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Krleža's Political and Psychotic Bestiary: An Example of Dramatic Menagerie on a Timeline from 1913/1914 to 1970

Suzana MARJANIĆ*

Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku, Šubićeva 42, HR-10000 Zagreb, Hrvatska
Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, Zagreb, Croatia

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ANNOTATION

The paper interprets M. Krleža's political and psychotic bestiary on the example of his plays, beginning with the first fragmental drama *Saloma*, which opens Krleža's diary entries (dated 26 February 1914) from the First World War (this is his diary-memoir book *Davni dani*, subsequently published in 1956), and ends with the screenplay *Put u raj* (1970), by which Krleža completed his drama work. Focusing on that period (1914–1970), the paper considers Krleža's dominant zoo-metaphors in the framework of his negative anthropology. In *Saloma*, for instance, the zoo-lexeme *dog* is reflected as the dominant zoo-metaphor. Specifically, for *Saloma*, everything that happens on war-like Earth is determined by the dog's existence as a subservient ingratiation toward all forms of power in the government. Instead of O. Wilde's somewhat precious Secessionist ornamental language, Krleža's *Saloma* begins with her aggressive nihilism and with Kyon-metaphors: "Nothing! You are as boring as wet dogs!" (*Davni dani*, diary entry dated 26 February 1914). This paper identifies Krleža's dramatic political and psychotic bestiary on select examples (one play per dramatic period), taking into account the classification of Krleža's dramatic work (18 plays) in five stylistic-generic cycles as part of Krleža's negative anthropology.

In the screenplay *Put u raj*, a cricket as the dominant zoo-metaphor discloses himself by his singing to the drama binomials (the ego and alter ego: Bernardo and Orlando) in the urinal, while they are urinating together (the male urinating topos) following their narcotic bliss. By combining two issues, the subject of meditation on the death from the novel *Cvrčak pod vodopadom* and the theme of the eternal repetition of Human Stupidity from the *Finale* (see the book of political essays *Deset krvavih godina*, 1937), Krleža rounds out his personal view of the global anti-utopia and dystopia in this anti-war requiem play.

* Corresponding author. E-mail: suzana@ief.hr

We conclude that Krleža's political and psychotic bestiary which we have examined on select examples using the drama menagerie on a timeline from 1913/1914 to 1970 is consistent: within the framework of a permanent negative anthropology, Krleža's preoccupation with documenting the all-powerful human stupidity of the man-ape who, when it learned to fly, *bombs other apes*, although in speciesist zoo-metaphors, we can say that Krleža does not find utopia in nature "as there is no justice even among flowers", as the title of one of his ballads states. In short, by negating Feuerbach's anthropological thesis *Man with man – the unity of I and Thou – is God* and by promoting the Ape to / as Man's deputy, as Desmond Morris does with the cover of *Naked Ape*, Krleža shows that Man is at its core and being (the ontological structure of the human being) is not *homo sapiens*. Today's pandemic picture of the world demonstrates all of this, or as Krleža would say in speciesist manner: man is still an ape, or as a non-speciesist statement: man is still man, the bloodiest animal.

KEYWORDS

Miroslav Krleža, Croatian literature, drama, political bestiary, psychotic bestiary, zoo-metaphors, negative anthropology, speciesism, war animals

Krešimir Horvat (to Polugan):
 "Man is an incredibly stupid animal."
 (Krleža: *Vučjak*, 1923)

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ABOUT THE ZOO-TIMELINE IN KRLEŽA'S PLAYS (FROM 1913/1914 TO 1970)¹

This paper identifies Krleža's dramatic political and psychotic bestiary on select examples (one play per dramatic period), taking into account the classification of Krleža's dramatic work (18 plays) in five stylistic-generic cycles (SENKER 1996: 11–81), as part of Krleža's negative anthropology. The paper follows the mentioned zoo-timeline in Krleža's plays from the first fragment of *Saloma* (1913/1914), which is the first work in his diary entries from the First World War (*Davni dani* [Bygone Days], a diary-memoir type of collection, subsequently published in 1956),² and concludes with a film script and his last drama *Put u raj* [The Road to Heaven] (1970), by which Krleža completes his dramatic work. According to many, Miroslav Krleža (1893–1981) is the greatest Croatian writer of the 20th century, and a crucial figure in the social and cultural history of the South Slavic people in the 20th century.³ Despite these facts, as *The Antioch Review* pointed out, he is "among the most neglected of the world's great writers".

¹ A shorter version of this paper was published in Croatian (MARJANIĆ 2017a).

² I wrote about zoo-metaphors in Krleža's First World War diary in my book on Krleža (see the chapter *Zoome-tafore* in MARJANIĆ 2005) as well as about his cat metaphors, fictional cats, and cat women (MARJANIĆ 2017b).

³ On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Krleža's death, the organizers of the Fric Literary Award (named after Krleža's nickname) stated the following on their Facebook page: "Today marks the 40th anniversary of the death of a Croatian writer (I will not say the greatest as this is a matter of taste or lack of it) and one of the smartest figures ever to grace these lands (this is a simple fact, not a matter of taste)."



The first cycle in this dramatic-stylistic pentagram consists of short artistic dramas Krleža started writing and publishing during the First World War. These works can be classified as “dramolettes”, which he identified as *legends* with regard to genre: *Legenda* [Legend] (1914), *Maskerata* [Masquerade] (1914), *U predvečerje* [On the Eve] (1919), *Adam i Eva* [Adam and Eve] (1922), and *Saloma* [Salome] (the first fragment from 1913/1914, finished in 1963). In this paper, Krleža’s *Saloma* (its variations) is considered as his first drama since it is the first work in his diary entries from the First World War (1914). His first published drama is *Legenda* printed in Marjanović’s *Književne novosti* in 1914.

The second dramatic cycle is based on expressionist stage visions: *Hrvatska rapsodija* [Croatian Rhapsody] (1917), *Kraljevo* [Feast of Kraljevo] (1918), *Kristofor Kolumbo* [Christopher Columbus] (1918), and *Michelangelo Buonarroti* (1918).

The third cycle is marked by political theatre / trilogy: *Galicija* [Galicia] (1922), *Golgota* [Golgotha] (1922), and *Vučjak* [Wolfhound] (1923).

