – propit će, rasuti... Bude li joj muž šokac, seljak, razbacat će novac na rakiju, na fine konjske orme, iroški sersam; kupit će si srmanu haljinu, čizme što škripucaju, kožnato sjedalo u kolima i drugo... Ništa pametno s novcem neće učiniti. Takvi su već danas ljudi!... Bude li majstor kakav, pogizdat će se uz taj novac još i više. Htjet će svaki dan s općinskom gospodom piti i jesti po birtijama, nositi se kao i oni: gospodski, po sobama će porazmještati kojekakove drndolije, fine krevete, ormare i ormariće, ogledala i slike sa zlatnim okvirima. Možda će kupiti i kakova kolica, okovana i omaljana, onako nešto ko "karuce". Bajagi, da se on majstor-čovjek ne voza po vašarima i varošima u prostim šokačkim kolima. A svijet kad ga vidi, šta će svijet?! Kazat će: "Eto, to je zet Đuke Begovića, onog belendova i budale! Dao sa kćerju hiljadarku i još dvije stotine, a ovaj se sad voza ko mali "spaija"!" Da, tako će svijet kazivati i smijati se njemu, jednom Đuki Begoviću, možda i u sam brk. A zašto se ne bi smijao? Zašto je bio tolika luda pa dao da se drugi njegovim novcem gospodi i keri!“

(Kozarac 2005:293)

“He should gift twelve hundred crowns! And to whom?... his daughter? – No, that money will not go to her. She will get married, and her husband will grasp that money like a hawk grasps a chicken. And then – he will drink it, or squander it away… If her husband is a Šokac, a peasant, he will spend it all on schnaps, fine ceremonial horse trappings; he will buy himself a silver threaded skirts, boots which sqeak, a leather seat for the carriage and other things… He will do nothing clever with that money. That’s the way people are nowadays!... If he is a gentleman of any sort, with this money he will gussy himself up even more. He will want to drink and dine every day with the local gentlemen at the inns, he will carry himself as they do: like a lord, he will place various knick-knacks around the rooms, fine beds, wardrobes and cabinets, mirrors and paintings with golden frames. Maybe he will buy a carriage, gilded and painted, similar to a “Karuca”. By God, a man such as him riding through markets and towns in a simple peasant carriage. And what will the people say when they see him?! They will say: “There he is, Đuka Begović’s son in law, that patsy and a fool! He gave away his daughter along with twelve hundred crowns, and now this one is driving around like

a little lord! “Yes, that’s what the people will say and laugh at him, someone like Đuka Begović, maybe they will even do it to his face. And why shouldn’t they laugh? Because he was such a fool that he let someone else act a lord and carouse with his money!

(Kozarac 2005:293)

The absence of sons signifies the end of patriarchal identity reproduction and patriarchal order, which additionally motivates Đuka’s ultimate excess, namely the squandering of his entire property in a single drunken night. The father, as a mimetic model, urges his son to imitate him and sees his son as the projection of his own identity in the future, on the other hand it is precisely the mimetic identification with the son in regards to the issue of desire that motivates their conflict, which culminates in Đuka killing his father.

In Pelin's novel *Zemja*, the traditional patriarchal order has been disrupted, but it is not entirely absent like in *Đuka Begović*, and accordingly religious faith is not lost, rather it offers the opportunity for salvation from destruction, which is where mimetic desire leads after repentance. The absence of parents at the very beginning of the story signifies a crisis of the patriarchal order, while it is precisely the memory of parents (namely, their symbolic presence) that is highlighted as the main obstacle for the development of fraternal conflict, which the collective consciousness expects:

„Те почитаха покойните си родители и понеже делбата стана скоро пред смъртта им, добрите чувства, които буди скръбта, още не бяха ги напуснали. Иван беше и така добър и отстъпчив, но Еньовото смирение учуди всички.”

“They respected their deceased parents, and because the property was divided quickly after their passing, the good feelings which sorrow awoke inside of them still hadn’t left them. Ivan was always good and yielding, but Enjo’s tranquility astounded everyone”.

(Pelin 2004:370).

Furthermore, the brother characters are built in opposition by contrasting their characters, whereby the older brother, Ivan, takes the symbolic role of a wise father and the younger brother, Enjo, takes the role of the prodigal son. Ivan embodies the values of order, gravity, calmness and extraordinary patience as well as selflessness in regard to the younger brother, while Enjo

is characterized as extremely quarrelsome and offensive. From the very beginning, the narrator and the supporting characters point out Enjo's irritability, that is, anger to Enjo,:

> „[Е]ньовата сприхавост беше знайна…"
> Enjo's irritability was well known..."
> (Pelin 2004:370)

> „Илчо премълча. Той знаеше, че Еньо е сприхаво момче и не искаше да го закача."
> "Ilčo kept silent. He knew that Enjo was an irritable fellow and didn't want to tease him".
> (Same: 380)

> „Ти си сприхав и лошо си тълкуваш това. Искаш ли аз да разбера тая работа?"
> "You are irritable and are misinterpreting it. Do you want me to figure it out?
> (Same: 384)