The fourth dramatic cycle consists of analytical-realist conversational dramas, namely, the Glemбай trilogy: *U agoniji* [In Agony] (1928), *Gospoda Glemбайevi (drama u tri čina iz života jedne agramerse patricijske obitelji)* [Messrs. Glemбай (a drama in three acts from the life of one Agramer patrician family)] (1928), *Leda* (1931), and the drama *U logoru* [In the Camp] (1934), which Krleža considers an adaptation of the play *Galicija*.

The fifth cycle is rounded off by drama fantasies with analogous dramatic situations and events: *Aretej* [Aretheus] (1959) and *Put u raj* (1970). These dramas stylistically unite quantitative dramaturgy from Krleža’s expressionist phase, with the psychological realism from the Glemбай phase, as Krleža himself formulated his plays and dramaturgy in the *Osijek Lecture* from 1928.

Two kinds of bestiaries exist within these works. One is political and the other is psychotic, and therefore introspective; psychotic with regard to dramatic figures relating to characters such as in *Vučjak (malograđanski događaj u tri čina s predigrom i intermezzom)* [Wolfhound (a petty-bourgeois event in three acts with a prelude and intermezzo)], where the figure of the Father is marked as *Pater diabolicus legitimus lupus* (Devilish father, lawful, wolf), and should be interpreted more as a form of authority than as an Oedipus complex (SUVIN 1981).⁴ The terms *psychotic bestiary* and *political bestiary* are used here in relation to the triadic concept of *animalism* that Deleuze and Guattari theoretically initiated in their book *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (DELEUZE–GUATTARI 1986) and rhizomatically sophisticated in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (DELEUZE–GUATTARI 1987). Within the triadic concept of *animalism*, in addition to individualized *Oedipal* and *Oedipalized* animals (e.g., pets) and animals with mythical or scientific characteristics (*State* animals serving the state, myth, and science), Deleuze and Guattari discuss *animals-anomalies* that have the potential of *becoming-animal* (Fr. *devenir-animal*), the modality of expansion, contagion / plague, multiplicity because *existence* is the pack, and not individuality or a characteristic.⁵

⁴ For children, mostly sons, taking on the animal equivalent for the Father cf. GENOSKO 1993: 627.

⁵ Josip Lešić was the first to systematically write about faunal signs in Krleža’s plays and noted that the faunal world is intensely present in all of Krleža’s plays except in the two carnival plays *Maskerata* and *Leda*, “which also otherwise belong to the closed civic and urban environment” (LEŠIĆ 1981: 204). Unlike Lešić’s excellent interpretation, which is mostly based on animals as visual and acoustic signs in Krleža’s plays (Lešić is interested in the presence and sounds of fauna), this paper focuses, as highlighted in the title, on Krleža’s psychotic and political bestiary in connection with Deleuze’s and Guattari’s readings of Oedipal / Oedipalized and State Animals as well as Agamben’s definition of the *anthropological machine*.



SALOMA OR REBELLION AGAINST DOG-LIKE PROSKYNESIS

With regard to *Legenda*, the scope of this paper will deal only with Krleža's *Saloma*, which is the first entry in his diary writings from the First World War (dated 26 February 1914) published in 1963 in its entirety, 49 years after the first diary entry from *Davni dani*. The zoo-lexeme *dog* notably manifests itself as the dominant zoo-metaphor in *Saloma*. For Saloma, everything that happens on Earth plagued by war is determined by a dog-like existence of subservient flattery to the State, i.e. all forms of power in authority. Instead of Oscar Wilde's precious ornamentality of language in art nouveau style, Krleža's *Saloma* begins with Saloma's *aggressive* nihilism, statements of a *state of boredom* (only a human animal can feel boredom) and metaphors of the state of sycophantic proskynesis: "Nothing! You are as boring as wet dogs!" (KRLEŽA 1977a: 10). She is bored with the egocentric (geocentric) strategy of the Romans (in the final version of *Saloma*: Kajo), according to which "the sky [...] is under our feet"; she is bored with the aesthetical strategy of the first Athenian who polished the myth of sublime art, according to which "art has no other purpose than to spiritually elevate life"; she is bored with the war strategy of another Athenian, according to which "life lives on blood, life is blind murder". She finds them boring as "wet dogs", they are awkward like wet dogs in their own roles, downcast as wet dogs under the guise of bad actors: "It is no good when a general wants to play a poet but can do nothing save for slaughter!" (KRLEŽA 1977a: 11–12). Meanwhile, the fallen prophet Johanaan (John the Baptist) is shown *in absentia* of speech: "based on stage directions, the voice of the Prophet echoes through the stage" (KRLEŽA 1977b: 65) and utters his name but so softly "that it was barely heard. [...] More like a sigh" (KRLEŽA 1977b: 71). Krleža deprives the fallen prophetic messianism of speech, the power of agitation, which he unmasked as a lie. As far as Croatian territories in the First World War are concerned, the lie of Yugom mythology and Yugomessianism is put in aphasia. The prophetic silence, the mentioned drama-legend, of course, in the context of *Davni dani*, can be read as a political drama where Saloma overcomes the virile cynicism of power in authority (MARJANIĆ 2005: 101–140).

When compared to Oscar Wilde's Salome, who acts under the auspices of moonlight as a sign of a morbid-erotic atmosphere, the spirit of Krleža's Saloma is focused on astral strategy and levelling the *dog-like*, sycophantic-subservient-penitent-subdued-cynical existence:

One thought has haunted me for a long time that 'the earth' is actually dog-stupid when it wants to impregnate itself. And it does so. It sprouted in the dark and it rapes itself, always following the same rhythm. It sleeps with itself and, strangely enough, this damn planet is not annoyed with itself yet, and I do not know what it finds so interesting every time it sniffs around its own tail (KRLEŽA 1977a: 12).

For the acoustic dimensions of animalism in Krleža's plays, Josip Lešić concludes that the thud of horses, whinnies, prancing, and hoofs sloshing in water and mud are related to "hunting, retreating, chasing, in a word, the defeat of human dignity. Innocent and frightened horses prance and trample people in *Kraljevo*" (LEŠIĆ 1981: 210). Furthermore, Lešić examines acoustic signs of fauna in the context of dramatic tension and categorizes them according to functions: psychological support for a certain character, ironic commentary, a symbolic rise, counterpoint, tonal leitmotif, dramatic emphasis, dialogue theme, or detail packed with meanings (LEŠIĆ 1981: 206). The mentioned horses in *Kraljevo* remind Branimir Donat of Dante's dogs from *Inferno* (Canto XIII) (DONAT 2002: 77).



Krleža modifies the mythical / archetypal archetype of *ouroboros* into the symbol of the Earth-dog biting around its *own tail*, as a zoo-metaphor for the eternal recurrence of neuralgic points in human history within Saloma's axioms of "human stupidity" and "earthly boredom". In the worlds of Krleža's Saloma, in addition to *dog* metaphors, one can also notice an ichthyomorphic metaphor used as a diagnosis of a universal-historical *ethos*: *a small fish can often eat a big fish*, and in Saloma's fragment, Johanaan figures as (Saloma's) *small and naive fish* (KRLEŽA 1977b: 72–73).⁶ Krleža marks the prophetic scene of kneeling before Saloma's astral strategies in a conclusive manner with a *feline scene* in which Saloma and the *prophet fallen into vice* remain embraced in an iconographic clew as *two cats* (KRLEŽA 1977b: 74).⁷ Josip Lešić noticeably interprets the mentioned feline iconogram of Saloma and the political prophet Johanaan in one dimension, stating that it is not just two cats "but a cruel game of a cunning cat and a naive mouse, which will end with the bloody head of the Prophet in a basket" (LEŠIĆ 1981: 104), while forgetting that Krleža assigned Johanaan the political aphasia of Yugomessianism reminiscent of the Vidovdan messianic phantoms of Ivan Meštrović advocating a warrior ethos (cf. MARJANIĆ 2005).

We can say that Oedipal animals (cats and dogs) in the context of Deleuze's and Guattari's definition (DELEUZE–GUATTARI 2013: 268), in Krleža's psychotic bestiary of *Saloma* from the diary entries figure as State and State-forming animals, especially dogs in the context of the character-group unit of *dogs of war*, and the cat-like Saloma as the *angora, witty, frivolous cat* overcomes the dog-like sycophantism directed toward power in authority: as a zoo-symbol that overcomes the will to power, in this exchange, it realizes the concept of *becoming-animal*, considering that she ultimately (like Scheherazade) defeats the virile power in authority (when it comes to Krleža's script).⁸

Krleža's ambivalence toward cat iconograms can be read as an ironization of Nietzsche's bestiary in the context of his philosophy. The woman-cat in Nietzsche's bestiary is determined by three modes: deception, sensuality, and playful nature (KENDAL WOODRUFF 2003: 251), and Krleža's

⁶ For *dog* metaphors for the eternal recurrence of neuralgic points in human history within Saloma's axioms of "human stupidity" and "earthly boredom" cf. MARJANIĆ 2005: 101–140. When examining Saloma's strategies, we can apply the interpretive gesture of the cynical gesture of the philosopher (in Sloterdijk's definition) in relation to general cynicism.

Unlike the very common motif of a dragon / snake biting its own tail, the image of a dog biting its own tail is not as common, with the Celts being one culture to feature it. It is a Celtic symbol representing renewal, eternity, immortality, dating from the 15th century near the shores of Lake Loch (cf. *Historic Impressions*: <http://www.historicimpressions.com/Scottish.htm>).

⁷ An intertextual parallelism can be established for a scene from Krleža's novel *The Return of Philip Latinowicz* (1936), in which Philip sees Kyriales and Bobočka as a *single, physical tangle*: "Someone dressed in black and a naked woman in a physical tangle, a scene as if taken from the gallery of some medieval bell tower. One of the seven deadliest sins: *a woman in a lewd embrace with a fiend*" [italics – S. M.].

⁸ Cf. Donna J. Haraway's critical remark on Deleuze's and Guattari's definition of cats and dogs as Oedipal animals. The theorist is surprised that Steve Baker, a theorist of visual animal studies with dedicated interpretations of contemporary art, also supports this triad, although he is uneasy with the Oedipal interpretation of cats and dogs (HARAWAY 2008: 314). Personally, I must point out that I support Deleuze's negative interpretation of *familyization* of pets (or as Joan Dunayer, for example, would term it correctly: *companions*). In the *Alphabet Book*, Deleuze states that it is frightening how people (caretakers) talk to their dogs as if they were children, and emphasizes that the most important thing is to have an *animal relationship with animals*. It is noticeable that, in this sense, he considers psychoanalysis partly responsible for the symbolic reduction of animals to a family member and he himself shows greater sympathy for hunters who have an inhuman attitude towards their prey (BEAULIEU 2011: 70). I add that I cannot agree with the mentioned categorization by Deleuze, i.e. his stance on the issue of hunting, which I personally cannot understand from my own zoo-ethical point of view.

cat can certainly be read within this same paradigm, mostly under the mode of sensuality. In Nietzsche's zoo-philosophemes, the cat is given the role of a liminal animal; by jumping out of the window of the house (the family home as a space of non-freedom and domestication), it easily becomes a wild cat, in its Aesopian nature of hunting mice, and Nietzsche assigns this same liminality to future humanity (KENDAL WOODRUFF 2003: 251–252).

In the proverbial cat – dog dichotomy, Nietzsche attributes a more negative role to the dog; the cat, in comparison to the dog and according to Nietzsche's binary philosophemes, is not a *herd* animal, and has never seen humans as *masters* (if we use the speciesist relationship between *humans and nonhumans*), unlike the dog (KENDAL WOODRUFF 2003: 252). Within the zoo-instrumentarium of Nietzsche's bestiary, Krleža's bestiary from *Saloma* with its cat – dog dichotomy certainly had a philosophical impetus but it also exhibited an ethical departure from his teacher, as Krleža demonstrated in his play *Zaratuštra i mladić* [Zarathustra and the Youth] from the same year (1914). Krleža's poetic metaphor of the poet as a young tiger can be interpretively incorporated in Nietzsche's bestiary from *Zarathustra (On Human Prudence)*: "Your wild cats must first have turned to tigers and your poisonous toads to crocodiles; for the good hunter shall have a good hunt!" (NIETZSCHE 1981: 128). Of course, in the context of Krleža's negative anthropology, the mentioned bestiary of so-called pets can also be contextualized by Freud's bestiary, who interpretatively defined many animals in psychoanalysis by domestication, which, as established in the book *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics* (1913), caused the desacralization of the animal, including the totem animal as a surrogate father (GENOSKO 1993: 603, 628).