The story starts with a description of a procession and a discussion between Enjo and the priest regarding the place where the prayer meeting will be held, which emphasizes the above mentioned Enjo's characteristic – his tendency to anger is linked to his desire towards dominance and prestige. Here Enjo's desire for prestige is already connected to the land as a privileged object, and the novel clearly reveals that the desires of fellow villagers for honor which would be bestowed upon them by the prayer meeting being held at their private property is exactly that which gives land ownership such prestige, which cannot be reduced to mere value of the land's usability. Unlike the rival doubles, Đuka and Šima Begović, who try to express their own grandness and superiority by excessive generosity and contempt towards hoarding, with which they are trying to rise above the law of capitalist accumulation, Enjo, on the other hand, links his superiority to land ownership and excessive acquisition, namely the obsessive adherence to the capitalist imperative of infinite accumulation – two symmetrically established relationships with the law which are shown to be identical because they are subordinated to the same goal – the mimetic struggle for supremacy or, more precisely, the attempt to overcome one's own "lack of being" (Girard 2005: 155).

Here Enjo is revealed to be a character who at the same time yearns for special recognition and prestige and who also resents such implied yearning in others, whereby he does not realize the absurdity of such self-positioning, while on the other hand the priest is presented as the bearer of insight regarding the potential conflict caused by the struggle for prestige, if that prestige were to be given to one of the fellow villagers through the act of holding a group prayer for rain at his private property, so he insists that the prayer meeting should be held on communal or no man's land, "lest anyone get angry": „Мястото е определено. Грамадата е пасище. Никой да се не сърди." "The place has already been designated. The field is a pasture. Lest anyone get angry." (Pelin 2004:366)

By emphasizing the secondary significance of the object itself (therefore the object relationships themselves), and highlighting the role of the mimetic model (adversary) in its accentuated form, Girard's mimetic theory of desire reduces human motivation to a struggle for pure prestige which he associates with the term *kudos* (Girard 2005: 161). The genesis of desire is not shown in the novel *Zemja* – from the imitation of the mimetic double to the struggle for pure prestige, but rather at the very beginning the awareness of the human tendency to fight for prestige and potential conflicts which it creates is attributed to the priest, whereby the religious knowledge which he embodies is attributed a higher level of insight into the nature of desire. After the priest's initial refusal to hold the prayer on Enjo's land, "lest anyone gets angry", Enjo projects onto others the feeling of envy for the honor he also craves, but he only sees envy as problematic in other people and reacts with anger at the merest hint of it: „Какво лошо има тука? Завист ли, какво ли" ("What's wrong with that? Is it envy or something else?" Pelin 2004: 367) Enjo thought to himself. As Girard describes it in his own interpretation of King Oedipus „[T]he same characters who are blind to the phenomenon of reciprocity while they are caught up in it perceive it all too well when they are not involved." (Girard 2005: 168)

After the priest, due to Enjo's persistence, finally relents and agrees to hold the prayer meeting on his land, this evokes a temporary feeling of completeness within Enjo, a feeling similar to deification:

> „Преди очите на Еньо всичко се слива, всичко се приравнява като нива, като буйна цветна ливада. Той е горд, душата му е обзета от една вътрешна светлина. Молитвите и кадениятa са за него. Мисълта му обикаля всички негови ниви и ливади и минавайки над всички чужди и цени имоти, той си казва: 'и това да било мое."

> "Everything is cascading before Enjo's eyes, everything is flattening out like a field, like a lush wildflower meadow. He is proud, his soul infused with a kind of inner light. The prayers and incense are meant for him. His thoughts turn to all of his fields and meadows, and the they rise above all of the valuable estates belonging to other people, and he says to himself: "and they say that all of it is mine".
>
> (Pelin 2004: 367).

The development of the failed love story with Cveta offers a double motivation – Enjo retreats because he feels offended due to not understanding Cveta's bashful behavior, which he interprets as an insult and because he is also put off by her poverty, so he chooses a girl who will provide him with a large amount of the much desired land. After initially falling in love with Cveta, in his fantasies Enjo equates her to the land for the purpose of confirming his own identity and superiority: „[т]ой виждаше Цвета като негова, както бяха негови сега толкова ниви и ливади." ("He saw Cveta as his own, in much the same way as he saw his numerous fields and meadows:" Pelin 2004:374). On the other hand, when Enjo decides to sacrifice his desire for Cveta in order to satisfy his desire for land, Cveta and the land are placed in the position of an interchangeable object. Here, as in *Đuka Begović*, the woman and land are placed in the role of mutually interchangeable objects, the only difference being that here the choice is reversed – Enjo is relinquishing the women for the land and the land becomes the main cause for the conflict between him and his brother, while in *Đuka Begović* the land and the woman are indistinguishably linked, or interchangeable, acting as the motivation behind the conflict between father and son.