APES FROM KRISTOFOR KOLUMBO, VUČJAK, OR THE WAR OF ALL AGAINST ALL

While dog metaphors are the most prevalent in *Saloma*'s worlds, the zoo-metaphor of the ape is key to the dramatic world of *Kristofor Kolumbo* (chosen for this paper as representative of Krleža's second stylistic-generic cycle), in which his tangent-prone astral strategy opposes the ape world of sailors as a pack of *rabid critters*, *sleeping herd*, and *apes* (originally *opica*, a Kajkavian dialect word for 'ape' from German *Appe*) who love spells (*cigumige*, as Krleža's Petrica Kerempuh would say) who do not care about the stars on the ship of Christopher Columbus. During the rehearsals for *Kristofor Kolumbo* directed by Miroslav Minja Dedić in October 1955 on the stage of the Belgrade Drama Theatre, the dialogue between Falanga and the Admiral was supplemented by variants of the text wherein the Admiral, on his journey of no return and on a tangent (Saloma's astral strategy gives importance to the stars in contrast to the dog-like existence with a tail tucked between one's legs) – as "The new cannot lie within a circle" – addresses the gregarious cardinals and admirals, man as a domestic herd animal in Nietzsche's definition (ZGODIĆ 2014: 132), with the initial statement and final performative:

The king is an oaf that is what I said. The king is an oaf, I said this out loud, and I still think so today. [...] For you to pollute this meadow of stars with your *hooves*, is something I will not allow. This is my land and these are my stars! (KRLEŽA 1956: 281–284).



From Krleža's third cycle of plays (cf. SENKER 1996: 11–84), we can single out the play *Vučjak* exhibiting Krleža's skepticism toward Rousseauian idealism, with the metonymy of *the war of all against all*.

When it comes to the ideosphere of the 18th century, Krleža is certainly closer to Voltaire than Rousseau, of whom he “remains suspicious” (ŽMEGAČ 1986: 23). It is noticeable that *Krležijana* dedicates a lexicographical note to Krleža's reception of Rousseau but there is no lexicographical note for Krleža's reception of Voltaire (VISKOVIĆ 1993–1999). It is interesting to note that Voltaire and Rousseau never met, even though they waged a true philosophical war for decades. The fact that Krleža was more inclined toward Voltaire, who let reason prevail over the heart, than toward Rousseau, who let the heart prevail over reason – i.e. Voltaire, the man of thought, who saw the world as a comedy, and Rousseau, the man of feeling, who saw the world as a tragedy, as shown by Guy Endore in his novel about Rousseau and Voltaire *The Heart and the Mind* is no accident, of course, given Krleža's fundamental life and artistic antithetical carousel (LASIĆ 1989: 39–40, 343), i.e. his irony with skepticism (ŠTIRVIČIĆ 2016); therefore, it would be *logical* for Krleža to be a follower of Rousseau but he is not.

Or, even more directly: Krleža is much closer to Thomas Hobbes, his paradigmatic formula *homo homini lupus*, the claim that the state of nature entails “the war of all against all”. However, unlike Hobbes, Krleža also applies this state of nature to the state, Hobbes' Leviathan, or, as Hobbes metaphorically calls the state, the mortal god. Krleža certainly does not believe in such a mentally formed civil state, and especially not the young Krleža (particularly during the First World War), when he was still fascinated by Stirner, or in 1923, when he saw the premiere of *Vučjak* (KRLEŽA 1923). At the same time, as part of his antithetical carousel, he is fascinated by Lenin (more so by the visionary image of Lenin, much like his visionary role of Christ) and the anarcho-individualist Max Stirner. In short, the *wolf mentality* of *Vučjak* presents the anabasis of Krešimir Horvat in early spring of the last year of the war (1918), just before its end. As mentioned in the introduction, the psychotic level of the wolf metaphor with regard to the play *Vučjak* is explained by Krešimir Horvat's furious dream (“Krešimir Horvat's frenzied scandalous dream”) in which the figure of the Father is marked as *Pater diabolicus legitimus lupus* (Devilish father, lawful, wolf), and should be interpreted more as a form of authority than as the Oedipus complex (SUVIN 1981).

Krleža's *reshaped* (Plautus', Schopenhauer's) Hobbes' paradigmatic formula *homo homini lupus* (Hobbes' formula applies only to Man in his *natural state* and not to Man who is politically – as a *political animal* – organized in the “mortal god” or “Leviathan”) is rendered as *homo homini homo* in the *diluvial* sense, and was already noted in Krleža's *Davni dani*, on the first pages of the diary which he wrote during the First World War.⁹ Negative qualitative zoo-metaphors dominate in Krleža's philosophical negative anthropology: the *horror-life* of the First World War was reduced to a *struggle for survival*, the “fear of a trained animal afraid of the consequences” of rebellion “against the discipline of menagerie” (KRLEŽA 1977b: 128). The alchemical *ouroboros*, a dragon or snake coiled in a ring was modified in Krleža's *Davni dani* into the *Earth-Dog* zoo-metaphor biting around its own tail as a metonymy for the Eternal Circle of Recurrence of bloody historical

⁹ The first zooethicist in the Croatian cultural circle Nikola Visković points out that, from a bioethical point of view, the wolf as a standard model of bestiality is not as we imagine it; it is a sociable animal, loyal to the pack and its sexual partner, a caring parent, it respects the territorial boundaries of wolf groups, does not mangle nor kill an opponent in conflicts if the opponent withdraws or submits, which makes clear its ethical qualities in relation to humans (VISKOVIĆ 1996: 348).



feasts of executioners in the categories of “human stupidity” and “earthly boredom” (cf. diary fragment of the legend *Saloma*; 26 February 1914 in *Davni dani*).

Reflections on human nature and the social contract during the Enlightenment were shaped by two antithetical theoretical models: Hobbes’ and Rousseau’s. While Hobbes states that people in their natural state of equality are aggressive and have therefore concluded a social contract to achieve peace, Rousseau believes that people in their natural state are benevolent loners but suffer inequality and tyranny due to civilization, so a condition for their happiness is democracy. However, the state of affairs is the same: in both conceptions, the man of nature is akin to an animal. According to Hobbes, it is a beast engaged in the war of all against all, and according to Rousseau, man treats man similarly as it treats animals that do not naturally engage man in war, except for self-defence and in case of extreme hunger (VIŠKOVIĆ 1996: 347). In his negative anthropology, Krleža seems to have combined both Hobbes’ and Rousseau’s concepts into one with his own concept of an antithetical carousel: according to Krleža’s negative anthropology, man carries the bloody attributes of an aggressive animal (or as Fromm would term it, “the anatomy of human destructiveness”) both in the natural state and in civilization. However, as far as Krleža’s reception of Rousseau is concerned, it is noticeable that Krleža was interested in Rousseau’s concept of democracy as well as his concept of the man of nature, and that he considered both of them to be wrong, just as Nietzsche and Max Stirner considered Rousseau to be wrong as advocates of dismantling all moral values. Note the negation of Hadrović as a mirror image of Polugan and a Rousseauian image of the countryside. Agamben reads the myth of the founding of the modern city in the same manner, from Hobbes to Rousseau, where he shows that such a life is not a natural reproductive life (Greek *zoe*) and also not a qualified form of life (*bios*), it is primarily “the bare life of a *homo sacer* and the *wargus*, a zone of indistinction and continuous transition between man and beast, nature and culture” (AGAMBEN 2006: 98). Agamben also points out that the protagonist of his book is bare life, i.e. the life of a *homo sacer* who may be killed and not sacrificed, whose essential function in modern politics we intend to revindicate (AGAMBEN 2006: 14).

Ranging from the diluvial to the present day, Krleža’s negative anthropology demonstrates that there is no difference between the state of nature and the so-called civilized state. He comes to a similar conclusion as Pierre Clastres,¹⁰ who sought to determine the causes of violence and war, and linked violence and war as foreign policy to the internal configuration of a particular social system, which is by definition staunchly conservative, i.e. which refuses to change and is virtually ossified. Wars are not fought to change something but in order for things to stay the same. According to him, war is a privileged way of existence for archaic societies: if enemies did not exist, they would have to be invented. Krleža uses the play *Vučjak* to demonstrate that the same mode of creation of the archaeology of violence is still valid today. We are completely the same in the diluvial sense, only with a small addition: we chose the concept of the state as voluntary bondage.

¹⁰ The founder of libertarian anthropology Pierre Clastres concludes that non-state and anti-authoritarian societies he studied in South America were not holdovers from the prehistoric era, as Westerners assumed, but that these societies were organized to prevent the emergence of the state. According to his premises, archaic societies are based on the political logic of eliminating the danger of the state coming into existence at all, which means that civilized societies begin with voluntary bondage. In the context of his theory of societies without states, capitalism will survive only because the political space does not provide an opportunity for an alternative (CLASTRES 2002).



BARONESS CASTELLI'S RUSSIAN GREYHOUND IGOR OR PINSCHERS AND RUSSIAN GREYHOUNDS FROM MESSRS. GLEMBAY

The Glemбай cycle (defined by Boris Senker as the fourth stylistic-generic cycle) documenting the rise of a kind of tycoon class in Croatia before the First World War can be characterized by Krleža's zoo-metaphor of the capitalist system of fish where he applied the proverb of big fish eating small fish, which he also systematically portrayed in family relationships. In addition to these global zoo-metaphors regarding capitalism, extremely strong micro-zoo-metaphors are also present, essential for the psychotic Glemбай bestiary, such as the green moth in the now archetypal *scene with the moth* as the centre of the second act, which is also "the centre of the entire drama (the mechanical, rhythmic, and semantic centre), which means that the play is symmetrical in relation to that scene, and that the parallelism of thematic elements is determined in relation to it" (KARAHASAN 1988: 112). Laura's furious gesture wherein she crushes the moth flying around the lamp is a sign of her protest against Križovec's rhetorical retreats and his subconscious desire to release himself from a possible marriage with Laura. Directly following the scene with the moth, there is a "definitive liquidation of a relationship that was just as transparent and 'fragile'" as that crushed green moth in the second act of the play *U agoniji*¹¹: "And so the moth in 'dramatica krležijana' became another 'detail packed with meanings'" (LEŠIĆ 1981: 216).

Lešić recognizes another zoo-detail involving a character which is packed with meanings: the moment when Baroness Castelli introduces the Russian greyhound Igor to the Glemбай scene. The detail is more than psychologically significant: it comes at the time of Leone's diatribe about the sewing machine he was late to deliver, "on my own 'paranoid' responsibility", as he states, a passive activity followed by stage instructions *The servant had already returned with a lovely white Russian greyhound, and Baroness Castelli-Glemбай is demonstratively playing with the dog during Leone's speech* and interrupts Leone's socialist, proletarian assault on the house of Glemбай and herself, and addresses the Russian greyhound: „Komm, Igor, komm, du schöner, intelligenter Kopf! Komm, du lieber, lieber Igor!" (Krleža, according to LEŠIĆ 1981: 212–214). But before that she also says a zoo-proverb in German: "Es ist besser einem treuen Hund in die Augen zu schauen, als so einen Blödsinn zu dreschen! Ich lass' mich nicht plagen! [...] Es blitzt in der Ferne! – It is better to look a faithful dog in the eye than to spew such nonsense! I will not be bothered! [...] There is lightning in the distance!" (KRLEŽA 1950: 352). Compared to Igor, who is seen as a dog for gentlemen (men), being a large, powerful, and elegant dog, and which the Baroness uses almost as protection, Leone recalls how Baroness Castelli came to his mother's funeral, her rival, "with a large bouquet of Parma violets and her Maltese pinscher Fifi", sarcastically adding: "What sensitivity! To come and see your dead rival with a Maltese poodle in hand!"¹² and who was defined as a status symbol in the form of a "lap-dog" for ladies (cf. PAVIČIĆ–VLAISAVLJEVIĆ 2013).

¹¹ In Krleža's dramatic world of *Leda*, Aurel is ironically described as a post-impressionist painter in 1925 (the time of Leda's plot), as one of the degenerate, cliché, stereotypical figures of the painting movement which Krleža did not adopt as his ethical and aesthetic footing. Moreover, he already posed the question "what good are those Ledas and swans" in the anarchist text *The Croatian Literary Lie* (Plamen, 1919).