Unlike Kozarac's novel, the eros in Elin Pelin's work is not connected to excess and abandonment of tradition, in fact it's the opposite – the motif of property, which separates people, is confronted by the motif of the mystified, authentic eros which binds them together into a harmonious community and which is linked with the idealized, premodern beginning, therefore we can describe Pelin's criticism of modernity as antimodernistic, which is pursuant to the manner in which Zoran Kravar (2003: 10) defines the determinant of antimodernism in the eponymous work in which he equates antimodernism with the criticism of modernism, as a special form of rationality tied to capitalist production and political liberalism, which are known for creating idealized anti-worlds which are projected towards the

past, but “they do not possess the worldview and systemic footholds outside of modernism”. Here, unlike in some other Pelin’s texts with an anticlerical note, we can see that eros is not opposed to religion, rather it is harmoniously connected to one of the visions of traditional Christian morality, which is untypical for Pelin's body of work, as Svetlozar Igov also noted (1990: 389-399). In line with the antimodernist tendencies, the choice between two women actually signifies choosing two ethoi (traditional and modern, one based on the original eros and the one based on insatiable desire for acquisition on whose behalf eros is sacrificed). Choosing Cveta would signify abandoning the principally unquenchable desire for land and accepting the traditional lifestyle boundaries, choosing Stanka signifies yielding to the constitutionally unquenchable desire for land.

Enjo's desire remains unsatisfied even after marrying Grbava Stanka and the acquisition of a large estate, and his anger and dissatisfaction are doubly motivated. His regret for the love lost is emphasized on the one hand, while, on the other hand, his generally unquenchable desire for land is intensified. As has already been said, Enjo links his own desire for completeness with the land as the privileged object, which is the focal point for his conflict with other people, whereby his estate starts to function as the projection of his being, and the lack, the incompleteness of being that is constitutively present in the desire, begins to manifest in his consciousness as the image of his estate into which his brother’s estate is cutting into and which he obsessively wants to make whole by acquiring ownership over his brother's property. The consolidation of the estate through the acquisition of his brother’s estate is an imaginary projection of achieving the desired completeness of his own identity, whose lack presents the basis for the mimetic desire. The brother’s land, which cuts into Enjo’s estate, represents a metaphor for the mimetic relationship in which the mimetic model embodies the illusory completeness of being which falsely promises that the impersonator’s lack of being can be overcome by conquering it and in the end it motivates him to commit murder (Girard 2005: 155):

> „Колкото пъти идеше тук Еньо, толкова пъти виждаше тая нива с тоя дъб и толкова пъти усещаше завист и злоба, като я гледаше легнала като чуждо добиче сред неговите собствени нивя. Той гледаше счупената линия на оградата и ръмжеше.“
>
> “How many times did Enjo come here, he saw that field and oak so many times and had felt envy and malice so many times as he

watched it laying there like someone else's treasure in the middle of his field. He watched the broken fence line and growled."
(Pelin 2004:405)

The main difference between the novel *Zemja* and *Đuka Begović* is in the fact that the patriarchal order in *Zemja* is not completely absent, it is only in a state of crisis, and in accordance with that the older brother, Ivan, embodies the paternal authority and traditional values, and, accordingly, he is idealized through the entire story as an almost saintly character at peace with destiny and his own limitations as something that is God-given, and "we cannot be angry at God" (Pelin 2005: 406), therefore he is completely devoid of mimetic desire and tendency to anger and compete, and he reacts to all of Enjo's insults with endless paternal patience. Unlike the novel Đuka Begocić, in which religion was presented solely in its cynically clerical and folklore version, and which does not provide Đuka with the option of deliverance which he seeks, in the novel *Zemja* the religious faith is not lost and, as in Girard's works, represents the path for deliverance from destruction into which mimetic desire leads. The presence of religious faith, which is also signified by the idealization of Enjo's adversary, makes it possible for Enjo to convert, to accept his own guilt and to see through the illusion of attempting to achieve his own completeness through the acquisition of land. Enjo is repentant after trying to kill his brother, he accepts to care for the crippled and mute brother, and takes up a symmetrically opposite position towards land ownership – from the moment of repentance he begins to sell and give away the land until eventually, like Đuka Begović, he has no more land left. The key difference being the way in which these two characters comprehend their own identity after losing their own estate and the sense of superiority which goes with it – Đuka ends with a completely indecisive "maybe", without remorse, and with the desire for further confirmation through excess still burning strong, while Enjo, after the transgression, sees through the illusion of such an undertaking and accepts his own lack of being, namely his own incompleteness, and gives up illusory attempts to try and achieve it through consolidated land ownership. The abandonment of the illusion is realized through the selling of the land and taking care of his feeble brother. Enjo actually ends up as a repentant sinner, but not an atoned one – the half-dead and mute brother playing the role of the father signifies the ambivalent presence and absence of the disrupted order, therefore Enjo stays in a sort of purgatory until the end, fruitlessly trying to atone for his own sin which is also personified in his burned dead body. Paradoxically, in the middle of the crisis of the

patriarchal order, Pelin's brothers manage to reestablish patriarchal authority, which is now embodied in the idealized character of the older brother as the holder of the Law, while in the novel Đuka Begović, the father and son function as feuded brothers within the framework of Girard's interpretation of the Oedipus complex as a crisis of paternal authority.

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