¹² While having a discussion with his father, Leone reiterates: "That woman was holding her pinscher while praying over my dead mother!", and in a conversation with the Baroness, following his father's death, repeats (for a third time): "Yes! And you brought a bouquet of Parma violets and you had your Maltese pinscher in hand. You do not have that pinscher today, that is all the difference!"





Photo 1. Vito Taufer, *Gospoda Glembajevi* [Messrs. Glembay], premiere: 6 May 2011, Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb

THE FIFTH DRAMA CYCLE AND THE ZOO-METAPHOR OF THE CRICKET AND GORILISM

Krleža's fifth drama cycle – *Aretej* (1959) and *Put u raj* (1970) – is defined by Branimir Donat as political miracles (DONAT 2002: 127). These are drama fantasies with analogous dramatic situations and events with very strong zoo-metaphors. *Aretej* is marked by the bird of paradise *Ancila*, which becomes a literally political *ancilla*, as well as a zoo-metaphor involving an ape hand,¹³ i.e. the eternal gorilism *in us and above us*, in a Kantian sense. It seems that in *Aretej*, Krleža achieved a parallelism between Rome of the 3rd century and Europe before Hitler's murderous insanity (on the Nativity of Mary in 1938) in the manner of Spengler's morphology of world history (*The Decline of the West* I–II., 1918–1922). The drama can be seen as another confirmation of Krleža's anthropocentric view of animalism as it exposes man as an animal (animalists would say *beast*, considering that they ascribe the bestial *ethos* exclusively to the *anthropos*) which supposedly thinks politically and acts humanely / humanitarianly. In line with his negative anthropology, Krleža highlights humanity as an eternal menagerie, a vivarium with political gorillas and dogs with broken backs and tucked tails, a *tame snout* for which “a fatty sausage is fragrantly roasted”

¹³ Galen subverts with his *and yet* during the discussion on the magnificence of the human (in actuality, the ape) hand which, in *Aretej*'s interpretation, contains “some dysteleological eventualities”. So the *and yet* saint (ANCILA) or maid (ANCILLA), “Europa” or “Evropa”...

from Kranjčević's *Gospodskom Kastoru* (1891).¹⁴ In short, *Aretej*'s basic premise is that man is a political animal, while politics itself is a struggle against the animal in man (Lešić 1981: 205). Another parallel in a series of bricolage parallels between *Aretej* (1959) and *Davni dani* (1914–1921/1922, 1st edition 1956) should also be mentioned. The diary entry from *Davni dani* dated 11 September 1916 at 1 o'clock in the afternoon in the cafe Central (Budapest) – where Krleža realizes a metachronic meeting of the ancient epoch and Honvéd Europe of the First World War, and an essay miniature about animalism which served *anthropoids* as a zoolatrical *path to higher powers*, given that mankind was ruled by cats, snakes, pike, and horses – can be read as an announcement of Krleža's future play *Aretej ili Legenda o Svetoj Ancili, Rajskoj Ptici (fantazija u pet slika)* [Aretheus or the Legend of the Holy Ancilla, the Heavenly Bird (a fantasy in five images)]. A fragment from the mentioned diary entry as an announcement of *Aretej*:

Perspective: to the most faithful absolutism of the officer's boot, to such a fetish that temples will be erected around the world in honour of the officer's Boot. After all, why not? Horses were senators in Rome. The cow is considered a sacred animal in much of the world even today, and the bull has reigned as God for millennia in basalt and granite temples, incomparably more solid and monumental than anything Europe has built to date. Mankind has been ruled by cats, snakes, pike, and horses.

Or in the anamorphic voice of *Aretej from the darkness* (Image II):

When an Emperor's white horse is elevated to the honour of a senator, [...] it is a historic moment where the universe has reached its full purpose.

Krleža's final drama *Put u raj* with the zoo-symbol of the cricket points to aestheticism without tendency, as used by Nazor in 1909 when he published the dithyramb *Cvrčak* [Cricket]. The dominant zoo-metaphor in *Put u raj* (the cricket¹⁵) appears to the drama binomial (the ego and alter ego: Bernardo and Orlando) in a urinal, when they urinate together (the group narrative figure involving male urination), after using narcotics. Combining 1) the theme of meditation on death from the short story *Cvrčak pod vodopadom* [The Cricket under the Waterfall], or as Bernardo emphasizes, "there are more dead people around us than living", and the living are only their satellites and 2) the theme of eternal recurrence of the same from *Finale (pokušaj pedesetvjekovne sinteze)* [Finale (an attempt at a fifty-century synthesis)] from the book of political essays *Deset krvavih godina* [Ten Bloody Years] (1937) with this "anti-war requiem", Krleža dramatically completes his own vision of global dystopia and anti-utopia about man who has descended into cannibalism today, "books have been written and books have been burned for seventy thousand

¹⁴ For the integral stage text, Zlatko Vitez, for his own direction of *Aretej* (premiere: 23 February 2006, Gavella City Drama Theatre), reminded theatre-goers that Krleža recommends bringing beans and cabbage to the theatre, to which the director adds: "So, heavy food".

¹⁵ In the expressionist *Hrvatska rapsodija* (from his second stylistic-generic cycle), Krleža counterpoints Nazor's bestiary ("Birds with golden wings flew around the train car, bears roared, centaurs whinnied, infinitely large crickets hitched to small carts scamper about the car..."). Zarathustra's gigantic call for the sun pushed the genius on the machine, just as the call of the New (the journey to the Land of No Return, following the astral *tangent*) pushed Columbus to the helm of Santa Maria (MARJANIĆ 2020).



years, the dignity of the human mind is condemned to death, dithyrambs to crime and tyranny are sung!” (KRLEŽA 2002: 112).¹⁶

Miroslav Vaupotić connects Krleža’s key zoo-metaphor of the dog (along with the metaphor of the monkey) in Krleža’s final play with a cricket, where he notes that in Krleža’s darkest novel *Cvrčak pod vodopadom* (1937), on whose worlds (as its own *genotext*) *Put u raj* is based, the last sentence connects the zoo-symbol of the dog and the cricket (VAUPOTIĆ 1964: 187):

‘We are all cigarette butts in urine’, he said sentimentally and spilled the milk bread, twisting the lining of his left pocket, using four fingers of his left hand to brush off the cricket’s crumbs like a dog scratching behind its ear (KRLEŽA 1966: 404).

It is no coincidence that Krleža’s darkest novel *Cvrčak pod vodopadom* comes as the finishing touch to his drama work, as it “represents the darkest states of Krleža’s oeuvre and his inner life, biological and psychological constitution” (VAUPOTIĆ 1974: 47),¹⁷ and in which he provided a fundamental determinant of negative anthropology: “We are all cigarette butts in urine”, which is the final statement in Krleža’s novella of *locus horridus* (MARJANIĆ 2019).¹⁸ M. Vaupotić notes that Krleža often varies the motif of “the howling of the dog-man as an individual defender of truth and a dog pack as protectors of conservatism” (VAUPOTIĆ 1964: 187), as is the case in the final verse of *Balada Petrice Kerempuha* [The Ballad of Petrica Kerempuh] (1936), so that the mentioned *dog-like* metaphor contains the link between cynicism as a school of thought and cynicism as an attitude, in Sloterdijk’s definition, of course, in an ethical dichotomy.

Contrary to speciesist zoo-metaphors similar to his own antithetical carousel, in many of his reflections, Krleža can be seen as a distinct animalist, and in some cases even as a critical animalist. For instance, in the play *U logoru*, or in its modified “version” *Galicija* (we should keep our focus only on drama examples, where Boris Senker introduces the play *Galicija* (1920) in Krleža’s third drama cycle categorized as *political theatre* and the drama *U logoru* (1934), which Krleža considers a reworking of the play *Galicija*, in his fourth drama cycle categorized as *analytical-realistic conversational drama*), Krleža raises the question of war animals, i.e. what gives us, the human species, the right to use horses – along with dogs as the basic animals of war – as a war machine, which is one of his very powerful bioethical determinants:

HORVAT, in a voice completely broken, as though standing over a grave, through tears: “Horses are the saddest part of all in our processions. How nobler these animals are than man! Horses have their own tremendous excuse: horses do not possess reason and are therefore

¹⁶ Krleža’s critique of the aestheticism found in Nazor’s *Cvrčak* [Cricket] can be read from the mentioned contextualization of the dithyramb, although, of course, the symbolism of the cricket can be connected with the opposition art (the sublime) – everyday life in connection with Jean de La Fontaine, who began his collection of fables *Les fables de La Fontaine* with the story *The Cicada and the Ant* based on one of Aesop’s fables. The cicada (the artist) spends the summer singing, while the ant (the worker) stores away food for the winter time as an allegory of work – the art and the manual work. Boria Sax wrote that they dwell in trees and are seen only when they die and fall to the ground (SAX 2001: 131).

¹⁷ Krleža himself will state that *Cvrčak pod vodopadom* is “one hundred percent dark. Dark as the night we live in” (Krleža i film 1973: 125).

¹⁸ Miroslav Vaupotić finds the beginnings of Krleža’s negative anthropology about cigarette butts in urine in Krleža’s diary entries in *Davni dani*: “We all give off smoke like bad cigarettes. We are being smoked, we simply sizzle like cigarette butts in a night pot” (according to VAUPOTIĆ 1964: 175).



not responsible for anything. But we, people, who move about our roads in such dark rain, we ruin not only ourselves but innocent horses as well. We have the right to do so to ourselves! But who gave us the right to drag along these innocent and sad creatures through these stupid stories of ours?" [italics – S. M.].

In Horvat's monologue (who is realized in the war machine as a gorilla in a panopticon, although he succeeds in an individual rebellion with the final anarcho-individualistic concept *I WILL NOT!*), in which he argues that horses allegedly have no reason, the issue of speciesism arises, all in line with the thinking of the era which concerned the animals of war as well as the existence of *animalism* in general.

This is a good place to note that in the puppet play *The Battle of Stalingrad* (World Theatre Festival, Zagreb, 2004), the Georgian director Reza Gabriadze thematized the fact that 10,000 horses died during the battle and how horses were even forced to run on three legs (cf. MARJANIĆ 2004) as well as an alternative, somewhat controversial estimate by Robert Drews in the book *Early Riders: The Beginnings of Mounted Warfare in Asia and Europe*, where horseback warfare is found deeper into the past: in the 4th millennium BC (according to BERNARDIĆ 2015).¹⁹



Photo 2. "The final moments of a faithful horse: one of our officers kills his faithful horse that was severely wounded by a shrapnel and as a result incapable of battle and life" (*Ilustrovani list*, no. 35, 1916, page 832, 26 August 1916)

¹⁹ For the topic of horses and other animals in the First World War, a book by Lucinda Moore can be recommended, which, among other things, contains a photo of a public request from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA, London) to help the sick and wounded war horses (MOORE 2017: 231).

CONCLUSION ON KRLEŽA'S DRAMATIC PSYCHOTIC AND POLITICAL BESTIARY

Among the three basic anthropological views regarding how Man is *problematic*, i.e. 1) the theological view (the school of Christian creationism where man is seen as an *image* of God: *similitudo Dei*), 2) the vision of ancient Greek philosophy (the concept of *homo sapiens*) and 3) the natural-science niche (the concept of *homo faber* where man is only a more complex level of animality), Krleža's anthropology is close to the latter, Darwin's naturalistic conception of the animal origin of man, with the corrective imperative that man in no way represents the hierarchical peak of a series of vertebrates and mammals. The term *Beast* – a four-legged roaring in us and above us (KRLEŽA 1977a: 26) – seems to have been *created* for Man. Since one of the goals of philosophical anthropology is to determine the distinguishing element between Man and Animal, Krleža presents the concept of philosophical negative anthropology: his reflections on human-animal analogies belong to the anthropological conception of *negative* theories of Man (cf. FILIPOVIĆ 1987: 178) which we find in teachings from the Buddha to Schopenhauer and Freud. We should keep our focus on Krleža's thinkers, or Krleža's basic animals for his anthropomorphic political bestiary: the dog and the monkey, with the dog being an obedient animal of war subservient to politics, and the monkey serving the sense of intellectual gorilism, imitation.²⁰ Both of these Krleža's specific anthropocentric zoo-metaphors have already been noted in *Davni dani* (1914–1921/1922). In short, Kropotkin's thesis of mutual aid, which Krleža, being an anarchoindividualist, wholeheartedly agreed with in his youth, was soon replaced by Darwinism, just as he replaced the Catholicism of his childhood with the concept of “the ape-like origin of man”.

The fantastically *fatal* word that influenced the detheologized image of the world and “the fall of various deities into the abysses of no return” was the word *os coccygis* (*os coccyx*, the coccyx), i.e. man has a tail:

There has been an aberration of the centre. [...] The cerebral hemispheres of the human fetus reach the same stage of development in the eighth month as the adult baboon can reach, [...] and is thus closer to an ape than an ape is to a dog (KRLEŽA 1977c: 413).²¹

In this sense, we can say that as a 20th-century author, Krleža in his search for the *anthropological machine* to use Agamben's concept documents how the history of philosophy is based on efforts to determine what defines man in relation to the animal world. This concept is defined as an *anthropological machine* that persistently strives to give a human dimension to the world (AGAMBEN

²⁰ Starting from the diary entry dated 4 June 1968 from the “Diary Fragments from 1968” (*Forum* 1972, 7–8) on the indifference of birds to the *human* massacre of war, Josip Lešić posits that this direct relationship probably “contributed to the fact that, in the entire fauna, birds show up most frequently” in Krleža's dramas (LEŠIĆ 1981: 206). Cf. a modified entry on the *indifferent singing of indifferent birds as if they were not in Croatia* dated 8 May 1917 (on the same day at 8 o'clock in the evening) from *Davni dani* and the chapter *Zoometafore* in MARJANIĆ 2005.

²¹ Krleža often used the term *man-ape*, which is obviously the influence of Ernest Haeckel, who reconstructed the history of man in his work *Anthropogenie* (1874). Agamben wrote of this First Known Specimen of *Homo erectus*: “The existence of this pithecanthropus ape-man, which in 1874 was merely a hypothesis, became reality when in 1891 a Dutch military doctor Eugen Dubois discovered on the island of Java a piece of skull and a femur similar to those of present-day man, and, to Haeckel's great satisfaction (Dubois was an enthusiastic reader of Haeckel), baptized the being to whom they had belonged *Pithecanthropus erectus*” (AGAMBEN 2004: 34).



2004), glorifying humanity as such.²² Krleža here opts for the man-ape as discussed by Haeckel because that man-ape still, as a hybrid being, bombs other monkeys (cf. KRLEŽA 1977b: 21).

In his book *Picturing the Beast*, the theorist of visual animal studies Steve Baker shows how the modern mentality of the representation of animals in some aspects has taken shape in less than the last twenty years (BAKER 1993). In this sense, Krleža's speciesist views expressed in zoo-metaphors cannot be interpreted only from the context of the contemporary animal rights movement, from the niche of critical animal studies but it is noticeable that some of his animalistic opinions within his negative anthropology are very contemporary. When problematizing the anthropology of evil, i.e. man as the only animal of war, Krleža asks in his war and post-war dystopia why man is still an *Ape* (in Krleža's essentialist sense) who, when it learned to fly, *bombs other apes* (cf. KRLEŽA 1977b: 21). Almost within the sphere of veganism, Krleža wrote in his novel *On the Edge of Reason* (1938):

Why, for example, cow or swine carcasses sliced in half in butcher shop windows do not provide stimulus for vomiting or intestinal rebellion? The bleeding, sore patches of animal meat provide unquestionable proof of a revolting, base murder but that criminal cut through a pig's insides in the display window of a deli still retains its more-or-less relatively real purpose in a world viewed through the eyes of a carnivore: a genuinely carnivorous animal considers fat and bleeding hogs cut in two most appealing since, above all, they can be used as food.²³

Or, as he discussed in the essay *Magistra vitae* (1940):

We wonder why man as a typical herbivore (ape) became a carnivore? [...] Through no fault of his own, in the new climatic and Nordic distances, his tropical ape nature adapted to the cannibalistic conditions due to climatic imperatives, and man began grilling meat out of necessity, thus becoming what it is today: hunter, archer, warrior, military leader, politician, in one word: 'man of chatter', 'man the artificer', 'man of stupidity', and in its last consequence: 'overman of World War II'.²⁴

We can conclude that Krleža's political and psychotic bestiary which we have examined on select examples using the drama menagerie on a timeline from 1913/1914 to 1970 is consistent: within the framework of a permanent negative anthropology, Krleža's preoccupation with documenting the all-powerful human stupidity of the man-ape who, when it learned to fly, *bombs other apes* (cf. KRLEŽA 1977b: 21), although in speciesist zoo-metaphors, we can say that Krleža does not find utopia in nature "as there is no justice even among flowers", as the title of one of his ballads states. Therefore, I used Krleža's two statements about man as certainly the most dangerous an-

²² Agamben describes two version of the *anthropological machine* – ancient and modern: "If, in the machine of the moderns, the outside is produced through the exclusion of an inside and the inhuman produced by animalizing the human, [when examining the machine of earlier times] the inside is obtained through the inclusion of an outside, and the non-man is produced by the humanization of an animal: the man-ape, the *enfant sauvage* or *Homo ferus* but also and above all the slave, the barbarian, and the foreigner, as figures of an animal in human form" (AGAMBEN 2004: 37).

²³ <https://www.prijatelj-zivotinja.hr/index.hr.php?id=1625>

²⁴ <https://www.prijatelj-zivotinja.hr/index.hr.php?id=1625>



imal as a motto: Krešimir Horvat (to Polugan): “Man is an incredibly stupid animal” (Krlježa: Vučjak, 1923) or as a variation on the theme: “Man is an animal like any other, tamed by its way of life” (KRLJEŽA 1977c: 413). In short, by negating Feuerbach’s anthropological thesis *Man with man – the unity of I and Thou – is God* and by promoting the Ape to / as Man’s deputy, as Desmond Morris does with the cover of *Naked Ape*, Krlježa shows that Man is at its core and being (the ontological structure of the human being) is not *homo sapiens*. Today’s pandemic picture of the world demonstrates all of this, or as Krlježa would say in speciesist manner: man is still an ape, or as a non-speciesist statement: man is still man, the bloodiest animal.



Photo 3. A postcard from the exhibition *Meow, Meow, What I Did in the First World War* at the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral in Rijeka (2014), from the collection of Piero Pazzi, collector and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice. The exhibition showed that Horvat’s rhetorical question about horses of war can be applied to cats in the same way: “But who gave us the right to drag along these innocent and sad creatures through these stupid stories of ours?”

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